The developments in the post-war period made it clear that it would not be possible for the British to keep its hold over India for a long time. The war-ravaged British economy, the tired army, the spread of discontent among the armed forces, the series of strikes in post offices and air forces were danger signals for them. Moreover, the internal situation was also grave. High prices of commodities, inflation, scarcity of food stuff and famines increased the sufferings of the common people. The agrarian situation was also unquiet. Several peasant movements took place throughout India and in almost all cases the CPI came forward to lead them.

Though the CPI adopted broadly an anti-struggle policy during 1942-1944 the outbreak of a series of peasant struggles following 1945 led to a shift in the CPI's policy. Shedding off its erstwhile anti-struggle and class-compromising policy of the preceding years the CPI now organised a series of peasant movements some of which took the character of armed rebellion. The major peasant movements of this period (1945-1947) were the Tebhaga struggle in Bengal, the Punnagra Vayalar movement in Kerala, the Telengana movement in Andhra and the movement of the Varlis of Maharashtra. One important feature of these movements was that they
were, in the main, local struggles aimed at securing economic demands and had no link with any broad strategy for securing Indian independence.

In September 1946 the Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha gave a call for Tebhaga struggle (a demand for two-thirds share of the crop for the sharecroppers—commonly known as bargadars or adhiars—instead of the prevailing arrangement of half or even less) for implementing the Foulum Commission recommendation. The main slogan was 'Nij Kholane Dhan Tolo' (stack paddy in your own threshing-floor) and 'Tebhaga Chai' (we want tebhaga). North Bengal, especially the Thakurgaon sub-division of Dinajpur and the adjoining areas of Jalpaiguri, Rangpur and Malda became the storm centres of the movement. Subsequently, it spread to Mymansingh, Midnapore and 24 Parganas. Simultaneously the Hajongs in north Mymansingh (Susang) started the Tanka (produce rent) movement. In 1937-1938 the Hajongs won a reduction in their 'tanka' which the tenants had to pay in a quantity fixed by the landowners even if the crop failed due to drought and/or heavy rains. Like the bargadar (sharecropper) they had no tenancy right and could be evicted. The peasant agitation was aimed at converting 'tanka' into much lower money rent so as to gain from higher prices. The movement was on the whole peaceful but it turned violent towards the end of January 1947. As one commentator informs that the Tanka movement rapidly spread
throughout the entire northern Mymansingh. The peasants took the crops to their houses and refused to pay 'tanka' until their demands were fulfilled. He quoted from an article published in the Statesman of March 25, 1947:

The present agitation to convert tanka into much lower money rent seeks to give the peasant benefit of the post-war level of agricultural prices and to make the eviction of tenant more difficult. Money-rent has another advantage for the cultivator. If there is a dispute and the landlord refused to accept his rent the rent can be deposited at the thana (police station - U.G.), if it is money. But if it is in kind he cannot do so for lack of storage facilities and is liable for interest.

Hajongs are in the form of this struggle for change but they know nothing about the tactics of agitation and this is where the Communists come in.... 2

During the second half of the 1940s the tebhaga movement spread to some pockets in Midnapore which was opposed by the landlord-dominated Congress Committees. The bargadors sought to counter the increasing police and jotedar (big peasants - U.G.) violence with lathis (sticks - U.G.). In tune with the tebhaga movement in the districts of North Bengal and East Bengal the CPI led the peasants of Kakdwip (24 Parganas) of South Bengal. The District Committee of the Kisan Samity of the CPI held a peasants conference in 1944 at Sudhakhali and subsequently the tebhaga movement spread rapidly. According to him, a large portion of the rich peasants also participated because of their own grievances against the big landlords. In the harvesting
session of 1946-1947 the Kakdwip peasants stacked paddy in their yards and the landlords were forced to concede the demands. But when the Congress Government assumed power the landlords with the help of administration disrupted the movement. 3

Similar was the case with the North Bengal and East Bengal districts. The Kisan Sabha had to take a decision whether the movement should be continued as the spontaneous phase was over. Sen writes that excepting Hajongs and Santals other sects of the peasants, especially the Muslims, showed signs of vacillation. In such a paradoxical situation Bhowani Sen put forward a new tactical line. Instead of building a broader movement Bhowani Sen emphasized on the slogan: land to the tiller. Under the circumstances of vacillation this was a very useful tactic because under this slogan peasants of all variants could be organised for pressurising the government to pass the Bargadars Bill which was drafted and published in the official Calcutta Gazette of January 22, 1947. In the last week of February several unarmed peasants died in police firing which was organised by the Government and ultimately the Bargadars Bill was shelved. As the peaceful transfer of power was at the stage of completion and the communalism again raised its ugly face in Calcutta and elsewhere the tebhaga movement gradually died away. 4 Dhanagare points out that the movement remained confined 'only to retention of a two-thirds share of the produce for themselves' and once that seemed feasible they did not consider any further
onslaught on the very system of sharecropping, adhiari or tanka and this was one of the causes of the movement not taking a violent class form. Rasul observes that much preparation was not taken against the police and jotedar offensive and efforts were not made to draw the urban middle class behind the movement. He also points out that as 'no discrimination was made between big and small jotedars' when the movement was led against the entire jotedar class the small jotedars joined the big jotedars; he also notes that the political aspect of the movement was very much neglected.

While the tebhaga movement was more or less peaceful and occasionally went to the brink of armed struggle the Telengana movement (July 1946-October 1951) took on the character of the biggest armed struggle India had ever witnessed. The Hyderabad state was one of the largest princely states and was ruled by the Asafjahi Nizams who were props of British imperialism. The jagirdari system of land administration was the dominant feature of political organisation of Hyderabad. There was no political and civil liberty and the people were subjected to extreme feudal exploitation. The deshmukha (revenue-collectors-turned-landlords) and jagirdars extorted vatti (forced labour) from lower castes and tribal peasants. Besides vatti another dominant practice was the system of bhagela serfdom. The bhagelas had to work for their masters generation after generation. Between 1910 and 1940, especially during
the depression, lands owned by tribal peasants passed into the hands of non-cultivating holders. Economic condition of the peasants deteriorated due to depression and war. The communists utilized this situation. Through the Andhra Conference (set up in 1928 which reflected regional, economic and political aspirations of the urban middle class) the Congress and the Congress sympathisers tried to popularise issues like constitutional reforms, civil liberties etc. With the help of the Andhra Conference the young communists voiced the peasants' grievances and mobilised opinion in favour of abolition of landlordism and the vetti system. After 1942 when the British Government lifted the ban on the CPI the latter captured both the Andhra Conference and the Andhra Mahasabha, another organisation, which led a movement for unification of all Telugu-speaking regions into separate Vishalandhra. The pro-peasant slogans of the CPI (viz., abolition of vetti, reduction in taxes, revenues and rents etc.) attracted large poor peasants, tenants and labourers and between 1942 and 1946 their influence over the peasants grew considerably. During the post-war years the Andhra Conference launched village level struggles and in some cases forcibly seized lands of those landlords who evicted peasants. One such incident took place in July 1946 in a village that formed part of Vishnur Deshmukh's estate. And by the end of July such militant peasant action against landlords spread to some 300-400 villages. The Andhra Conference was banned. The movement reached such a
height that to curb peasant militancy General Auchinleck's services were requisitioned.

Though the CPI was busy in organising the peasants the Congress, according to Seshadri, was 'playing the legal constitutional game adopting peaceful methods.' He maintains: ".....the Congress did not do anything ... watched the happenings with mixed feeling of admiration and apprehension. Admiration because the Nizams whom they could not tackle was being properly dealt with, apprehension because once these forces succeed, they would take the revolution to its logical end ... affect all the vested interests which support the Congress."10 Meanwhile the political situation of Andhra began to change. The Nizam refused to merge with the Indian state though the Hindu majority favoured such merger. The CPI this time aligned with the Congress and participated in Congress led non-violent satyagrahas to seek the merger of Hyderabad. In August 1947 a 'Standstill Agreement' was signed between the Nizam and the Government of India and it was decided that after one year a permanent settlement would be negotiated. As the Nizam got one year's breathing space he enlarged and modernised the army and ruthlessly suppressed the ongoing movements. When the state Congress was hesitant about the agreement and dared not launch any resistance the CPI gave a call for armed resistance to the Nizam's rule. On September 13, 1948 the Indian army entered Hyderabad and within less than a week the Nizam surrendered. The entry of
the Indian army created a paradoxical situation for the CPI. Because continuance of the struggle with the Indian army meant self-destruction and simultaneously any decision to withdraw the movement meant losing all that they had achieved. Ravi Narayan Reddi, B. Yella Reddi and C. R. Rao favoured abandonment as they saw in the movement symptoms of 'left-adventurism', 'infantile disorder' and individual terrorism. On the other hand, P. Sundarayya and M. Basavaiah advocated continuance of the movement and saw symptoms of 'right reformism' in the former. Ultimately the opinion of the second group prevailed and the Telengana peasants were instructed to face the Congress armed forces bravely. The armed forces attacked the communist strongholds and the guerrilla squads and consequently the revolutionary peasants had to retreat to the forest. The decision to carry on the movement was later endorsed by the Second Congress of the CPI in 1948 which attacked the 'right-reformism' of Joshi. For this decision the peasants had to pay a heavy price. A glimpse of the police repression can be had from Sundarayya's account. According to his estimate in more than 2,000 villages 3 lakhs of people were tortured, 50,000 were arrested and more than 5,000 were imprisoned for years. D. N. Pritt maintains that over 2,000 peasants died in the encounter and 25,000 were arrested by August 1941. Ostensibly, the army was sent to quicken Hyderabad's integration with India but in reality its aim was to crush the communists. Anyway, the achievements of the Telengana movement were spectacular.
Nizam's administration was paralysed. Landlords ran to the cities in panic. A people's raj was established. Taxer and forced labour were abolished; lands and grains were distributed; mortgage deeds were destroyed, irrigation channels were dug up and night schools were organised. Nehru's army took back most of these gains, severely repressed the peasants and brought back the status quo ante. Besides police repression, intra-party differences and the CPI's failure to win over the support of the urban middle class and the working class was responsible for the failure of the movement. Again, there was a lack of co-ordination between the liberated village communities. Seshadri notes that a large section of the Hindu population was neutral as they saw in the movement a rebellion against Muslim domination. He thinks that the objective conditions of Telengana and other Andhra regions were different and the Telengana tactic was inapplicable to other Andhra regions. He also criticises B. T. Ramadive's left-leaning in the Second Congress where the decision to continue the movement was endorsed. Alongwith these factors conciliatory gestures of the Nehru Government towards the CPI in early 1951 and the CPI's decision to participate in the general election played a crucial role in petering out of the movement.15

Anyway, the Telengana experiment had far reaching implications. On the one hand, it brought to the fore the problems and possibilities of agrarian movements in India. On the other hand, the manner of its suppression by the Congress Government gave the communists a foretaste of
the nature of the Congress rule. Subsequent agrarian reforms initiated by the Congress did meet up some of the demands of the rich peasants who later turned conservative and dissociated themselves from the middle and small peasants. This had far-reaching impact on the future of any agrarian movement of the Telengana type.

The struggle of Punnnapra and Vayalar was another armed resistance against the landlords and capitalists. By 1946 the CPI had built up a powerful base among the coir factory workers and fishermen, toddy-tappers and the agricultural labourers of the Shertallai-Allenpy-Ambalapuzha area of North-West Travancore state. The movement began in October 1946. The condition of the peasants was no more different from other areas of India. The Second World War gave them more unemployment and starvation. To improve the situation the workers, agricultural labourers and the tenants were organised under the leadership of the Coir Workers Union and the CPI. In July-August 1945 the coir workers of Alleppy, Shertallai and Muhamma called a general strike demanding supply of necessities at fair prices. In January 1946 Dewan C.P. Ramaswami Iyer announced his plan for an 'American-model' constitution which in reality meant balkanisation of India. While the State Congress was hesitant and was keen for a compromise the CPI launched a massive campaign against the Government. However, from September 1946 the State Government began hunting the communists and the trade unionists. The All Travancore Trade Union Congress gave a call
for general strike which began on October 22, 1945 and an attack was made on October 24 on Punnagara police camp near Alappuzha. Within twenty four hours the entire region was handed over to the army who surrounded the volunteer head quarters at Vayalar and on October 27 began firing and hundreds of volunteers were killed.  

The varlis of Maharashtra were of tribal origin and they were subjected to inhuman feudal exploitation. They were debt-slaves and the zamindars and cowkars (money lenders) used to extract veth (forced labour) from them. As they had no organisation they were subjected to inhuman exploitation for ages. The Kisan Sabha organised the varlis and fought for their demands and the varlis were liberated from their slave life. In 1944 about 3,000 varlis in Umbergaon taluka struck work in the harvesting season and demanded a daily rate of 12 annas for agricultural work, cutting grass and felling trees. But the strike failed. The Varli Conference (the Umbergaon Conference) that met at Zari on May 23, 1945 adopted the programme of abolishing serf-tenure and forced labour and ultimately the system of forced labour collapsed. The varlis of Dahanu taluka struck work in October 1945 demanding increase of rate of cutting grass, faced wanton repression but ultimately their demands were won. A conference of the varlis of Dahanu and Umbergaon talukas was held at Mahalakshmi on January 21, 1946. 15,000 varlis attended the same. The varlis, according to the advice of the Kisan Sabha, refused to pay
the legal and illegal rents (excepting paddy rents) and consequently all arrears of rent were wiped out and all exactions (excluding rent of paddy) were stopped. Another successful strike was organised by the varlis in mid October 1946. 17

We have already noted that the leadership of the AIKS was gradually being captured by the communists. The Congress never took the AIKS in confidence but opposed it and during 1937-1939 sent directive to the Bihar Congressmen to dissociate from the AIKS and keep an eye on its activities. Due to change of line after 1941 the CPI-dominated AIKS adopted an anti-struggle line and campaigned for growing more food and advised the kisans not to participate in the Quit India movement. But despite such anti-struggle stance of the CPI the peasants of United Provinces, Bihar and Bengal spontaneously participated in the movement and especially in Midnapore, Bengal, the people established a parallel government. However, in the post-war period the CPI did not hesitate to fight for the cause of the kisans. Shedding off its erstwhile anti-struggle stance it gave leadership to the tebhaga, Telangana, Punnapra-Vayalar and the movement of the varlis. Compared to the Congress position the CPI stance was much more radical and pro-peasant. The legalisation of the party in 1942 made it possible for the CPI to strengthen its base. In 1944 the AIKS membership was 5,53,427 as against 2,25,781 in 1942. In 1945 it was 8,27,686. However, in 1946 membership came down to 7,54,345. 18
Meanwhile prominent leaders of the AIKS began to take exception to the domination of the CPI in the Sabha and many of them either quit or preferred to remain neutral. The Central Kisan Council in its meeting held at Bombay in September 1942 adopted a resolution reiterating the united front character of the Sabha:

Despite the fact that various political trends, Communist and non-Communist, have always been at work in the Kisan Sabha, it had never identified itself with the Communist Party which is represented in the Kisan Sabha in prepondering numbers. The Kisan Sabha has always remained and does remain today an independent mass organisation of the Kisans with an independent policy of its own and is not deflected from that policy on any account.

The Netrokona session of the AIKS held in 1945 also emphasized the united front character of the Sabha. It is noteworthy that during 1946 when the country plunged into communal massacre the AIKS remained more or less non-communal. When the new Congress Governments came to power the Sabha put forward some agrarian demands like abolition of landlordism, non-eviction of actual tillers, permanent ownership of land by the peasants, fixation of ceiling of individual holding (upto 25 acres), introduction of agricultural income tax from land above a tax-free minimum etc. The tenth session of the AIKS at Sikandra, United Provinces, held in May 1947 deplored partition. In 1948 the CPI was banned and almost all prominent leaders of the CPI and the AIKS were imprisoned. The communists became the first victim of the first Congress Government.
II

The trade union sector where the CPI was most powerful also bore the impact of policy shift of the party in 1941. The CPI gave a call for unhampered production to meet the needs of the people and of national defence. The CPI asked the workers 'to solve disputes and production problems by means of collective bargaining and co-operation', to use the right to strike 'with special care', not to allow the mills and factories 'to lie idle'. It was stated that 'in the present grave hours of national emergency, nothing matters except defence of the country, the fight for freedom and the speeding up of production to win the war...'. Those who opposed this policy the CPI attacked them thus: "...The Fifth Column agents appear on the production front and attempt to close factories by all devices, by calling for "political strike for national struggle", by provoking strikes through the economic end, by taking the help of the millowners and closing the mills from above, and by finally attempting destructive sabotage in factories and the bombing of workers out of the mills." It declared that it would unite the 'patriotic masses' for 'defence production'. It was admitted that the CP 'actively assisted' the process of production, 'by directly fighting against sabotage,.... by its bold exposure of the Fifth Column and its slogans.' The party position about production policy was stipulated thus: "The production policy of the party is the practical and specific application
of the main slogan: Unite for Defence. To the industrial front, produc-
tion is the key base of national defence which the working class mans. It
is the patriotic duty of the worker to strengthen defence by taking ini-
tiative for organising more production and better transport, and against
stoppage of work...."27 It is also evident that other constituent par-
ties of the AITUC opposed this new pro-war line of the CPI.28 Defending
the new line B. T. Ranadive wrote:

.... Indian defence, now depended on how far they maintained tr-
ansport and production, inspite of the provocative conditions im-
posed on them by the owners and the authorities.

.... The workers were told in mass meetings that stoppages now
would only facilitate Japanese invasion and expose our people to
terror and conquest. Patriotism required that the workers im-
proved production and through it compelled the Government and the
employers to sanction their demands. 29

Again,

The 1942-45 period was the acid-test of the patriotism of the
T.U. movement .... The T.U. movement emerged successfully from
this test .... Every worker ought to be proud that it beat
back the offensive launched by some of our own countrymen to
disrupt it .... 30

However, a good many strikes were organised by the AITUC during 1946.
In this year there took place 1,629 strikes involving 1,961,948 workers
with a loss of 12,717,762 working days.31 The most notable strike of this
year was the strike launched by the Posts and Telegraphs Department which,
supported by the AITUC, engulfed the whole country. The attitude of the
INC was one of neutrality though Nehru sympathised orally. Afterwards Azad, Sarat Chandra Bose et al. appealed to withdraw it as their demands were partially met. The strike was withdrawn on August 3, 1946.32 But the year 1947 was a fateful year for the AITUC and the CPI. Afraid of the growing militancy and strikes launched by the trade unions the INC hatched a plan to disrupt the unity of the working class. Both the Congress ministries in the Provinces and the Interim Government at the Centre resolved to suppress the activities of the communists on the old plea that they indulged in violent activities. Patel wrote to V. V. Giri, Minister for Industries and Labour, in Madras:

Being in charge of Government in eight or nine provinces and also having power in Central Government, it would be folly to allow the Trade Union Congress to be exploited by the communists or other groups hostile to the Congress ... 

If we cannot capture the Trade Unions Congress by peaceful and decent means, it would be better to start with a rival Trade Union Congress organisation which would straightway be recognised by the Government and all pretensions of the representative character of the rival organisation would be destroyed. You must, therefore, think of either joining the existing organisation and capturing the Centre or start a rival organisation at once. This is a question which should be considered immediately. 33

In a letter to Gulzarilal Nanda, Minister for Labour, Government of Bombay, Patel wrote that the members of the AITUC were being chosen as official representatives in international conferences which gave them a status and that the government policy of repressing the communists would ultimately appear to be embarrassing. Hence he suggested:
"...it is high time that we should mobilise our forces and start a parallel organisation which may for all intents and purposes be recognised as a genuine Trade Union Congress....."34

Apart from this attempt to disrupt the trade union unity both the Interim Government at the centre and the state governments were planning to suppress the communists by a heavy hand. In September 1946 the CPI exposed the government plan of fomenting communal riots and the plan of the army to suppress the sporadic mass movements. As a result the CPI offices were raided in January 1947 and the leaders got arrested. Though Nehru and Patel pleaded innocence and they blamed the foreign bureaucracy for the repression it is now known from the documents published in Transfer of Power that both the leaders knew the forthcoming action.35 As to the Bombay Government's decision to detain the communists without trial Wavell, quite significantly, wrote to Pathick-Lawrence:

I noticed in a report the other day that the Congress Government in Bombay had decided that the only way to deal with the Communists was to resort to detention without trial. They may well be right, but it is a strong volte face from their old attitude to such executive measures; and it may come as a shock to you if they should resort to such "imperialistic" methods. 36

Again, Colville wrote to Wavell:

.... They (the Bombay Provincial Ministry - U.G.) are determined
to handle the communist and other extreme Left Wing elements firmly, and are bringing forward this session a new Public Security Measures Bill which reiterates all our ordinances in full, and provides for the suppression of private arms in uniform. These powers will help to meet the threat of a general strike. 37 (Emphasis added - U.C.)

These excerpts show that the Nehru Government's real aim was to wipe out the communists from the Indian political map. It is evident that the Congress was preparing ground on the eve of the independence to launch large scale attack on the communists. Given this background it is hardly surprising that the Congress would hesitate to disrupt the trade union unity any more. Consequently, the Industrial Relations Act, 1946, was passed by the Bombay Government. On May 3-4, 1947 the Congress Majdoor Sevak Sangh convened a conference at Delhi wherein a new Congress trade union - the INTUC - was born. The meeting was presided over by Patel. It was a historic incident in the sense that some proponents of socialism like Nehru, Ram Monohar Lohia, Ashok Mehta and Aruna Asaf Ali (the last three being CSP stalwarts - U.C.) were present at the meeting. Though Patel this time justified the formation of a new trade union on the ground that "... The communists who are in the dominant position in the AITUC have little scruples as regards the means to be adopted ... in discrediting the Congress and defeating its programmes..."38 the real intentions, as we have seen, lay elsewhere. 33

The CPI opposed the Congress attempt to establish a parallel union
and denied the allegation that the CPI dominated the AITUC and played any anti-national role. Protesting against such a move Dange wrote that the formation of the rival trade union 'with the prestige of the Congress behind it is a great blow to our developing unity.' \(^2^9\) But such protest fell on the deaf ears of the Congress leaders. It is generally assumed that during Nehru era democratic institutions were built up with great care and that the government's aim was to ameliorate the conditions of the people. However, the fate of the peasant and working class movements during 1945-1947 and the role played by the Congress in suppressing and repressing the movements of the poorer sections of the society explode such myth. As transfer of power was imminent and the Congress leaders were very eager to grab power they were not in a position to tolerate any mass movement that might stand in the way of their smooth accession to power. Disruption of the peasant and working class movement was carried on with an eye to achieve this aim. In 1947 the Congress formed a rival pro-establishment union and in 1948 it felt no qualm to suppress the peasants and communists by military action.

III

Two other important events of 1946 that gave birth to a revolutionary situation in which people of all hues responded actively and spontaneously are the trial of the INA personnel and the revolt of the RIN
ratings. In the first week of February 1946 the British Government started the trial of the officers and men of the INA - a contingent raised during World War II by Subhas Chandra Bose - who had taken up arms against the British Government. On February 10 the historic trial started at the Red Fort of Delhi. On February 11 the Muslim Students' League of Calcutta gave a call for a students' strike which was supported by Calcutta branch of the AISF. Following police repression of the strike, on February 12, 1946 the CPI and AITUC gave a call for an industrial general strike and 'the response was overwhelming'.

In fact, the protest movement reached its peak during February 11-13, 1946 which was started in late November 1945 when the people came to know that the INA men would be tried. Thus on November 21-23, 1945 periodic upheavals took place in Calcutta. On November 22-23, Sikh taxi-drivers and communist-led tram workers struck work. On December 2, 1945 the People's Age commented:

During the course of the mass mobilisation itself unity of action among students was achieved and unity among the parties too would be reached had it not been for the impossibly sectarian and cowardly attitude of Sjts, Kiran Sankar Ray and Sarat Bose ... 41

That the British were getting panicky and that some Congressmen, too initially wanted suppression of the INA men though subsequently they championed their cause can be proved from George Cunningham's letter to Wavell:
The thing is daily becoming more and more purely Indian versus British... I think that every day that passes now brings over more and more well-disposed Indians into anti-British camp....

.... Congressmen - Dr. Khan Sahib among them - have said to me 'If only they had been shot in Rangoon or Singapore, everyone would have been pleased.' But that feeling has gone and can not now be revived. 42

However, afterwards the Congress formed the INA defence committee and men like Nehru and Bulabhai Desai came forward to defend the cause of the INA men. The INA trials had an adverse effect on the morale of the Indian army. On November 5, 1945 Wavell mentioned in an official note : ".... I believe that the Congress are counting on the I.N.A. as the spearhead of their revolt, they would suborn the Indian army if they could, and they hope that their threats will impair the loyalty and efficiency of the police." 43 Noting the hesitancy of the Congress and League leaders to make the most of the rebellious public mood the People's Age commented:

As against the heroic unity of the masses, the conduct of the top Congress and League leaders stood out in sharp contrast. The insane jealousy of each for the other led them to try and make party capital out of the upheaval and turn it against each other ...

The choice before the leaders is this: Either they lead united, disciplined demonstrations of all the people against imperialism to seize power or Imperialism drowns all revolutionary action of the masses in blood and bullets. 44

Cunningham's letter reveals that the Congress maintained a double
standard on the issue of the INA. It becomes very difficult not to share Sumit Sarkar's observation that the pro-INa role of the Congress 'was essentially election propaganda combined with the need to accommodate the popular mood....' It is also evident that the CPI for the first time gave up its erstwhile anti-Forward Bloc stand and openly opposed the trial and mobilised its trade unions and students' unions in favour of the INA prisoners. But simultaneously it should, however, be mentioned that it was the CPI's spontaneous reaction to a unique crisis pregnant with revolutionary potentialities not a planned political strategy. The Politbureau and the Central Committee resolutions of the CPI during 1945-1946 did not take cognizance of the fast-moving developments like the INA trial and the RIN strike. Clearly, the CPI lagged behind the political developments of the period.

The other significant event was the RIN strike that took place in Bombay on February 18-23, 1946. It began on February 18 at the Talwar Signals training establishment and by the morning of February 19 it had spread to all the 20,000 ratings in the twelve shore establishments in Bombay. The strike initially started as a protest against bad food and racial discrimination but gradually took on an anti-imperialist character. B. C. Dutt, a RIN personnel, writes that the ratings were 'battling to extend the nationalist movement inside the Navy' and that the role played by the INA was an immediate source of inspiration. He also writes that before the enquiry
commission they did not reveal that they had been inspired by poli-
tics because they were advised not to utter such things and also be-
cause they did not want to 'besmear the reputation' of the leaders. 47
The strike was total and the strikers used Congress, League and Red
flags. The British Government got panicky and resorted to violent re-
pressive measures. When the Indian soldiers refused to fire, the Bri-
tish army was requisitioned and a seven-hour battle took place on Feb-
ruary 21 outside the Castle Barracks and in the afternoon Admiral
Godfray threatened to destroy the entire navy.

In response to the call of the RIN the Bombay Committee of the
CPI called a general strike on February 22, 1946 and demanded cessa-
tion of repression and the opening of negotiations. Despite the op-
position of the INC and the AIML 3,00,000 mill workers of Bombay par-
ticipated in the strike and violent street fighting continued for two
days. The common people brought food for the ratings to the Gateway
of India and the shopkeepers invited them to take whatever they need-
ed. 48 According to official estimate, 228 civilians were killed and
1046 injured. 49 The RIAF, the tram workers of Bengal, the AISF and
Muslim Students Federation of Madras, Bombay and Bengal supported the
strike call. It would be very fruitful to have a comparative analy-
sis of the stand taken by the major political parties. Patel wrote:
... In any case, discipline in the Army can not be tampered with. To do so would be to court disaster. We will want army even in Free India. The Naval ratings may have their grievances but they should not be allowed to be exploited by political parties nor should their grievances be mixed up with politics.... 50

Azad felt that "strikes, hartals and defiance of temporary authority of the day are out of place. No immediate cause had arisen to join issue with the foreign rulers who are acting as caretakers."51 Jinnah advised the ratings to 'adopt constitutional, lawful and peaceful methods' and 'not to play into the hands of those who want to create trouble...'.

Gandhi, the ardent champion of Hindu-Muslim unity, in a statement on February 22, 1946 dubbed the strike as "thoughtless orgy of violence" and wrote

"...... Why should they continue to serve if service is humiliating for them ....?"

A combination between Hindus and Muslims and others for the purpose of violent action is unholy ...

The rulers have declared their intention to 'quit' in favour of Indian rule. Let the action be not delayed by a moment because of the exhibition of distressful earnest which has been lying hidden in the breast .... 53

Aruna Asaf Ali, however, strongly detested Gandhi's approach and noted: "It simply does not lie in the mouth of Congressmen who were themselves going to the legislatures to ask the ratings to give up their jobs...."54 and said that she would favour the unity between the
Hindus and Muslims on the barricade than on the constitutional front as, she thought this alliance was more politically sound than the one based on political and other concessions. Gandhi, however, was ever ready to keep faith in the Britishers. It becomes now amply evident that Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and Jinnah were totally opposed to the strike. Given these facts perhaps it was quite right for the ratings - who knew nothing of the intricacies of the art of compromise but suffered from humiliation for a brave attempt - to say that 'the rulers and the leaders of the ruled were no longer adversaries, but allies'; that though the Indian members in the Central Assembly sympatilitised with the ratings in public they "more or less collaborated with the British in terms of a action" or that the suppression of the strike 'suited' both the leaders and the Indian and British officers corps.

Compared to the compromising and anti-struggle attitude of the Congress and the League the CPI's stand was much more radical. The CPI thought that the period was not "one of mounting discontent and unrest, but one of deep revolutionary crisis of imperialist rule in India - one of rising revolutionary upheaval." Reacting against Nehru's current that the strike was sporadic and the strikers followed eighteenth century method of struggle Adhikari asked "... If similar events of peoples' resistance in 1942 struggle evoked warm tributes from Punditji, why are they denied to that of February 1946? Is it because the Congress had not given the call? ...." He further observed that
When the people, Hindu and Muslim are forging unity... when a wave of patriotism is sweeping the Indian army, when men of the armed forces are joining hands with the people in common fraternity and we are on the brink of a revolutionary upheaval—at such a time, the leadership of the Congress and the League are taking the disastrous path of compromise and surrender to imperialism and war against each other.

The RIN strike was, indeed, a signal of the gravity of the Indian situation. It becomes also evident in the Government's threat to smash the entire navy. "While the Communists and the Congress Socialists encouraged the mutineers to keep up their resistance", maintains Gopal Patel and the 'old guard' of the Congress at Bombay, acting in concert with the Government, sought to persuade the sailors to lay down arms."[^62] (Emphasis added - U.G.) Sumit Sarkar compares the RIN strike with the strikes of the Russian Navy in 1905: "The pattern of events in fact unconsciously echoed the course of the mutiny on the Black Sea Fleet during the first Russian Revolution of 1905: that too had begun over inedible food, and the fraternizing crowds had been shot down...."[^63] The RIN strike was phenomenal in the sense that for the first time in the history of Indian freedom struggle the common people in concert with the armed men fought against the imperialist rulers. Instead of seizing the opportunity the Congress and the League leaders discouraged and denounced it and adopted a stance of not to disturb the 'caretaker' government which was busy in completing the formalities of the negotiated transfer of power. Such an attitude of the leaders, R.P. Dutt rightly says,
betrayed the weakness of the national leaders which the British fully 
exploited.\(^6^4\) Simultaneously it should, however, also be noted that 
though the CPI supported the RIN strike, gave call to hartal and mobili-
sed the workers and students in support of the ratings it did not have 
any concrete proposal or strategy of underground work for the strike.
The CPI's role vis-a-vis the Congress and the League deserves apprecia-
tion but the movement was a spontaneous one and the CPI did not prepare 
the ratings for armed struggle as it did in the case of the Andhra peas-
sants. It was acknowledged in a Party pamphlet: "... attempts have 
been made by officers appearing before the Commission (the Enquiry Com-
mission appointed after the strike - U.G.) to point to the Party as the 
instigator of the mutiny. The allegations... are totally untrue." The 
individual party sympathisers, if any, inside the RIN - stipulated 
the pamphlet - "received no instructions from the Party; they acted on 
their own as did all other ratings."\(^6^5\) (Emphasis added - U.G.) Adhikari 
explained the failure of the CPI to successfully lead the mutiny in the 
following manner:

Isolated as we were from the mainstream of the national movement 
because of the 1942 developments, our slogan of final assault co-
uld not rally together even the militant anti-imperialist elements 
in the national movement, though the bulk of them were in someway 
or other drawn in that upsurge at its various points.\(^6^6\)

He also noted that the CPI's approach to the post-war mass struggles su-
ffered from subjectivism as it "tended to look upon them as a mass upsurge
against the compromise which the national leadership had made and not as what they really were - struggle for the consolidation of national independence war." (Emphasis added - U.G.)

IV

Until 1939 the CPI's attitude towards the communal question seemed to be more or less pro-Congress, it criticised the communal leanings of some of the Congress leaders though. But in the 1940s its stance changed considerably. It now openly supported the League demand of a separate nationhood and advised the INC to concede the League demand. It was opposed to the Congress position that the communal problem would be solved after the British withdrawal. It apprehended that such a policy would help the diehards and the imperialists who would repress and crush the popular movement. So it put emphasis on Congress-League unity. But this time the CPI's perception of unity was of a different nature. It criticised the INC for not conceding League's Pakistan demand:

National question has been loud in its proclamation that under a free India, there will be no oppression of the minority by the majority. But a minority which distrusts the majority can not be satisfied with such assertions. Its fears must be completely allayed. Its equal status must be guaranteed in a form easily understood. It must be given the right to secession, the right to form an independent state. (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Not only to the Muslims but this right should be extended, so stipulated the Editorial, to other distinct nationalities like the Pathans
Baluchis, Sindhis etc. which are 'bound together by religion, culture, tradition and history'. The Editorial went on:

... To look upon the right to secession as the special fad of Jinnah..... is to ignore the new Muslim awakening, as also of other nationalities, e.g., Anchras, Karnatakis, Maharastrians etc., the awakening of a distinct nationality to new life, individual national consciousness. The acceptance of the right of secession does not divide India but unites it for common advance against imperialism and national resistance....69

Extending this line of argument Adhikari tried to locate the economic base of communalism which for him now seemed to be a national identity. He explained the deadlock concerning the communal question in the following way:

Firstly, inspite of the imperialist hindrances, bourgeois economic (industrial) development of our country is proceeding apace horizontally, if not vertically. The level (emphasis original - U.S.) of industrialization is not rising but the same low level of industrialization is spreading to every nook and corner of India. As a result there is a growing competition between the bourgeoisie of the different individual nationalities. The provincial autonomy under the new constitution tended to accelerate these frictions and we have in this period the Bengali-Behari, Marathi-Karnatki, Andhra-Tamilnad questions, the Hindu-Muslim question in Bengal, in the U.P. and in the Punjab, cropping up.....70

Adhikari dubbed this aspect as 'the bourgeois aspect' and 'the disruptive aspect' which the imperialists and their agents used for maintaining their rule and for mystifying the real problem. Adhikari, however, also recognised the progressive aspect of the development.
He maintained:

"...Side by side with the bourgeois development, the all-India national and anti-imperialist movement is spreading to every nook and corner....The common goal of India's political and economic emancipation is being seen through the waking eyes of individual national consciousness....Here is the progressive aspect of the accentuation of the communal and provincial jealousies, which our growing national democratic movement itself brings to the surface..."71

The Hindu-Muslim conflict is the result, argues Adhikari, of economic and other competition between the bourgeoisie of the upper class of the two communities which the imperialists use for divide and rule. Adhikari did not treat the League as reactionary because,

"...the Muslim League leadership can be said to have undergone a transformation during this period. It is no longer feudal reactionary no longer just a willing tool of imperialism. It is now an industrial bourgeois leadership, which is no more just an adjunct of imperialism but one which play an oppositional role vis-a-vis imperialism...."72 (All capitals original - U.G.)

Thus Adhikari equated both the INC and the AIML as anti-imperialist organisations and described the individual national consciousness of the Sindhis, of Punjabi Muslims etc. as progressive ones within the framework of the broader all-India nationalism. He saw behind the demand for Pakistan "the justified desire of the people of Muslim nationalities....to build up their free national life within the greater unity of the all-India national freedom...."73 Guided by this logic Adhikari opined, "...the recognition of the right of nationalities to separation, is the recognition
346

of their equality and freedom from oppression in a free India." This
would lay the basis not for separation but for joint fight for freedom
against the aggressors and for the creation of an Indian union based
on voluntary co-operation of free nationalities." Clearly, Adhikari's
image of India was a multi-national one. In a resolution of the CC, the
CPI endorsed the claim of the separate Muslim nationhood. The prime em-
phasis was put on Congress-League unity based on the recognition of the
right to secession. The Editorial of the People's War of November 29,
1942 commented:

...the main obstacle to national unity is the failure to recog-
nise unequivocally the right of Indian nationalities to self-
determination. It is the failure on the part of the National
Congress to admit this right in unequivocal terms in respect
of Muslim nationalities that prevents settlement and unity to-
day .... 76

In a Resolution adopted by the Enlarged Plenum of the CC on
September 19, 1942 and endorsed by the First Congress of the CPI in May
1943 the main lines of the CPI's policy regarding the nationality ques-
tion was identified. It was maintained that the CPI's policy was to
draw 'together the toilers of all castes, communities and nationalities
in common class organisations' which, according to it, constituted 'the
cornerstone of the policy of achieving communal unity.' It was argued
that 'the basic rights of the communities and nationalities must be made
an essential part of the programme of the united national front' for
the defence and freedom of India. To ensure perfect unity between dif-
fferent communities and nationalities it was proposed that,

Every section of the Indian people which has a contiguous terri-
tory as its homeland, common historical tradition, common language, culture, psychological make-up and common economic life would be recognised as a distinct nationality with the right to exist as an autonomous state within the free Indian union or federation and will have the right to secede from it if it may so desire... Thus free India of tomorrow would be a federation or union of au-
tonous states of the various nationalities such as Pathans, Wes-
tern Punjabis (dominantly Muslims), Sikhs, Sindhis, Hindustanis, Rajasthanis, Gujaratis, Bengalis, Assamese, Dehradus, Oryas, An-
dhras, Tamils, Karnatakas, Maharashtriens, Kerals, etc. 80

Clearly, it visualised a federation composed of sixteen autonomous states of sixteen nationalities (if the Bengali Muslims of eastern and northern districts of Bengal wished to form a separate state which, ac-
cording to the CPI, was also feasible, then the number would be increased to seventeen - U.G.) For the interposed minorities it favoured the idea of granting rights by statute. According to the Resolution, such a decla-
ration of rights would form the basis for unity between the INC and the League. Because "...this would give to the Muslims wherever they are in an overwhelming majority in a contiguous territory which is their home-
land, the right to form their autonomous states and even to separate if they so desire ... Such a declaration therefore concudes the just essen-
ce of the Pakistan demand and has nothing in common with the separatist theory of dividing India into two nations on the basis of religion."81

It was also thought that the recognition of the right of separation would not 'necessarily lead to actual separation' but would lay the basis for a
greater unity. In his report on the Resolution Adhikari quoted Stalin's definition of nation:

A nation is a historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture. 82

Stalin viewed that the concept of nation was a product of the bourgeois era:

Modern nations are a product of a definite epoch of rising capitalism. The process of the abolition of feudalism and the development of capitalism was also the process of the development of peoples into nations. The British, the French, the Germans and the Italians formed into nations during the victorious march of capitalism and its triumph over feudal disunity. 83

That is, in all those cases the unification of people into a nation took place with a single language and with a common historical-cultural tradition. When the Britishers refused to give India independence they did so on the ground that India was not a nation in the sense stated above. Adhikari argued that the moderate political leaders of India were also awed by this kind of thinking. But he thought that such line of thinking was incorrect as India was composed of a good number of nationalities. Adhikari traced the growth of the national question in history. He divided the history of freedom struggle into three phases. In the first phase which, according to him, lasted until 1905, the fundamental argument of the nationalists was that India was one nation and the Hindu-
Muslim difference was a religious one which with the growth of nationalist urge would wither away. The early nationalists had an image of a single Indian nation like the British nation. According to him, the second phase - which lasted until 1934 - the national bourgeoisie consolidated its position as the leader of the nationalist movement 'in place of the earlier loyalists and Liberal reformists'. This period, he maintained, was also marked with 'clashes and conflicts between the bourgeoisie of the two sections......'

(Emphasis added - U.G.) This period was also marked by Hindu prejudices as the leaders mainly came from the educated Hindu middle class:

.....The national movement at that time was dominantly Hindu in colour, it was led by the Hindu middle class leaders. The nationalism of that period, therefore, expressed itself in the garb of Hindu ideology. The idea that India is one nation thus became inextricably interwoven with ideas depicting the oneness of India in Hindu religious and cultural imagery. 65

This very phenomenon, he wrote, 'left a special Hindu cultural impress' upon the nationalist movement. The slogan of Indian unity became similar to the idea that 'the cultural unity of India is a Hindu cultural unity'. The Lucknow Pact of 1916 was described as "a pure top agreement between the Khilafatists and the Swarajists, based on the demands of the top leadership..."86

The Muslim mass participation in the war was a result of the "freedom urge of Muslim nationalities which was given a religious turn" which collapsed with the withdrawal of the non-co-operation movement of 1920-1922. Since 1922, Adhikari stipulated, some sort of thwarted and distorted development of the
industrial bourgeoisie took place vis-a-vis the imperialists; there were also conflicts among different sections of the same bourgeoisie. Adhikari maintained that the left viewpoint in the 1930s was wrong as it thought that the Muslim League was a reactionary and communal organisation and that the communal problem could be solved if the Congress fought for economic demands of the Muslim masses and guaranteed cultural rights. The beginning of the third phase—from 1934 onwards—was, he wrote, a real watershed in the Indian history as in this period it became clear that the communal problem was in essence 'a problem of growing nationalities.' He wrote that during the period capitalism penetrated in the backward regions and provinces. He wrote:

...the spurt of industrial development which followed the end of the first World War and which was mainly restricted to centres in advanced provinces now begins to spread to the other parts of the country. After the crisis and depression of the years 1926-32, capital from older centres of industry begins to flow and penetrate into the backward regions and provinces. New industries like sugar and cement flower forth. The spread of industries to backward provinces, creation of new centres of industries in them brings in question of acute competition and rivalries between different sections of the Indian bourgeoisie. These get accentuated in the period of ministries under 1935 Constitution. 87

Adhikari assumed that as capitalism was spreading in different parts of India inter-provincial rivalry was verily manifest during 1937-1939. These rivalries were in essence frictions and competitions "between
different sections of the bourgeoisie, between the bourgeoisie of the different provinces, of different parts of India." Where industrial development spread to relatively "backward" provinces there arose, he argued, "competition between the bourgeoisie of the "advanced" provinces who are economically and politically more powerful." In support of his argument he cited the incident of factional strife inside the Karnataka Congress between Kannad Lingayat and Maharashtra Brahmins. This friction, it was viewed, was essentially a friction between 'the Maharastrian Brahmin (landlord) money-lending group' which dominated the politico-economic life and 'the rising Kannad middle class (merchants) and the bulk of Kannad peasantry belonging to the Lingyat community...' Similar were the cases with the Andhra-Tamil and Bengali-Behari community he argued. To substantiate the fact of capitalist penetration Adhikari referred to the existence of separate Chambers of Commerce in Andhra, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bengal, Punjab, etc. According to Adhikari,

... It shows that the indigenous bourgeoisie in each area is attempting to consolidate its own market in its own home-land. Besides, in each of these areas there is development of their own language, culture and literature. Not only this, in some of these areas where one nation has been cut up into different provinces, the demand for unification of the nation into a single province has been put forward as a democratic demand.... 

True to this logic Adhikari noted,
... The demand for Pakistan, if we look at its progressive essence, is in reality the demand for the self-determination and separation of the areas of Muslim nationalities of the Punjab, N.W. Frontier, Sind, Baluchistan and of the eastern districts of Bengal. 92

The theoretical implications of this line of argument had far reaching effects. Stalin defined the emergence of nation as essentially a capitalist phenomenon. If one draws the analogy between the Russian and the Indian society if one takes for granted that capitalism was strong in some centres (as was the case with the Great-Russian bourgeoisie - U.G.) and it had spread in the peripheral provinces of India then it would seem very logical to concede the separate national demands of various communities. This very logic, which to the CPI appeared to be correct, led the party to support the League's Pakistan demand and to portray regional or lingual demands as national ones. Besides Stalin's definition of nation, his another comment relating to India heightened the confusion where he drew an analogy between the Russian and the Indian societies. Stalin commented,

Who could have imagined that old Czarist Russia consisted of no less than fifty nationalities and ethnic groups?... Nowadays India is spoken of as a single whole. Yet there can be hardly any doubt that in the case of a revolutionary upheaval in India many hitherto unknown nationalities each with its own languages and its own distinctive culture will emerge on the scene. 93
According to Adhikari, the early nationalist movement was restricted to the advanced provinces of Bengal and Maharashtra—"Hindu provinces with a common Hindu cultural background and languages allied to Hindi"—and as it was primarily a middle class movement "the one nation idea got draped in Hindu cultural imagery with Hindi as the national language." Thus now it appeared to Adhikari that the communal problem was in essence a national problem—"that within the womb of the Indian national movement now preparing the ground for a free and democratic India, are throbbing not one but many baby nations...." One has to view the CPI's approach to the Pakistan question in terms of the above mentioned logic not by any ulterior motives. It is nothing but a travesty of truth when Shouri alleges that

The impulse was not theory but opportunism. The Communists had alienated nationalist opinion by their abuse of the Congress, of Gandhiji, of Subhas Bose, of the leaders of the 1942 underground movement. Now .... they were latching on to other grievances to enlarge their following... 

Driven by the logic mentioned above the CPI dubbed the Muslim League as 'secular' and its demands as 'democratic'. It even thought that "the League leadership was playing the same oppositional role vis-a-vis British Imperialism as the Congress leadership was doing..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) Adhikari noted that until 1938 it could not
assess the real nature of the Muslim League but in March 1948 when
the League adopted the Pakistan Resolution it became 'crystal clear'
to them that the League demand was in fact a national demand, that
the Muslim League was no longer a communal organisation but an orga-
nisation which was being guided by 'anti-imperialist national consc-
iousness.' 97 According to him, within the Pakistan demand "was
included, in a distorted form, the rising national urge of the Mus-
lim nationalities which had awakened to life with the spreading of
political consciousness during this period..." 98 He recognised that
the imperialist oppression was the dominant national oppression but
in the same breath he pointed out that because of the unequal deve-
lopment of the various nationalities certain section got more deve-
loped than others and apprehended that

... The uneven geographical development itself creates condi-
tions wherein one dominant nationality may be in a position to
stifle the growth of less developed and weaker nationalities
in a free India... 99

And he thought that granting of self-determination would bring forth
Hindu-Muslim unity to wage a struggle against the British. As he be-
lieved that it was essentially a national problem not a communal or
religious one, Adhikari wrote:
In this sense (i.e., in the sense of a separate nation - *V.G.*), alone is the urge for Pakistan among the Muslim peoples real. In the religious sense, it is unreal. Only so long as their real democratic rights are not granted will they cling to Pakistan in the religious sense - in the hope that Pakistan will satisfy their national urge for self-determination. 100

Granting of national self-determination, it was argued, to the point of secession would allay all fears of domination by majority communities and then the interests of the people of every nationality who would make up the Indian union would be identical; he thought that in such a situation they would 'gain everything by sticking to each other' and would 'lose by breaking away'. That is, it implied the idea that granting of national self-determination to the point of secession would ultimately bring forth an Indian union wherefrom no community would try to secede:

The granting of the right of self-determination recognises the patriotic national consciousness that binds each Muslim nationality to its homeland. It gives to every such nationality the freedom to take its destiny into its own hands and build up its own political and economic life in its homeland, in a free Indian union. In a free India, the Pathan will have his own national state, with the right to secede; the Punjabi Muslim will have his own national state with the right to secede; and so on. 101

Dispelling of distrust by recognising the right of separation, it was argued, would strengthen the unifying bond. "The object is to unite, not to partition off", it was stimulated. The CPI emphasized
self-determination not out of any opportunistic impulse to win over Muslim supports to overcome its political alienation but for achieving Congress-League unity for united resistance to imperialism. This becomes evident from another document:

Our ardent appeal to the Muslim League is: your right of self-determination will remain on paper if you do not intervene in the national crisis. Hindus, Muslims and all will pass from under British domination to Jap slavery if you let the situation drift. The quicker you work for the release of the Congress leaders, the more unequivocal your support to the national demand, the more ardently you work for Congress-League agreement, the easier it will be to get the Congress to accept willingly and enthusiastically the right of self-determination. The Congress is in jail, you are free. You discharge your patriotic responsibility and none will be able to deny you your just right. 102

Adhikari observed that the Baluchi Muslims who formed 90-99 per cent of the population, the Pathan Muslims (nearly 90 per cent of the population), the western Punjabis constituting nearly 60 per cent of population, and the Sindhis were distinct nationalities. 103 According to him, the Bengalis also formed a distinct nationality and hence be given the right of self-determination. As to the Muslim peoples dwelling in the eastern districts of Bengal who constituted 50 per cent of the population having 'a distinct cultural complex of their own' it was suggested that 'they would be better off' if they remained within the Bengali state. According to him, the question of self-determination of the nationalities should be looked upon as
'a political-revolutionary question, not a constitutional question.' 104

Next to the Muslim nationality the CPI dealt with the problem of the Sikhs. Joshi wrote:

The Sikhs are an important nationality in the Punjab with great historical traditions. But the trouble is that they have no contiguous territory. They are an interspersed minority spread all over some districts but having a majority nowhere except in some tehsils here and there. A Sikh homeland therefore can not be carved for them. 105

Adhikari proposed two Constituent Assemblies for Punjab - one for the Sikh-Hindu majority Central Punjab and the other for the Muslim majority western Punjab. He formulated a threefold solution of the problem of Sikh homeland viz.,

i) 'the separation of the Hindustani-speaking zone of Punjab consisting of the Himalyan States and Ambala Division';

ii) 'the creation of the Punjabi-speaking Central Punjab State with Amritsar as its capital';

iii) 'the demarcation of Western Punjab with all the Muslim-majority districts' with Lahore as their capital.
Gandhi was released in May 1944 and in July he proposed talks with the League on the basis of Rajagopalachari's formula. Gopalachari proposed (a) a post-war commission to demarcate boundaries in the Muslim-dominated North West and North East India; (b) plebiscite of all peoples of those areas to ascertain if they would prefer Pakistan, mutual agreement (if separation was ascertained) to run certain essential common services e.g., defence, communication etc., and (c) implementation of the entire scheme after full transfer of power by the British. It was, however, hoped that the League would support the Congress demand for independence and help form Interim Government in the transition period. The CFI had high hopes that something positive would come forth from Gandhi-Jinnah talk. Jinnah, however, stuck to his demand for the separation of six provinces-Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, N.W.F.P., Bengal and Assam—and described the offer as 'a shadow and a husk, a maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan'. Ultimately the talks broke down. Later, the Simla conference (June 25-July 14, 1945) also broke down as Jinnah demanded League's absolute right to choose the Muslim members in the proposed cabinet and as he wanted to secure some sort of communal veto in the Executive. The CFI opposed the League demand on the ground that,

... The Congress may be a Hindu dominated organisation but it is certainly not a Hindu organisation... is certainly a nat-
ional organisation. As the Congress would be wrong if it claimed to be an all-inclusive national organisation, so would the League be wrong if it claimed to be an all-inclusive national organisation in the country... 108

The phenomenon of the growth of communalism in modern India is full of ambiguities and vague notions. Recent research has unearthed many hitherto unknown things about communalism in India. For example, Bipan Chandra has repudiated the idea in vague that the Hindus or Muslims or Christians constituted a nation. He thinks that "not only did Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs or Christians not (emphasis originl - W.H.) form a nation or a nationality, they did not even form a distinct and homogeneous 'community' except for religious purposes. That is, they did not separately form 'a monolithic social structure' or a cohesive unit on a religious basis with common economic, political, social and cultural interests, or bonds or outlook..... While a communalist talked of, or believed in, defending his community's interests, in real life no such interests existed outside the religious field..." 109 For him communalism is a product of false consciousness. Under conditions of underdevelopment communalism was, he argues, one of the forms through which individuals of the middle and lower-middle classes 'could group and struggle to maintain and improve their individual positions.' It was an inevitability in a stagnant economy and in the absence of any strong anti-imperialist and class movements. In fact, in times of strong anti-imperialist
movements the evil of communalism seemed to be nonexistent. Again, he argues that "... the middle class scramble for jobs created communalism, middle class hope and domination of politics made it difficult and even impossible to fight it successfully." He dubs it as 'a petty-bourgeois phenomenon par excellence' and observes that it could not be wiped out till the economy started developing and the petty-bourgeoisie lost its predominance over politics and society. Similarly, Amiya Kumar Bagchi maintains that the League steadfastly stuck to the Pakistan demand because it promised "the hedging off of a part of India from competition by the established Hindu business groups or professional classes so that the small Muslim business class could thrive and the nascent Muslim intelligentsia could find employment." Besides the talukdars and zamindars, points out Sumit Sarkar, the Ispahani and Adamjee business families financed the League press; a Federation of Muslim Chambers of Commerce and Industry was founded in April 1943 and in the post-Second World War years Muslim banks and an airline were planned. According to Kuvaini Jafir, 'Muslim separatism was the product of the class interest of the propertyed class. It was studiously cultivated, to begin with, by the feudal, professional and colonial interests. It was led to success by the Muslim bourgeoisie under the leadership of Jinnah.' For him, the economically and politically weak
and collaborationist Muslim bureaucracy expanded Pakistan because it "promised them domination, without competition, in the "land of property and prosperity." He points out that on the question of the MIN meeting, striking the peasants and the working class, the League and Congress leaders "betrayed identical class bias".

Again, the much wanted Congress-League unity could not easily be achieved as the British covertly or overtly encouraged communalism on the plea of safeguarding the interest of the Muslim minorities. The divide et impera policy was followed with a profit motive. After 1937 the British recognised the League as the sole representative of the Muslims and, as pointed out by S. Chandra, their ready acceptance of the League demands stood in the way of fruitful negotiation on the communal question between the Congress and the League leaders. In the post-1945 period the British viewed the partition of India as a part of a long-term policy of "ordered withdrawal". To have a glimpse of the British plan we quote from an official document:

There is further question whether in the last resort it is not the wiser course to have the Muslims than the Hindus as Britain's friends. Muslim friendship would make it less difficult to prevent India from becoming an easy prey to Communist ideology and Soviet influence. Strategic and ideological as well as Imperial considerations point to the Muslims as the better choice if a choice is forced on Britain by the course of events.
Needless to say that the support of the League demands by the CPI in effect came to the help of the League and the British.

However, the main question is whether the Muslims constituted a nation. First of all it should be noted that the analogy between Russia and India was mechanical. Though a majority of the Congress leaders were Hindu and in many cases Hindu tinge was found in Congress politics nevertheless it could not be said that the Congress represented a dominant Hindu culture and dominated the Muslims. Adhikari's notion that cultural unity of India was a Hindu cultural unity was mistaken. Shri Prakash alleged that the CPI stuck to Stalin's definition of nation and ignored the rich debates between different Marxist currents. He also noted that as this definition emphasized 'the aspect of national culture, it was only a stepping stone for the CPI to qualify nationality by religion.'

It is a truism that Jinnah's main emphasis was on religion but this religious demand of the League appeared to the CPI to be a national demand. And the CPI, in fact, had been fighting throughout the 1940s for a relatively non-existent issue.

Secondly, Adhikari took much pains to prove that capitalism had spread in different regions of India and tried to relate the Muslim aspiration of a separate state to the existence of separate
nationalities in different provinces where capitalism had flourished. In fact, behind the bogey of separate national entity there remained the selfish interest of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements of the Muslims. The Hindu bourgeoisie also were not averse to separation. Thus Birla wrote: "You know my views about Pakistan. I am in favour of separation, and I do not think it is impracticable, or against the interest of the Hindus or of India..." 120 It was, in essence, a religious demand under the garb of nationality. When Adhikari wrote all these things he had in mind the nationality question as prevalent in the USSR where the uneven development of capitalism gave birth to many nationalities. Historically speaking, the Russian and the Indian situations were incomparable.

Thirdly, the CPI dubbed the League as an anti-imperialist organisation and praised its anti-imperialist role. It was, however, a travesty of truth to say that the League was an anti-imperialist organisation. The League did not participate in the civil disobedience movements launched by the Congress. The Britishers nursed the League after 1940 because it did not participate in the Quit India movement. From 1935 onwards the League claimed to be the sole champion of the Muslims and was trying to achieve a Muslim state viz., Pakistan, with the help of the Britishers. Biplan Cha-
ndra has rightly pointed out that it was a false consciousness on the part of the petty-bourgeois communal league leaders to think that their salvation lay in the separation from India as the real enemy was the stunted economy which was the result of imperialist exploitation. To dub the League as 'secular' 'patriotic', 'democratic' and as a product of anti-imperialist movement was, therefore, not correct. In fact, the approach of the CPI towards the communal question during the 1930s was much more realistic than the policy followed by it in the 1940s. Thus Adhikari was right in 1933 when he wrote:

... the so-called communal-conflict is born of capitalist-imperialist exploitation. It has its roots mainly in the competition for jobs and favours in the struggle for distribution of the little political power which is to be obtained through compromise with imperialism. 171 (All emphasis original - B.J.)

Pointing to the imperialist manoeuvring of the primordial communal sentiments he wrote that this problem

... can be finally resolved only when the united struggle of the workers and peasants of both the communities is successful in putting an end to imperialist as well as capitalistic exploitation. 172

It correctly stressed that until and unless the national struggle adopted 'a clear cut economic and democratic demand' no amount of
cultural guarantees, negotiations, or crucial representation will solve the communal problem... So long as this does not take place, the Congress will continue to move in a vicious circle and be at the mercy of the communal leaders..." 123 It is interesting to note that when M.F. Butt denounced the CPI policy on national question in the March 1946 issue of the Labour Monthly, the CPI questioned the validity of Butt's approach. Butt wrote:

Muslim League is not a national movement of certain nationalities occupying certain parts of India. It is a communal organisation organising Muslims as Muslims in all parts of India just as Hindu Sangh organises Hindus as Hindus (emphasis in original - U.G.) ... Pakistan movement is a movement of the Muslim League for the constitution of the Muslim State with the determination as religion and not nationality. 124 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Again,

It is doubtful if it is correct to speak of "Muslim nationalities" any more than it would be to speak of Spain, Italy, France and Austria as "Catholic nationalities", 125

It also appears that Butt also did not agree with the CPI's slogan of seventeen Constituent Assemblies. The CPI criticised Butt's approach as 'wrong'. It appealed to the party members not to be "misled by the article (Butt's article in Labour Monthly - U.G.) into a wholesale negative critical attitude towards the policy and agitational line followed by our Party..." 126 because it wo-
uld degenerate into 'a pro-Congress and anti-League deviation inside the Party.' It reiterated its old stand that the Muslim League was "an expression of the freedom and anti-imperialist aspirations of the masses, even though in a distorted form." 127 (Emphasis added - H.H.) Obviously, the CPI's stand of the 1940s was the repudiation of its earlier line and was strongly pro-Pakistan. For this unrealistic stand it had to pay a heavy price as it became easy for the Congress and the common people to dub the CPI as an anti-national force. Adhikari later acknowledged that the CPI's stand on Pakistan was wrong and a 'Rightist' mistake. 128 The CPI did not, however, abandon its demand of seventeen Constituent Assemblies and 'a voluntary union of sovereign national states' 129 till mid-1947.

V

The popular movements made the British, the Congress and the League panicky though, of course, for different reasons. On the one hand, the movements sounded the death knell of the British imperialism and thus made continuance of the British rule uncertain. The nervousness of the British Government was manifest thus:
... We must remember rent agreements and avoid an unpleasant, which would be a great deal more serious than in 1905; but I confess that I don't quite know how it is going to be done... 131

On the other hand, the Congress and the League became more and more dependent on the British and eventually the partition of India was effected. As most of the movements were mainly local and spontaneous those never assumed an all-India character which alone could have perhaps prevented the partition.

The Britishers began negotiations with the Congress afresh after the war ended with a view to obtaining Congress and League participation in the Central Government. After Gandhi's release on May 5, 1944, no one felt the need to set up 'a provisional political government' at the centre based on a Congress-League coalition prima facie to ensure Indian co-operation in the war effort but in reality to divert the Indian energies into some other channels than agitations. 131 In July 1944 the Gandhi-Jinnah talk on the basis of Raja Gopalachari's formula ended up in smoke as the League clung to the demand of a separate Pakistan. On June 14, 1945 the Congress Working Committee members were released. The Government proposed that a new Executive Council, exclusively manned by Indians, would be set up except the posts of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief. Equal representation to both the 'ca-
The AICC session on September 23, 1945 observed,

... These proposals repeat with unimportant variations, the offer made in March 1942 by Sir Stafford Cripps on behalf of the British Government... It is significant that there is no mention... of the independence of India... The proposals now made are, in the opinion of the A.I.C.C., vague, inadequate and unsatisfactory. 

The CPI was gradually becoming aware of the futility of its position about the Muslims. The gradual shift of its attitude could be evidenced in its reaction to the failure of the Simla Conference. P.C. Joshi felt that the INC was a national organisation and not a caste-Hindu organisation as stated by the League; but at the
same time he also noted that neither the League nor the Congress was an 'all-inclusive national organisation...' He appealed to fight unitedly against the provision of 'Viceroy's veto':

They can reduce the Viceroy's veto to an empty sound by coming to an agreement that over issues of common interest, they will stand together if the Viceroy wants to exercise the veto. 133

He preferred coalition both at the centre and the provinces. Joshi reiterated his old stance that both the Congress and the League leaders showed more faith in the British Government than in each other. He observed that while the Congress demanded complete independence for whole of India it refused to accede to the demand of the League, giving thereby birth to Muslim suspicion of Hindu domination. He noted that the CPI supported "the Muslim demand for self-determination but insists upon just boundaries and notes forward plans for really voluntary and free Indian Union, instead of partitioned and divided India..." 134 Joshi alleged that the Congress was still nursing 'illusions about a unilateral settlement with the British' and similarly accused the League leaders for believing that the British would satisfy the Muslim demand 'quicker' than their Hindu brethren. Taking strong exception to the policy of divide and rule that underlay the Wavell Plan and which refused to disturb the status of the princely states Joshi wrote: "All the disturbances whe-
A Princely India as a strategic base, an economic and military dumping ground for the British, a Muslim India resulting from partition and thus giving the British the moral right to stay and keep the peace, and a Hindu India formed of the rest of India provided the other provinces are agreeable—this is the picture Coupland presents.

Criticising Congress insistence on non-violence in the Calcutta session of the AICC in 1945 Joshi wrote "... it (the resolution emphasising non-violence—U.G.) was an illusion in Lord Wavell that the Congress leadership was not going to try to solve the problem of Indian freedom by methods which the British rulers did not like.

Joshi alleged that the Congress was thinking in terms of winning majority in as many provinces as possible and was waging a virtual 'war' against the left wing. He was also of the opinion that 'the reactionaries' and the communal parties like the Hindu Mahasabha were exploiting 'the Congress name'. This very tendency, according to the CPI, was nothing but 'a return to discarded liberalism' and 'the way of surrender to the British imperialist plan'.

Joshi found slavish mentality in the League dependence on the British as,
according to him, the league thought of 'achieving sovereignty of Muslim-majority homelands by effecting the division of India'. This very attitude, Joshi thought, 'inevitably led to the doom of the British rulers themselves, asking them to effect the division of India - which in fact can not realise sovereignty of Muslim-majority homelands but only make more secure British domination.' 139 Joshi proposed a united front against the British "not only to overthow British domination but also to realise the aim of seeing free India emerge as a family of free nations." 140 It was argued that the Congress demanded transfer of power from the British but at the same time refused 'to extend it and share that power with other Indian peoples'. According to Joshi, the 'very strength of the Congress becomes the basis of sectarianism in its leaders... becomes the basis of blindness to the just aims of others who differ from it'. 141 He also criticized the League for its attempt to achieve a unilateral settlement. The CPI rejected the League demand of six provinces because the demand appeared to the CPI to be 'unjust' and promised extension of its support if the League gave up the demand of partition and agreed to 'fight shoulder to shoulder for common freedom in alliance with freedom loving brothers'. 142 But this time the solution of the Congress-League rift was sought in the transfer of power to a 'real All-India Constituent Assembly' and 'The delegates
of the All-India Constituent Assemblies based on the national homelands of various Indian peoples, viz., Baluchistan, Kathmandu, Sind, Western Punjab, Central Jammu, Hindustan, Orissa, Gujarat, Maharashatra, Karnataka, Andhra, Kerala, Tamilnad, Orissa, Bengal, Assam and Bihar..." 143 It was stipulated that those 17 National Constituent Assemblies 'shall be elected by universal adult franchise.' Moreover, it was stated that "full and real sovereignty shall reside in the National Constituent Assemblies which will enjoy unfettered right to negotiate, formulate and finally to define their mutual relations within an Independent India on the basis of complete equality." 144 (Emphasis original - H.H.) Clearly, beneath this scheme remained the vision of a free India comprising 17 nationalities and a vague idea of some sort of confederation. It became more evident in the Election Manifesto of the CPI which noted that the delegates of the All India Constituent Assembly 'shall have no more authority than that of plenipotentiaries.' 145 The 'right of the full self-determination' was also extended to the peoples of Indian States. It guaranteed the Sikhs 'their right of self-determination'. 146 'Bengal as the common homeland of the Bengali Muslims and Hindus should be free to exercise its right of self-determination through a sovereign Constituent Assembly', it was stipulated. 147 The entire plan is summarized in the following paragraphs:
The League is free to plead for and to get a separate sovereign federation of the Hindu-majority areas living in friendly alliance with a sovereign federation of Hindu-majority areas, but not insisting on a common Indian Union.

The Congress is free to plead for and to get a federal Indian Union based on autonomy but not sovereign units. (Emphasis added - [H.J.])

It pleaded for "a voluntary union of sovereign national States,... the more advanced helping the less advanced through a common Federal Centre." [H.J]

In its election Manifesto, [H.J] the CPI put forward a detailed outline of industrialisation and agricultural rejuvenation. It was stated that the Tatas and the Birlas were collaborating with their British counterparts and penetrating the IIC and the League 'to ensure that their interests would be safe' when popular ministries came to power. It proposed radical means like nationalisation of key industries, control of all major industries, even development of industrial resources, eight-hour working day, right to strike and right to form trade union for the workers. In the villages it pledged to end the domination of the feudal parasites, black-marketeers and the usurers; it proposed to pass acts to abolish landlordism and nationalisation of land 'so as not to leave any individual holding of above 100 acres.' [H.J] It also proposed distribution
ntre and majority of Muslim seats in the provinces. The CPI emerged as the principal contender of the League and the INC capturing three provincial seats.

On February 19, 1946, Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State, announced that a Cabinet Mission would be visiting India. From March to June 1946, the members of the British Cabinet Mission together with Wavell carried on prolonged negotiation with the Congress and the League leaders on the formation of an interim government and principles and procedures for framing a new constitution of India. On May 16, the Cabinet Mission presented a two-fold plan (alongwith a scheme for an elected Constituent Assembly) viz., a weak Pakistan and a three-tier confederation in which the League might have the chance of dominating the North-West Provinces within a united India. The Mission proposed a weak centre having control over foreign affairs, defence and communications and regrouping of the provinces in three sections viz., A, B and C. According to this scheme, Section A would include the Hindu-majority provinces, and B and C Muslim majority provinces of the North-West and North-East. It was stipulated that the Sections could set up intermediate-level executive and legislatures. The League and the Congress accepted this plan. But afterwards the agreement broke down as Jinnah saw in the grouping a future Pakistan (by consolidating groups
Band C and seceding from the Indian union) in embryo while Nehru felt that there would probably be no such grouping in future. Moom's Viceroy's Journal reveals that Wavell had a strong bias for Jinnah while his rulers in London favoured the Congress. Thus while Wavell's initial effort to set up an Interim Coalition Government at the centre broke down and he had to set up a caretaker government of officials on July 4, 1946 the decision-makers in London advised Wavell not to break with Congress. However, it should be mentioned here that though the INC raised certain objections regarding some of the Provisions of the Cabinet Mission plan its attitude towards the plan was more or less favourable. Gandhi observed that it was "the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances... The Congress and the Muslim League did not, could not agree. We would grievously err if at this time we foolishly satisfy ourselves that the differences are a British creation. The Mission ... have come to devise the easiest and quickest method of ending British rule..." He saw in the plan 'the first step' in the act of renunciation. Anyway, on September 2, 1946 a Congress dominated Interim Government was formed.

The CPI objected to the presence of British troops and demanded their total withdrawal within six months "irrespective of the fact whether India's political parties have settled their differences."
The question of Indian unity is an internal question to be settled by the people themselves. It can not be made an excuse for the refusal of Britain to transfer power." 155 It was stated that "the best course would be an agreement between the Congress and the League for parity in the Government and for adequate representation to minorities." 156 To enable the Provisional government to negotiate freely it demanded abolition of all special powers vested in the British Government, the Viceroy and the Governors. The main task of the provisional government would be, it was maintained, to convene a Constituent Assembly within six months, to remain responsible to the Constituent Assembly and not to sign any economic and military treaty with any power. 157 Adhikari dubbed the proposed scheme of the Constituent Assembly as 'undemocratic' "because it is not elected on the basis of adult suffrage, and because the representatives of the Indian States to it are going to be elected not by the people but nominated by the princes. It is not sovereign because it is meeting under the shadow of British Bayonets, and because the Constitution it frames comes into force only when ratified by the British Government..." 158 Jomnath Lahiri wanted the provisional government to convene a sovereign and democratic Constituent Assembly "based on adult suffrage, proportional representation and the self-determination of the national units." 159 Lahiri
demanded 'withdrawal of all British troops' from India as its presence, he thought, was 'incompatible with Indian sovereignty' and 'inconsistent with India's policy of peace and freedom for all nations.' 160 To solve the Hindu-Muslim problem Lahiri proposed setting up of a Boundary Commission which would redemarcate the existing provinces and states in such a way that "each such redemarcated unit, together with the contiguous States or parts of States, form the unified homeland of a linguistically and culturally homogeneous people, and India is regrouped in national units such as Kerala, Karnataka, Andhradesha......." etc. 161 It was, however, categorically stated that the people of each such unit "will have the unfettered right of self-determination, i.e., the right to decide by the plebiscite of the entire adult population, whether they will join the Indian union or form a separate state..." 162 And each constituent national republic would be 'free', 'equal' and would have the 'right to secede'. 163 Lahiri observed that popular interim government be formed in 584 odd princely states and each of the governments should form a Constituent Assembly based on the principle of universal adult suffrage and proportional representation to decide its future status. And the Constituent Assemblies should elect delegates to the All-India Constituent Assembly and the people of every state "shall decide by a plebiscite, whether
the State as a whole or its corresponding part, as the case may be, merge with adjoining province inhabited by the people of the same nationality." 164 Joshi was afraid that the princely states would become 'satellite states' and 'the weakest link in the chain of the British imperialist plan.' 165 The People's are alleged that the Congress leaders were persuading the States to join the All-India Constituent Assembly as a counter move 'against the League claim for two federations'. It observed: "It is a great pity that blind hatred of a brother party... should drive our leaders to put faith in the Princes, who owe their existence to the service they rendered to the British in enslaving our people and whose hands are smears with the blood of the States' Peoples movement." 166

VI

Though during 1945-1947 the people of India, especially the peasants, workers and even the men on horseback, were in a militant mood the CPI could not utilise them for a revolutionary cause. Their support to these movements - though heroic and radical compared to Congress and League positions - remained in the main, confined to the limits of economism. The peasant struggles, including the Telengana movement, were led against feudal exploiters with a view
to achieve some temporary economic gains for the peasants. In the trade union sector strikes were organised and supported with the immediate aims of achieving some economic concessions. Of course, strikes supporting the cause of the RIN ratings and the INA men were organised which were definitely political in nature but the CPI during this period could not develop any long-term strategy of organising and uniting these partial struggles for a mass revolution. It is also a truism that class analysis of the League and the Congress leadership was either superficial or cursorily made. The main thrust of the CC resolutions until August 1946 was aimed at building up united front from above. Perhaps this was a hangover of the compromising line that was adopted in the early forties. A CC resolution of September 1945 thus stipulated: "The international situation, the victory of the forces of world democracy, opens the prospect of immediate peaceful realisation of Indian freedom through alliance with British labour and with the support of the United Nations (i.e., the Allies - U.G.)." It could not be appreciated by the CPI that independence could not be achieved through this kind of 'alliance'. At best one could have a sympathetic public opinion in those states which supported the ideal of national self-determination. It needs to be mentioned that the CPI was talking about a 'peaceful realisation of Indian freedom' at a time when the
British police, passively supported by the Congress and League leaders, was suppressing the peasants and workers movements. The prime emphasis on unity between the Congress and League leaders and lesser emphasis on the class character of such a unity blurred the CPI's political perspective. To quote the CC resolution of September 1945:

The true role of the party is the party of unity which fights for justice and freedom all round irrespective of the attitude of other parties and interests towards itself, which has an undying faith in the sound national and democratic sentiments of the entire people and which is bent upon rousing their best and fighting the worst from whatever quarter it comes. 168

Thus the CPI adopted an ambivalent stance in fighting the League and the Congress. The Resolution also denounced any left opposition to the above line of the party, since "the sectarian left reaction which will wrongly understand the emphasis on the independent role of the party as the call to fight the other two parties, indulge in sectarian self-glorification of the party..." 169 Thus the CC resolution in December 1945 did not mention the INA demonstrations and other popular upsurges. On the contrary, it cautioned against the attempt to describe these movements as having revolutionary potentialities. It stimulated, decrying these trends in the party which opted for a different interpretation of reality,
The first minority trend is purely sectarian which bases itself entirely on the elemental upsurge that is already visible in the new post-war period, glorifies it and suggests tactics of the period that we applied in building up the initial working class movement in 1929-34. It glorifies working class action only to cover up the isolation of the working class to which such a policy inevitably leads. It seeks the glory of debating with the national bourgeois leaders from a distance and hopes that the patriotic masses will come over to our side. It also leads to the adoption of a narrow strategy of class versus class and left versus right instead of the right strategy of national unity versus national disruption." 170 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

The absence of the class perspective is amply clear from above.

The emphasis on national unity against British imperialism overshadowed the idea of leading the struggles of the peasants against feudal exploiters and the imperialists. Ramadive has a point to make when he writes that "the fear of mass struggle which developed in the period of war is continued in the September and December resolutions and in this resolution it again comes out in the shape of a warning against vanguardist mistakes when strike struggles were breaking over our heads and we were lagging behind them." 171

The Anglo-American scholars 172 sought the reasons of such a non-class approach to the post-war developments in the absence of clear guidelines from Soviet and British communist parties. That such allegations are unfounded can be traced to the fact that some CC members themselves raised questions against the validity of this
approach. A statement taken from the minutes of the December 1945 meeting of the CC 173 will prove it. We quote:

... Hangover of old period still. Got to sharply bring out main change - imperialism is the main enemy. For example, we have not studied economic situation when imperialist economy is facing a final collapse. Economic crisis - world and Indian - looming large. Out of this arises new revolutionary struggle, strategy against British imperialism. What is the setup? Imperialists seeking a new way out - with new social allies - old landlords and princes are not enough. They seek to meet strengthened national bourgeoisie - and "balance of imperialist leaning" towards the Congress and away from the League. See change from Linlithgow to Wavell. This is in line with need for exports in Britain. They are seeking a new alliance with the Congress, not only against the League but also the growing mass movement. Which is the direction of the mass struggles? Not just local struggles - but heading for national general strike...... In this period, cut out idea of any possibility at all of peaceful freedom... (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Again,

In this period the specific policy of the bourgeois leaders of the Congress will be to smash independent class organisations of the workers and peasants. They themselves start rival organisations and in coming period, they will use their official positions to buttress these and smash genuine trade unions and kisan sabhas...

Though this minority view was defeated it contained a fairly correct reading of the strategies of British imperialism and of the Congress leaders. This is particularly confirmed by Wavell's letter to Pethick-Lawrence (July 13, 1946) which shows that the British
Government was very eager to come to an agreement with the Congress. In the penultimate phase it wished to desert the Muslim League as its future seemed to be less prospective. Thus Wavell briefed Pethick-Lawrence how Britain would suffer in transfer of power and how a hostile India would blockade Persian Gulf region through which oil was exported to Britain. So he suggested that, first, power should be transferred in an 'orderly manner' to a friendly and united India and, second, a satisfactory defensive alliance should be secured. Wavell wrote to Pethick-Lawrence:

These two provisions (as mentioned above - U.G.) are the crux of the whole matter. If India lapses into chaos, Britain will lose trade, strategic advantages, and prestige... The worst possible outcome from Britain's point of view will be if India, either through lack of responsible government or by communist revolution or by deliberate choice, falls under the control of Russia. Britain will then have sacrificed her own position...

... It is clear that a defensive alliance ... can not be forced on a free India, but is likely to be sought by India itself, if we manage well. It should secure our naval position in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf, the maintenance of the link in air communications and so far as possible the use of Indian manpower. Without such an alliance Britain stands to lose very heavily by abandoning India. 174 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Wavell pointed out that if the future Indian Government became weak
... the loss to Britain in strategic position, manpower, resources, communications and trade will be very serious even if Russia does not intervene. Indeed any advantages to Britain that can be anticipated as a result of handing over political power are all conditional on there being a stable successor government that can rule the country. 175 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

He then summed up:

To sum up it is vital to Britain that when she gives over political power in India she may be able to hand over to a stable and friendly Government and contract with it a genuine defensive alliance... If this objective is achieved the demission of political power may bring advantage and not loss. In all other circumstances the debit balance will be heavy. 176 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

These long excerpts show that the fears betrayed in the Election Manifesto of the CPI and in the CC minutes were real, not imaginary.

The CC resolutions of April 1946 was but the continuation of the anti-struggle line of the early forties. In April 1946 the CC of the CPI dubbed the Congress and League ministries as 'popular' and opposed calling them 'fascist' or 'semi-fascist'. It observed:

"... The proper party characterisation of the Congress and League ministries is that they are popular ministries... because the organisations they represent are the biggest popular organisations of our country, embodying in howsoever a distorted and wrong way, the
freedom urge of the vast majority of our people. In addition the Congress is committed to a broad democratic programme of national reconstruction, however reformist it may be." 177

Thus it appears that despite Congress attempts to break the trade union unity, its collaboration with the British Government to suppress the RIN ratings and its strong anti-peasant attitude the April CC dubbed the ministries as 'popular' and a symbol of 'the freedom urge of the vast majority' of the Indian people. It even suggested:

All mass leaders should see and awaken the militants to the realisation that the mass work in the new period both on the trade union and kisan fronts is possible only with the determined political approach of regarding both the Congress and the League ministries as popular ministries. 178

The Resolution gave a call to isolate the vested interests both inside the Congress and the League and stimulated "Our tactical line is based on the approach that the political differences between us, the Congress and the League should not come in the way of cooperation between all - in peoples interests...." 179 (Emphasis added - U.G.) Moreover, it was also maintained that "the party will particularly guard against the grave danger of drifting into the attitude of only exposing the shortcomings or anti-popular acts of the ministries, which can only lead to the growing isolation of
intervene' with correct political slogans, programme and strategy so "as to transform it continuously in the direction of developing, extending and unifying these expressions of mass discontent, counteracting the retarding influence of the bourgeois leadership, and thus setting the stage for final struggle for power." It was observed that the new British policy was to consolidate its position in India by aligning with the bourgeois leadership of both the Congress, League and the princes and by launching 'a crushing offensive against the rising revolutionary forces.' As to the Interim Government it was said: "... As conceived by imperialism, it is to be based on Congress-League conflict so that it remains permanently weak vis-a-vis imperialism - while it can be used as a convenient screen and weapon to disrupt the growing national revolutionary forces." The bourgeois leadership of the Congress was seeking compromise with imperialism, the resolution stipulated, by using 'potential threat of struggle':

The national bourgeois leadership of the Congress relying upon the tremendously increased mass backing and prestige... is using the potential threat of struggle against the background of new revolutionary upsurge to secure a compromise favourable to itself out of the imperialist plan.

It opposed the demand of separate Muslim State in the North-West and the North-East areas because the League demanded it 'without the democratic vote of the people of those areas and denying self-
determination to the nationalities contained therein." It was viewed that the League saw in the Cabinet Mission proposal of compulsory grouping a stepping stone to Pakistan while the Congress saw in it the possibility of a strong union. Thus, according to the Resolution, both the Congress and League leadership 'instead of turning the people for a democratic decision on the question of Pakistan and the unity of India' were in fact turning to imperialism 'for a separate compromise against each other' giving imperialism an upperhand to consolidate its position. It was mentioned that bourgeois leadership of the Congress and the League representing the vested interests were seeking compromise with imperialism and trying to put a brake upon the mass movements. It rejected the Cabinet Mission plan in the following manner:

The Communist Party totally rejects the Imperialist Plan. It brands it as an imperialist manoeuvre to smash the growing upsurge, to split the freedom movement and to perpetuate imperialist feudal rule in a new form.

It exposes the proposed Constituent Assembly as a fake and not a sovereign body, an imperialist trap beset with imperialist awards... 186

The Resolution betrayed fear that the Interim Government would be used to hit the growing revolutionary upsurges. It was proposed that by rallying the people the CPI would 'endeavour its utmost to
prevent it from going further down the road of compromise and sur-
render..." 187 It demanded all power to the people and a Constitu-
tent Assembly based on adult suffrage with proportional representa-
tion. The Constituent Assembly would be, it was also proposed, the
association of willing nationalities to form a union. As to the
people of the princely states it demanded complete self-determina-
tion through a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage to de-
cide the question of their future status.

As to the League demand of six provinces without plebiscite it was
said that this reflected "the policy of the Muslim bourgeois feudal
vested interests who are seeking a compromise with imperialism for
a share of administration in a divided India." 188 Emphasising
self-determination of nationalities, it was stated that

Self-determination of nationalities means the bringing togeth-
er of the common people of the same nationality, Hindu
and Muslims, to fight against imperialist feudal regime,
against Princely autonomy and landlordism. 189

By self-determination the CPI meant 'the unity of nationalities in
India to form a voluntary union to build common economic life...'. 190

The Congress rejection of self-determination of the nationalities,
according to this Resolution, reflected 'the urge of the Indian
big business to compromise with imperialism in order to inherit
from the monopolist grip over the economic and political life of entire India thus denying to the peoples of different nationalities the right to shape freely their own life..." 181 It was argued that acceptance by the Congress of the right of self-determination of nationalities 'to the point of secession' would convince the Muslims that the Union could be voluntary which in turn would create "a basis for a Congress-League joint front for common assault on imperialism." 192

Significantly, it was for the first time since 1941 that the CC Resolution categorically declared that the revolutionary upsurge 'can be developed into the all-in final struggle for power' and the compromising politics of the Congress and the League could be effectively countered. Though it criticised the politics of the CSP and the AIIB the August CC Resolution gave a call for joint left action:

In the conditions of today when both sets of leaderships are pursuing a path of compromise, it is essential that all left elements who are opposed to the imperialist Plan must come together to raise the banner to the danger ahead. 193 (Emphasis added - P.P.)

A definite call was thus given to all left parties and left 'elements' opposed to compromise to help form a 'joint freedom front, for the defeat of the British plan for the final struggle for pow-
er." It was admitted for the first time since 1941 that the party had been 'lagging behind' the spontaneous movements of the workers and peasants and had 'hesitated to give a bold and courageous lead to develop the spontaneous strike wave.' It was suggested that the CFI would make the most of these spontaneous movements of the peasants and the workers to lead the final struggle against imperialism. Despite the pro-struggle and anti-compromise stance the August CC Resolution had, however, some weaknesses also. According to Ranadive, the 'main weakness' of the same was that "it really did not analyse the role of the Indian bourgeoisie..." we also come to know that Joshi 'first opposed the August Resolution' and though later accepted it he "continued a persistent fight against it and did his best to sabotage its operation..."

In the December 1946 meeting of the CC the draft placed by Joshi, maintains Ranadive, attacked the August Resolution on the ground that the latter underestimated the popular character of the Interim Government and overstressed the class character of the Congress ministries and underestimated the role of the Indian bourgeoisie. Though Joshi's draft was ultimately defeated he got some 'concessions' and using these concessions, Ranadive maintains, he attacked the August Resolution. Thus there prevailed some sort of
ideological struggle between the left and the reformist sects of the CC till June 1947 when the left again became minority and the Mountbatten Resolution was adopted by the CC. And it was only in the Second Congress of the CPI when again the left elements secured majority and a highly left-sectarian policy was adopted. Ranadive also writes that in letters to the CC members Joshi denounced the August Resolution "as trotskyite, meaning thereby that its attack against the bourgeois leaders, its insistence on the upsurge and its revolutionary call for struggle against imperialism were all wrong..." 198

But though Joshi's draft in the December 1946 CC tried to repudiate the August 1946 Resolution it can not be denied that the latter was, much closer to reality. That the British Government was quite panicky and wanted to transfer power to a friendly and stable Congress Government so that their economic interests could be best secured is evident from the Viceroy's Journal. Wavell wrote to the Crown on July 8, 1946" ... We are bound to fulfil our pledges to give India her freedom as soon as possible and we have neither the power nor, I think, the will to remain in control of India for more than an extremely limited period .... we must secure the co-operation of the Congress which represents the great majority of Indian opinion, whatever our views on the past record of
that party." He also felt that the services of the tired army and police were not dependable. But still he hoped that if the British played their card well the new Government would, "likely to continue to lean on British help, and may maintain some connection with the Commonwealth; ....." Given these hard facts we can not repudiate the observation of the August 1946 CC Resolution that both the British and Indian bourgeoisie would be benefited from the proposed transfer of power.

Anyway, when both the Congress and the League rejected the Cabinet Mission plan Wavell set up a caretaker government of officials in July 1946 and within a few weeks began insisting on the need for Congress entry into the Interim Government, even if the League did not participate in it. It was a major departure from his stand in the Simla conference where his pro-League bias was strongly evident. This departure reflected the new policy adopted by the Attlee government towards the National Congress and also the fear of mass struggles which were rising almost everywhere during the month of July 1946. The League joined the Interim Government in October.

Meanwhile the country fell prey to the largest communal holocaust India had ever witnessed. To quell the Quit India movement the British machine-gunned from the air but the Government did nothing of the sort during the days of communal frenzy. On February 20, 1947
Atlee in his speech in the House of Commons fixed June 1948 as a deadline for transfer of power.

In March 1947 Mountbatten succeeded Wavell. After a series of discussions with prominent leaders of the major Indian political parties Mountbatten formulated the partition plan. This plan was accepted by the Congress, League and Sikh leaders on June 2, 1947 which became the cornerstone of the Indian Independence Act. This was ratified by the British parliament on July 18 and implemented on August 15, 1947.

The CPI criticised the Congress acceptance of the Atlee statement.201 Opposing Mountbatten's plan of partitioning India Joshi wrote that by dividing India the Britiishers were trying to effect a division between the Hindus and the Muslims and planning to achieve favourable military and economic alliances with both the countries. He suggested settlement of the Pakistan issue through plebiscite and self-determination by regrouping the provinces on a cultural and linguistic basis.202 For Joshi the Mountbatten plan was "not a real quit India plan, but one that seeks to keep as many economic and military controls in its own hands as possible and prevents the immediate progressive development of full Indian independence."203 A similar stance was also evident in the June 1947 CC Resolution. It was stipulated:
The Mountbatten Award does not give India real independence but is a culmination of a double-faced imperial policy which, while making concessions to the national demand to transfer power, sets in motion disruptive and reactionary forces to disrupt the popular upsurge, obstruct the realisation of real independence, throttle the growth of democracy and destroy the unity and integrity of India. 204 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

It was stated that the popular upsurges forced the British Government to enter into negotiations with the Indian leadership. According to the Resolution, the British aim was to influence the 'reactionary' leadership of the League "to allow British capital to have almost undisputed sway over the undeveloped Muslim majority areas, to utilise the North-West as a strategic base..." 205 Similarly, it was also felt that by entering into 'partnership with Indian Big Business' the British big business aimed to continue its domination over the Indian economy. It was maintained that the British big business expected to achieve this "through reliance on the great influence of Indian Big Business over the extreme Right-wing of the Congress leadership." 206 It was observed that by its agreement with Indian capital it expected to 'preserve intact its capital and retain and extend its control over vital industries in India.' 207 As to the princely states it was stated that by giving them the option to stay away from the Indian union the British gave them a weapon 'to drive a hard bargain' with the Congress leaders.
and 'act as a brake on the democratic movement of the entire people'.

But the June 1947 CC Resolution lacked the spirit of the August 1946 CC Resolution. Instead of putting emphasis on unity of the people both against the imperialists and the bourgeoisie the CPI this time declared:

The Communist Party reciprocates whole-heartedly the recent appeals of the national leaders for mutual co-operation in the great task of nation-building. (Emphasis original - U.G.)

The CPI thought that the 'new situation' demanded "the broadest Joint-Front based on the principle of fullest co-operation between the popular Governments and all popular organisations for the noble task of national liberation and reconstruction and final unification..." (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Earlier, the CPI never propagated the policy of 'fullest co-operation between the popular Governments and all popular organisations'. Nor did it stipulate earlier the following course of action:

The Communist Party appeals to all Left organisations and elements to forget the partisanship and differences of the past and come together to fight the dangers and realise the possibilities of the present. (Emphasis original - U.G.)
And nowhere before the June 1947 CC is found any such paragraph:

In the coming critical transitional phase it will be the task of the Indian working class and peasant movements to see that the fight for real independence, full democracy and Indian unity goes forward to final victory and they play their full part in forging the unity of the National Front shoulder to shoulder with all progressive and Left elements in our country. 212 (emphasis original - U.G.)

It also put forward a scheme of 'nation-building' which included formulation of a five-year plan on the basis of abolition of landlordism and nationalisation of key industries etc. As to the partition it was maintained that partition would not solve problems but would give birth to "conflicts on boundaries, border hostilities, oppression of minorities in each state ... [and] thus create avenues for imperialist penetration." 213 We come to know that the new line of the June 1947 CC Resolution was opposed by some CC members. Ranadive, one of the main opponents, thus observes,

... Every amendment which sought to put down that the Mountbatten award (sic) was a concession to the national bourgeoisie and that national bourgeois leadership was striking a deal against the interests of the people was negatived or watered down and it was asserted that the Mountbatten award (sic) was a concession to the national movement and the Indian people... 214

We also come to know that two opposed interpretations of the Mountbatten plan prevailed among the CC members. Those who supported
the August 1946 Resolution thought it to be the continuation of the same and others who "stood for the Mountbatten resolution led by Joshi considered it to be a total repudiation of August resolution..." 215 However, the pro-Congress, conciliatory and anti-struggle approach as manifest in the June CC Resolution was also found in Joshi's political-organisational letter of January-February 1947.

"The main weakness of imperialism lies", this letter said, "in the fact that the bourgeois leadership which it is using against us is also the popular leadership... answerable to the people." 216

It was proposed that by 'driving a wedge between the imperialist bureaucracy and the bourgeois leadership by rousing the common people' the strength of imperialism could be destroyed. Not only that. The letter's compromising line is evident thus:

The imperialist tactic is to hide itself behind the popular ministries and isolate us by exploiting anti-Communism and thus crush us. Our counter tactic is just to isolate the bureaucracy...

... In such a situation, if our propaganda makes it primarily the issue of Rightwing (sic) offensive against our Party, we play the imperialist game, only isolate ourselves more, and will succeed neither in isolating imperialism nor putting the Right-wing on the defensive nor in winning popular support. This is the one big correction we have to make in our understanding. Our explanation has to be NOT that the Right is hitting at us because it is compromising, but imperialism is hitting at us because it wants to disrupt and divide freedom forces piecemeal... In short... we must exp-
ose the main role played by imperialist bureaucracy and the auxiliary role of the subservience played by the right-wing and reunite the people for intervention, not with the demand (directly or indirectly) "Down with the Ministry" but with the demand that "Ministry must stop this (emphasis added - U.G.) ... our slogan is: ... Break with the bureaucracy, Break with the vested interests ... 217 (Emphasis original - U.G.)

In a way there is a point in Ranade\textquotesingle s observation that such a line arose 'because of the reformist illusions about the national bourgeois leaders... It arose from a failure to understand the bourgeois leaders themselves, driven by their fear of revolution and narrow class interests, were vitally interested in suppressing the people..." 218 It appears that the June CC Resolution did not take due cognizance of Zhukov's report to the Academy of Social Sciences, USSR, on May 11, 1947 wherein Zhukov unambiguously wrote that "The Britishers as well as the higher Indian circles who collaborate with them are afraid of the mass democratic movement in the country..." 219 (Emphasis added - U.G.) According to Zhukov the British agreed to transfer power because it had been facing anti-British mass upsurge in the entire colonial East, because the stronger American imperialism made plans 'to drive away Britain from the colonies' and also because the fear of working class movement in India pushed the Indian bourgeoisie to the Right making it easier for Britain 'to strike a favourable bargain with Indian upper circles on the basis of obviously, mutual concessions and comprom-
British imperialism

...must look for new forms of mutual relationship with the colonies - forms which would make provision for the nominal, fictitious "independence" of the colonial countries, while essentially maintaining the British domination. Quit the colonies, but in such a way that actually you can remain there - that indeed is the task which the British imperialists have set themselves. And, of course, only in this way we can explain the whole range of reforms which the Britishers are introducing in India. 221

Zhukov had noted that the Indian 'big bourgeoisie' had profited in the war and had become more "self-confident and at the same time more accommodating in relation to Britain." The Indian capitalists stood for full Indian independence because, observed Zhukov, they strove to maintain and consolidate their economic positions. For this they needed 'complete liberation of India' and complete separation from shackles of feudalism. To achieve the latter goal they must have needed popular support. But "... The close ties of the Indian big bourgeoisie with the feudal elements bar this road..... The Indian big bourgeoisie is afraid, not less but perhaps more, of the masses than of the Britishers. It is not, therefore, in a position to pursue a consistent progressive policy..." 222 According to Zhukov, the Indian big bourgeoisie was comorador in nature because though they wanted 'formal independence' they also 'recognised
in principle the necessity of maintaining economic and military ties with Britain.

This is so because 'the Indian capital, although it has become considerably stronger during the period of the war, yet does not feel itself in a position to go out independently into the world without British support. The Indian capital is prepared for "independence" only to that extent which will enable it to attain the position of an equal partner of the British capital. It is precisely for this role that it is at present aspiring to enter into partnership with the Britishers."

For Zhukov both the Congress and the League represented the propertyed classes. The difference between the two "consists only in the fact that in the Congress the big capital stands directly at the helm, while in the League the big landlords and capitalists of a little less calibre than that of the leadership of the Congress..."

(Emphasis added - U.G.) He, however, mentioned that both the parties included 'a progressive Left wing'. According to him, Nehru's position corresponded with the "general position of the Indian big bourgeoisie of maintaining connections with Britain."

(Emphasis added - U.G.) A close comparison of the June 1947 CC Resolution and Zhukov's article would reveal that though the Resolution put some emphasis on the collaboration between the British and Indian big business it refused to see Nehru as a representative of
the big bourgeoisie. Moreover, for the CPI the Mountbatten award was a 'concession' to the Indian people achieved by the Congress through pressure tactic, not a compromise. But Zhukov's reading was somewhat different. For him it was true that the Indian bourgeoisie needed complete liberation but at the same time it felt the necessity 'to enter into partnership with Britishers' (since they feared the masses and had close feudal ties). But the June 1947 CC Resolution regarded the Mountbatten award as a 'concession' and hoped to move towards final liberation by taking an active part in the task of nation-building. That is, it proposed to fulfil workers and people's demands by persuading the new 'popular' ministries. In Zhukov's article there was no suggestion of co-operation with the Nehru Government, a theme which constituted a vital element of the June CC Resolution. However, the June CC line was totally repudiated later in the Second Congress of the CPI in 1948.

The fault of the June CC Resolution lay in the fact that like Zhukov it described only big bourgeoisie as compromising and was silent about the bourgeoisie in general. Theoretically speaking, the political independence which was achieved on August 15, 1947 was not sham. Compared to colonial slavery it was certainly an advance. And the June CC Resolution was not incorrect to recognise it as a retreat of imperialism. We have seen in Chapter I that Le-
nin advised the CPs of the colonies to fight for democracy and independence in association with the colonial bourgeoisie. But at the same time he advised them to organise the peasants and workers independently so that the CPs did not trail behind bourgeois nationalist parties. He cautioned against the vacillating and reformist role of the colonial bourgeoisie. Barring the August 1946 CC Resolution all CC Resolutions since 1945 till June 1947 underestimated the importance of carrying on intense class struggle against the vacillating Indian bourgeoisie. Thus we see that despite severe Congress repression and suppression of the peasants and workers the CPI trailed behind the Congress and failed to lead numerous working class and peasant movements against the compromising Congress leadership as well as against British imperialism. Its support to the RIN mutiny and the INA men, though heroic, suffered from spontaneity and had little impact among the broader Indian public. We have seen that there was a minority sect inside the CC which unsuccessfully tried to persuade the leadership to abandon this line. Of course, there is some truth in Adhikari's observation that due to the isolation of the CPI from the mainstream of the national movement because of the 1942 developments, its slogan of final assault (as made in the August 1946 CC Resolution - U.G.) could not rally together even the militant 'anti-imperialist elements in the national movement...' 227 But it cannot, however, be de-
nized that the CPI also fell prey to reformist deviations at the CC
Resolutions during the period 1945-1947 explain. The June CC Reso-
olution was not wrong in proposing the principle of joint front with
the bourgeoisie (now represented by the Nehru government - U.G.) in
the task of nation-building, but it was certainly wrong in not as-
king the peasants, workers and the progressive elements to organi-
se against the anti-people and repressive measures of the Congress.
The CPI thus lost the much needed proletarian class perspective.
Adhikari later acknowledged: "... It was necessary to fight this
tendency (anti-peasant and anti-working class tendency of the Con-
gress - U.G.) and develop these struggles within the framework of
the united front in which the national bourgeoisie had yet a place.
The resolution was defective here. It missed the task." 228 Adhik-
ari was also quite right to note that

... What was needed was a correct understanding of the ro-
le of the Indian national bourgeoisie and its leadership
in the new stage of national-democratic revolution, corre-
cnt formulation of the tactic of unity and struggle vis-a-
vis the bourgeoisie in that stage and correct direction in
which the mass struggles were to be developed. 229

This in a way explains the major shortcomings of the CPI's
policy in the period of transfer of power.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Accounts of the peasant struggles during 1945-47 given in this chapter are based mainly on memoirs and autobiographical sketches of leaders of the movement. Recently some important writings on the peasant movements have been compiled by A.R. Desai. See A.R. Desai (ed.), Peasant struggles in India (Delhi, 1981). Some of the references about peasant struggles are taken from this book.


3. This account is based on Krishna Kanta Sarkar's 'Kakadwip Tebhaga Movement' in ibid., pp.469-85.


8. ibid., p.191.

9. ibid., p.194.


14. See Government of India, Communist Violence in Hyderabad, Hyderabad, 1949, pp.1-71. Also Government of India Information Department File No. 25/8 which includes Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Officer, No. 9372 wherein it has been stated that 'The immediate intention of India's forces in Hyderabad was (a) to round up the Communists in the South-eastern districts; (b) to go round taluk by taluk, tracing out the Razakars and disarming the population so that the Nizam could be retained as the head of the state.' This information is taken from Uhanagare, op. cit., p.211, n. 79.

15. K. Seshadri, 'A Look in the Peasant Struggles in Andhra Pradesh' see n. 10 above.


18. Rasul, op. cit., pp.81, 109, 123.

19. ibid., p.107.
20. ibid., pp.115-17.


22. ibid., pp.134-51.


25. 'Political Resolution of the CC, CPI' submitted to the First Congress of the CPI, May 1943, p.5. PCJA, JNU.

26. ibid., p.6.

27. ibid., p.10.

28. '20th Session of All India Trade Union Congress. Organised Workers vote for : national unity and self-determination.', PW, No. 45, 16 May 1943, pp.1, 3.

29. B.T. Ranadive, 'Twenty Five Years of the Indian Trade Union Movement', PW, 3(49), 29 April 1945, pp.7, 10.

30. ibid., p.10.


32. ibid., p.406.
In his letter to A. Kaleswar Rao, Bezwada, 27 March 1946 Patel wrote: "... I am glad that you have succeeded in defeating the communists everywhere in your Province ... I congratulate you all for the good work you have done during the short period at your disposal..." in ibid., vol. 2, p.243. Patel advised V.V. Giri on 2 March 1946 that in the forthcoming election the communists "must be demolished and the Congress position vindicated ..." in ibid., vol. 2, p.237. Patel opposed the inclusion of N.M. Joshi in the Constituent Assembly on the ground that he was a communist. See ibid., vol. 3, p.33. The Congress appreciation of the militant activities of the trade unions and its covert support to prepare the field for the starting of a rival organisation with the help of Gandhi Sevak Sangha is verily evident from a Congress Resolution:

The Working Committee view with deep concern the intense and widespread labour unrest which has in recent months involved numerous industries and services in the country...

* * *

The Committee understand that the undesirable feature of labour situation are due in part to the efforts of certain individuals and sections to exploit the ignorance of the workers and the need of the community for ulterior aims, political or other, and this makes it all the more incumbent on Congressmen to develop further contacts with labour ...
... the Committee have come to the conclusion that a central agency should be provided to encourage, support and co-ordinate the efforts and activities of Congressmen in the field of Labour organisation ... The Committee note with satisfaction that the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh has been functioning in this field for a number of years... The Committee recommended to Congressmen to make the fullest use of the facilities provided by the Sangh for the service of the working class, and to accept its guidance in dealing with labour question.

See The Indian National Congress (March 1940 - September 1946) (AICC, 1946), pp.174-76. A committee consisting of Patel, Nanda and P.H. Patwardhan was formed to formalise the action proposed in the Resolution.


Home Member did not consult me. He has been embarrassed by Nehru's disclaimer (that the Interim Government had no responsibility in repressing the communists - U.G.) of Central responsibility, as he knew of impending action.

Home Member reacted strongly against the idea that action taken against Communists should be subject of discussion in Parliament. I also deplored this as it can only impede the efforts of Congress to deal with the revolutionary element in the country. (Emphasis added - U.G.)

In a letter to Wavell on 23 January 1947 Pethick-Lawrence wrote: "While Nehru has contended that the Interim Government had no responsibility (for actions taken against the communists - U.G.), it seems evident that Patel knew and at any rate acquiesced in the action which has been taken although he is not apparently prepared to acknowledge this in public." see ibid., vol. 9, p.534.

37. J. Coliville (Bombay) to Wavell 27 February 1947, p.022. Faced with such severe repression the CPI was forced to go underground. For detailed plan of underground activities see Political Organisational Letter on New Offensive Against the Party. This rare original typed copy of the document is to be found in PCJA, JNU.

38. G. Ramanujam, From the Babul Tree. Story of Indian Labour. (INTUC, New Delhi, 1967), p.56. According to Gulzarilal Nanda, the Secretary of Hindusthan Sevak Sangh, the new trade union was formed as the AITUC opposed the Bombay Industrial Relations Act and the Industrial Disputes Act. See P.P. Laksman, Congress and Labour Movement in India (AICC, 1947), p.155.


40. Gautam Chattopadhyay, 'The Almost Revolution. A Case Study of India in February 1946' in Essays in Honour of Prof. S.C. Sarkar (Delhi, 1976), p.431. G. Chattopadhyay was the then Secretary of the Calcutta branch of the AISF.

41. 'A Pointer', Editorial, PA, 4(23), 2 December 1945, p.5.


43. ibid., pp.181-83.

44. 'The Calcutta Events', Editorial, PA, 6(35), 24 February 1946, p.5.


47. ibid., p. 189.


49. Mansergh, Transfer of Power, vol. 6, pp. 1082-83. Also see Home Department File No. 5/21/1946 Poll (I), NAI.

50. Patel to Biswanathan 1 March 1946 in K.V. Patel and G.M. Nandurkar (ed.), Sardar's Letters Mostly Unknown (Ahmedabad, 1977), vol. IV, p. 165. Gandhi wrote to Patel "What an ordeal you are passing through! What terrific things around us!" Gandhi to Patel 23 February 1946 in ibid., p. 159. Also see Patel to Biswanathan 1 March 1946 in ibid., p. 165. Patel also wrote: "There should be no attempt to call for a hartal or stoppage of mills or closing of schools and colleges...I would... appeal... to do nothing to disturb the peace in the city in the present state of high tension." See Banerjee, op. cit., p. 63.


52. Dutt, op. cit., p. 183. Nehru is reported to have said that '.. The RIN episode has opened an altogether new chapter in the history of the armed forces in India...' in ibid., p. 214. Wavell's letter to Pethick-Lawrence of 5 March 1946 also reports the same thing. See Mansergh, Transfer of Power, vol. 1. 6, p. 117. However, J. Colville wrote to Wavell on 27 February 1946 that though Nehru came to Bombay against the will of Patel: "...On arriving here he had been impressed by the necessity for curbing the wild outburst of violence which
had taken place..." in ibid., p.1084.


54. ibid., p.163.

55. ibid., pp.162-63.


57. ibid., p.208.

58. ibid., p.194.

59. G. Adhikari (ed.), Strike! The Story of the Strike in the Indian Navy (Bombay, 1946), p.5. An Editorial commented:"It is unfortunate that the leaders of the Congress did not understand the mood of the people, did not listen to the voice of the masses..... The real reason behind this policy of the Congress leaders is the illusion they nurse about unilateral settlement with the British Government ... they expect freedom as a gift from the British. That is why they wanted the R.I.N. Ratings to desist from a strike... by a hartal." (Emphasis added - U.G.) See 'In the Name of Our Dead', Editorial, PA, 4(36), 3 March 1946, p.2.

60. Adhikari, Strike! The Story of the Strike in the Indian Navy, p.5.

61. ibid., p.9.

That Congress leaders suppressed the mutiny in close co-operation with the British is also evident from archival materials. We quote: "Congress were (sic) against today's (22 February 1946 - U.G.) hartal and Vallabhbhai Patel was emphatic about this..." S.K. Patil, Secretary, Bombay PCC, "deplored the incidents... made it clear that the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee would not directly interfere in helping the aggrieved party unless they... adhere to the principle of Non-violence." Again, "Patel is rightly reported to be pleased that the mills have resumed work again... He told Nehru not to come to Bombay and is extremely annoyed that he is coming. But he will be sent away again as soon as possible..." All citations are from Home Department File No. 5/21/1946 Poll(I), NAI. It needs to be put on record that Patil and Chundrigar, a League leader of Bombay, offered "the help of volunteers to assist the police." See Manseergh, Transfer of Power, vol. VI, pp.1051-82.

63. Sumit Sarkar, Modern India (Delhi, 1963), p.424. B.C. Dutt was right in saying that "The Naval rising in February, 1946, the mass movement of support within India and the heroic stand of the Bombay working people constituted the signal of the new era opening in India..." Taking exception to the sympathetic attitude of the Congress towards the so-called 'caretaker' government but Dutt wrote: "... The British, so far from being seen as the oppressors of India, were seen as "caretakers" on behalf of the Indian upper class. Such was the degeneration and sliding over to the side of imperialism, through fear of the latent revolutionary forces of the Indian situation at the moment of crisis..." See Dutt, op. cit., pp.580, 584-85. B.C. Dutt writes: "... The leaders - Hindu, Muslim or Sikh - were already committed to the conference table. They were no longer in a position to make common cause with us against foreign rule... Principles apart, the politicians of India at that point of time were already smiling to the radiance of coming power... they were already committed mentally to the continuation of the very order they were non-violently resisting!" (Emphasis added - U.G.) See Dutt, op. cit., pp.134-35.

64. Dutt, India Today, p.585.
65. See Towards a People's Navy (Bombay, 1946), pp.17-18. In the introduction of the pamphlet P.C. Joshi writes that this was 'Communist Party's Memorandum to the RIN Enquiry Commission.' B.C. Dutt writes: "The truth was that no political party had any active member in our ranks... I know from personal knowledge that the elected members of the Central Strike Committee were strangers to all political parties." See Dutt, op. cit., p.124.

66. G. Adhikari, Communist Party of India and India's Path to National Regeneration and Socialism (Delhi, 1964), pp.90-91, 99. Adhikari wrote these lines by way of reviewing the stance of the Second Congress of the CPI held in 1948 in Calcutta. To have a fuller view of the new line adopted in 1948 we quote from the Political Thesis of the Second Congress:

"...The bourgeois leaderships of the National Congress and the Muslim League clearly saw that the struggle of the masses was getting beyond control and was bringing to the forefront the working class and the exploited masses. They, therefore, were eager for compromise and began to attack the militant struggles of the people.

* * *

The leadership of the National Congress, representing the interests of the Indian capitalist class, thus betrayed the revolutionary movement at a time when it was on the point of overthrowing the imperialist order. It only exploited the movement to win the maximum concessions possible for its own selfish interests and disrupted for the time-being the growing revolutionary movement. By detaching the Congress from the movement, by isolating these spontaneously developing militant struggles, by repressing them, the national leadership played the game of disrupting the battle against imperialism and pursued a policy of repressing it."

It is noteworthy that though subsequently the new line was
dubbed as 'left-sectarian' the reading of the Congress attitude so far as the struggles were concerned, as the Political Thesis reveals, was not totally incorrect. See M.B. Rao (ed.), Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India (Delhi, 1976), vol. VII, pp.36-37. Henceforth Rao, Documents VII etc.

67. Adhikari, Communist Party of India and India's Path to National Regeneration and Socialism, p.99.

68. 'Unity for Victory', Editorial, PW, No. 5, 9 August 1942, p. 2.

69. ibid., p.2.

70. G. Adhikari, 'National Unity Now', PW, No. 5, 9 August 1942, pp.3-4. Adhikari informs that the CPI began to see the Hindu-Muslim communal problem as a problem of growing nationalities since 1940. And as there remained some confusion about the new formulation the new line was cleared in the Party Letter of May 1941. As the said Party Letter is not available now we quote from G. Adhikari (ed.), Pakistan and National Unity (Bombay, 1944), p.30. This is a slightly revised version of Adhikari's Pakistan and Indian National Unity (London, 1942). See 'Our Policy', Editorial, PW, No. I, 5 July 1942. It stressed Congress-League unity on the basis of the principles of self-determination 'including the right of separation.' It was stated: "We do not concede the right of self-determination as a concession, that would be a slander against the minority communities and backward nationalities. To us it is right that is their due... We preach the cause of national unity on the basis of self-determination as the only way to get all-in unity to defend our motherland."p.2.

71. ibid., p.2.

72. ibid., p.2.
73. ibid., p.2.

74. ibid., p.2.

75. See 'Solve National Crisis Thru (sic) National Unity - Resolution of the Party Central Committee', PW, No. 12, 27 September 1942, pp.1-9; especially, p.8.

76. See 'A Conference for All-Parties' Unity', Editorial, PW, No. 21, 29 November 1942, p.2. In consonance with this line B.T. Ranadive wrote:

"To expect the League to give up Pakistan is to demand unity on one's own terms on the basis of an indivisible and free India. To demand, this is not only to demand the impossible but to perpetuate disunity to the greater glory of imperialism..."

"... The League has chosen the most democratic method - the plebiscite... A fairer offer can not be imagined..." See B.T. Ranadive, 'League opens the door - we can and must unite', PW, No. 8, 30 August 1942, pp.1, 6.

77. For the Resolution see Adhikari, Pakistan and National Unity, pp.14-16. Ben Bradley in a message approved the line. He wrote: "... I am in full agreement with the policy of the Congress League unity and congratulate you on the decisions of your Central Committee..." See PW, No. 31, 7 February 1943, p.1.


79. ibid., p.14.

80. ibid., p.15.
81. ibid., p.15.

82. See Adhikari, Pakistan and National Unity, p.30.

83. ibid., pp.30-31.

84. ibid., p.18.

85. ibid., p.20.

86. ibid., p.21.

87. ibid., p.23.

88. ibid., p.24.

89. ibid., p.24.

90. ibid., p.24.

91. ibid., p.36.

92. ibid., p.36.

93. ibid., pp.35-36.

94. ibid., p.35.

95. Arun Shouri, 'The Great Betrayal' in Illustrated Weekly of
India (henceforth IVJ), 1 April 1984, p.12.

96. Adhikari, Pakistan and National Unity, p.29.

97. ibid., p.29.

98. ibid., p.40.

99. ibid., p.38.

100. ibid., p.41.

101. ibid., p.43.

102. See 'Work For Congress-League Agreement. Manifesto of the Communist Party of India for Unity Week', November 1-7, 1942 in Joshi, For the Final Bid for Power. The Communist Plan Explained (Bombay, n.d.), p.53. Henceforth For the Final Bid For Power. Also see P.C. Joshi, 'Letter to Muslim League Patriots to win Self-Determination' in FW, vol. (missing) No. 29, 24 January 1943, p.1. Here he reminded the League that its demand can be had only from the Congress and not from the British and that it was the League's 'first duty' to work for the release of the Congress leaders. In the previous chapter we have seen that the League opposed the Quit India movement on the plea that it was moved with a view to crushing the League. But the CPI thought that theQuit India resolution tacitly admitted the principle of self-determination. We quote from the People's War: "But to denounce the August Resolution as anti-Muslim, when it was precisely through this resolution that the Congress was being roused to accept the principle of self-determination, is a travesty of political judgement; to build a policy on this reading... is nothing short of suicidal under present circumstances." See 'Is the League Helpless?', Editorial, FW, vol. (missing), No.30, 31 January 1943, p.2. Also see 'All Together for Release of Gandhi to End National Crisis'. Resolution of the CC CPI ad-

103. Adhikari, Pakistan and National Unity, pp.44-46. For Joshi's detailed treatment of the issue see his 'Issues Before the Gandhi-Jinnah Meeting' in P.C. Joshi, They Must Meet Again (Bombay, 1945), pp.35-37. When it became crystal clear by June 1947 that Bengal will be partitioned a CC Resolution favoured a plebiscite and stipulated: "The Communist Party has always stood for self-determination of Bengal inside a free Indian Union. The Communist Party will continue to fight for this. A Congress-League agreement... can be an important step in the fight for Indian unity. The Communist Party will continue to campaign for this unity unceasingly." (All emphasis original - U.G.) But the resolution acknowledged that a struggle for unity would be difficult as 'reactionary' forces were very strong and also that "the main force of the democratic movement has grown inside the Indian Republic" See 'Communists and Partition of Bengal. CC Resolution of the CPI' in PA, 5(51), 22 June 1947, p.7.

104. Adhikari, Pakistan and National Unity, p.47.

105. See 'Issues Before the Gandhi Jinnah Meeting' in P.C. Joshi, They Must Meet Again, p.33.


108. P.C. Joshi, 'Wavell Plan', PW, 3(52), 24 June 1945, p.5. And after the breakdown of the Simla conference the CPI appealed both to the Congress and the League leadership not to wait for a fresh British initiative "but to come together themselves on the basis of Congress-League parity......" See 'Prospects', Editorial, PW, 4(5), 29 July 1945, p.5. Also see P.C. Joshi, 'Simla Breakdown - How it came about, what next?', PW, 4(4), 22 July 1945, p.5. Elsewhere Joshi alleged that for the failure of attempts to come to compromise on the communal question was due to the pursuance of the nineteenth century liberal idea by both the League and the Congress leaders and their placing of more faith in the Britishers. See P.C. Joshi, For the Final Bid for Power, pp.50-51.


110. ibid., p.54.

111. ibid., pp.305-6.


115. ibid., p.60.

117. ibid., p.279.

118. Fouri to Beards (Private Secretary to Atlee) 16.2.47 in Man­nsarh, Transfer of Power, vol. 9, p.732.


122. ibid., p.11.

123. B.T. Ranadive, 'Communal Problem', NF, 2(4-5), 12 March 1939, p.62. Similarly A.K. Ghosh wrote: "It is actual part­icipation in mass struggle that will radicalise the Muslim masses. Mass struggle is the greatest solvent of communal differences. By fighting shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy - imperialism and national vested interests - the Hindu and Muslim masses will draw closer to each other...

(Emphasis original - U.G.) Again, it was stipulated that: "By purging the Congress completely of Hindu atmosphere... by intensifying mass-contact drive, by creating po­litical consciousness among the Muslim masses... by develop­ing extra-parliamentary struggle on the basis of popular demands... the Congress will be able to overcome its isolation from the Muslim masses." See A.K. Ghosh, 'Congress and the Muslims', NF, 1(31), 18 September 1938, pp.9,16. In another article Ghosh favoured organised campaign 'to make the Muslim people understand that their economic interests are very similar to their Hindu brothers...' See A.K. Ghosh,
'Communal Unity', NF, 1(4), 1 January 1939, p.5.

124. Both citations are from Party Letter (New Series) 12 May 1946, No. 4, pp.9-9. R.P. Wutt's article 'India and Pakistan' was published in Labour Monthly (LM) in March 1946. This article had given birth to strong inner-party discussion. This Party Letter set the lines for inner party discussion.

125. ibid., p.9.

126. ibid., p.7.

127. ibid., p.6.

128. Adhikari, Communist Party of India and India's Path to National Regeneration and Socialism, p.84.

129. Thus it was stipulated:

"The acute differences between the Congress and the League on the issue of the Constituent Assembly can only be settled by the just application of the principle of self-determination."

"The Communist Party stands for a free, voluntary, democratic Indian union of sovereign units ... It is only on the basis of the application of the principle of self-determination ... that Indian unity can be preserved." See P.C. Joshi, 'Memorandum of the Communist Party of India to the British Cabinet Mission' (henceforth 'Memorandum of the Communist Party') in Pamphlets of the Communist Party of India (n.p., 1946), pp.13-14. Henceforth Pamphlets. In another pamphlet we see that the CPI criticises the Muslim League
for its extravagant demands of six provinces, the right of self-determination inside the Indian union was not discarded though. It is stipulated that,

"... They (the League - U.G.) always demanded the fulfilment of their communal demands as a condition for joining in the national struggle... today when the question of independence is being raised and the Congress is demanding the complete independence of India, the Muslim League are (sic) demanding that the area in which the Muslims are in the majority should be formed into a separate Muslim state.

"Now it is clear to us that this demand is totally undemocratic having regard to the nature of the areas which they are demanding as the Muslim State... The Indian Communist Party has recognised that it is not a question of dividing India on the basis of a religion, but of understanding that in India there are different nationalities, and only if the right of self-determination inside India is recognised for India as a whole.

"...The right of self-determination as the Muslim League wants it to be exercised would not unite the common people in the main struggle... only when we are able to develop the main struggle of Muslims and Hindus united for land, bread and democratic rights, only then will we be able to build the unity of the Indian people as a whole...

"...The Indian Congress...has not been able to solve the problem for two reasons - it doesn't see the growth of the Muslim League as not just the growth of fanatismism (sic) - it does not see behind the Muslim aims is genuine anti-imperialism being guided into the wrong channels, and the task of the Communists is to take a clear-cut stand on the demands of the people along the lines of the workers and peasants demands, and also by putting the question of self-determination in the correct democratic way..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) See speech of G. Adhikari in the 'Empire Communist Parties Conference' held in London from 26 February -
March 1947, p.4. A photostat copy of the report of the conference is available at PCJA, JNU. It was thought that by fighting the Hindu communalists inside India and granting rights to the minorities ground for reunion of the two states could be prepared. However, it did not repudiate its theory of national self-determination even in mid 1947. It was stipulated: "The more readily we guarantee the right of national self-determination in our Constitution, the sooner will the Muslim masses in Pakistan see that inside the Indian Union there is equality of all nationalities and not Hindu domination." See August 15, Onward to Tasks Ahead, Communist Party's Appeal to the People of India (Bombay, 1947), p.7.

130. Wavell to King George VI, 31 December 1945 in Mansergh, Transfer of Power, vol. 6, p.715.

131. Wavell to Churchill, 24 October 1944. Wavell decided to negotiate with Gandhi and Jinnah — with much aversion though — because "... I can see no prospect of our having more reasonable people to deal with. We have had to negotiate with similar rebels before, e.g., De Valera and Zaghlul." See Moon, op. cit., p.98.

132. Summary proceedings of the AICC, Bombay, 21-23 September 1945 in The Indian National Congress (March 1940-September 1946), p.48

133. P.C. Joshi, 'Wavell Plan', PW, 3(52), 24 June 1945, p.5.

134. Joshi, For the Final Bid For Power, pp.3-4.

135. ibid., pp.60-76. In support of his observation Joshi cites from election speech of Sjt. Prakasam, President of the Andhra Provincial Committee. According to Prakasam:
"We have now got swaraj in the form of elections.... We are going to have our own ministries. That body will enjoy complete independence...."

Again,

"The present Viceroy is very good. He saw the strength of the Congress for the last three years and that is why he went to England and brought about the Simla Conference." p.75.

136. ibid., p.66.

137. ibid., p.71.

138. ibid., p.75.

139. ibid., p.76.

140. ibid., p.80.

141. ibid., p.81.

142. ibid., p.97.

143. See 'Election Manifesto of the Communist Party of India'. This is to be found in the Appendix of Joshi's For The Final Bid For Power, pp.106-7. In another article Joshi wrote:

"Our party is convinced that majority delegates of sovereign Constituent Assemblies based on universal adult franchise will not only vigilently guard the freedom of their own
homelands but voluntarily agree to set up a common Indian union for defending and advancing common interests."

Again,

"Our party will unflinchingly campaign for the full application of the principle of self-determination and adult franchise to Princely India." See P.C. Joshi, 'For a Free and Happy India. Blueprint of Election Programme', PW, 4(16), 14 October 1945, p.5.

144. Joshi, For The Final Bid For Power, p.106.

145. ibid., p.106.

146. ibid., p.106.

147. ibid., pp.106-7.

148. ibid., p.107.

149. ibid., p.107.

150. ibid., pp.110-18.

151. ibid., p.116.

152. ibid., p.118.

153. On August 29, 1946 Wavell wrote in his diary: "...I had an almost panic stricken telegram from the S. of S. (Secretary of State - U.G.) asking me to do nothing rash with Congres-
s..." On August 31, in his diary he mentioned: "I had another rather panic-stricken cable from S. of S. asking me on no account to do or say anything that might occasion a break with Congress..." See Moon, op. cit., p.343.

154. M.K. Gandhi, 'An Analysis', Harijan, 10(16), 26 May 1946, p.152. Gandhi, of course, raised some objections especially regarding the presence of alien troops in India. See M.K. Gandhi, 'Vital Defects', Harijan, 10(17), 2 June 1946, p.160. The Working Committee Resolution of the INC passed on 24 May 1946 also took exception to the presence of British troops and betrayed some reservations about the provision of the Constituent Assembly. See The Indian National Congress (March 1940-September 1946), pp.157-59. But in the Wardha session of the Working Committee (August 9-13, 1946) a resolution was adopted which unequivocally stated that: "The Committee wish to make it clear that while they did not approve of all the proposals contained in this statement, they accepted the scheme in its entirety..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) See ibid., p.167.


157. ibid., p.12.

159. See Somnath Lahiri, 'Draft Resolution For the Constituent Assembly' in Pamphlets, pp.5-8. Adhikari, however, opposed the League demand of six provinces: "The League's demand for a single Constituent Assembly and a separate state consisting of six provinces can not be conceded without reference to the will of the entire peoples of the linguistically and culturally homogeneous areas like Assam, Bengal, the Pathanland, the Central Punjab, etc., all of whom have the right of self-determination." See C. Adhikari, 'Week in Review', PA, 4(44), 20 April 1946, p.4.

160. Lahiri, 'Draft Resolutions For the Constituent Assembly' in Pamphlets, p.5.

161. ibid., p.8.

162. ibid., p.6.

163. ibid., p.8.

164. ibid., pp.8-9.


167. See 'Report on Reformist Deviation' presented by B.T. Rana-
dive to the Second Congress of the CPI in 1948 in Rao, *Documents VII*, pp.139-40.

168. ibid., p.141.

169. ibid., p.141.

170. ibid., p.144.

171. ibid., p.144.


175. ibid., p.52.

176. ibid., p.52.


178. ibid., p.147.

179. ibid., p.148.
180. ibid., p.148.

181. See 'Communist Policy For Final Phase of India's Freedom Struggle. All Together For Last Assault on British Imperialism.' This is generally known as August (1946) CC Resolution. The meeting of the CC was held from 23 July - 5 August 1946. See PA, 5(7), 18 August 1946, pp.1-5, 11.

182. ibid., p.1.

183. ibid., p.1.

184. ibid., p.1.

185. ibid., p.1.

186. ibid., p.2.

187. ibid., p.2.

188. ibid., p.2.

189. ibid., p.2.

190. ibid., p.2.

191. ibid., p.2.

192. ibid., p.2.

193. ibid., p.11.
Moon, op. cit., pp. 494-96. On 30 October 1946 Wavell wrote in his diary: "...Our time in India is limited and our power to control events almost gone. We have only prestige and previous momentum to trade on and they will not last long. My task now is to secure the safest and the most dignified withdrawal possible ...." (Emphasis added - U.G.) Also see diary entry of February 18, 1947 wherein Wavell notes that the soft attitude of the Labour Government was due to their attempts to protect British economic interests in the fields of coals and electricity. ibid., p. 421.
ion From Direct to Indirect Rule*. This document is commonly known as June (1947) CC Resolution adopted in Delhi meeting of the CC from June 13-20, 1947. The present version of the Resolution is from FA, 5(52), 29 June 1947, p.6.

205. ibid., p.6.

206. ibid., p.6.

207. ibid., p.6.

208. ibid., p.6.

209. ibid., p.10.

210. ibid., p.10.

211. ibid., p.10.

212. ibid., p.10.

213. ibid., p.7. Also see August 15. Onward to Tasks Ahead. Communist Party's appeal to the People of India, pp.1-8.

214. B.T. Ranadive, 'Report on Reformist Deviation' in Rao, Documents VII, pp.160-61. Ranadive also informs that there was also another trend inside the CC which suffered from a pro-League bias. They accepted both the Congress and the League as progressive: "... This went to such a length that they wanted the CC to hail the League decision to launch direct action in August 1946 as an event full of anti-imperialist significance." p.162.
215. ibid., p.161.

216. See 'Political-Organisational Letter on New Offensive Against the Party' pp.3-4, 13-15. The original typed copy of this document is available at ICLA, JNU.


219. E. Zhukov, 'The Indian Situation'. This is to be found in On the Colonial Question (Bombay, 1949), pp.24, 27-36. This is Zhukov's Report made to the Academy of Social Sciences, USSR, on May 11, 1947, and revised by the author for the July 1947 issue of the World Economics and Politics, Moscow.

220. ibid., p.27.

221. ibid., p.28.

222. ibid., p.29.

223. ibid., p.30.

224. ibid., p.30.

225. ibid., p.34.

226. ibid., p.35.

227. Adhikari, Communist Party of India and India's Path to National Revemation and Socialism, pp.90-91.

228. ibid., p.95.

229. ibid., p.97.