By mid 1941 the war in Europe reached its climax. After overrunning Poland, Belgium, Holland, Norway and France, as well as most of Eastern Europe, Germany attacked Soviet Russia on June 22, 1941. By the end of the year Japan entered the war and bombed Pearl Harbour and as the year was coming to a close, the USA and the USSR were fighting the Axis on the side of the Allies. In the first phase of the war both the USA and Britain were bent on crushing the first communist state of the world, the USSR, and especially the British followed the policy of appeasement towards Germany. The anti-Soviet attitude of Anglo-American block was verily manifest in the speech delivered by the then American Senator Harry Truman who later became President of the USA. He said:

If we see that Germany is winning, we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning, we ought to help Germany, and that way let them kill as many as possible. 1

According to Robert Taft, another Senator, 'Hitler's victory would be preferable to the United States.' 2 Again the war did not remain confined to the European soil; it spread over the Asian countries. Philippines, Indonesia, Indo-China, Malay and Burma were all
rapidly conquered. In March 1942 Japan occupied Rangoon and the security of India got endangered. Britain anxiously sought active co-operation of India for the war effort. Moreover, Chiang-kai-shek and Roosevelt were putting pressure on the British Government to solve the Indian problem. The British Government sent Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet, to India with a Draft Declaration. It was a make-believe device on the part of the Britishers. Churchill wrote to Linlithgow:

It would be impossible, owing to unfortunate rumours and publicity, and the general American outlook, to stand on a purely negative attitude and the Cripps Mission is indispensible to prove our honesty of purpose...\(^3\)

Churchill also wrote that if the Mission was rejected by the Indian parties their 'sincerity will be proved.' Tomlinson doubts whether the Cripps offer was 'a serious offer at all.' He opines that for Churchill 'it mattered not so much that something should be done as that some attempt should be seen to be made.' \(^5\) The then Secretary of State, Amery, foresaw the probability of the scheme being rejected by the INC and wrote to Linlithgow, the Viceroy:

...the public here, in America, China and in a large measure even in India, will realise at least that the real difficulty lies in the unreasonableness of Indian politicians and incompatibility of their respective domestic policies. \(^6\)
Both Linlithgow and Amery were convinced that no further concessions should be given than offered in the 'August Offer' of 1940 and decided to back the Muslim League and the Princes. 7

It has already been established in the earlier chapters that the Congress followed a policy of inaction and looked after the British for further concessions. It is interesting that in July 1941 the Congress Working Committee 'did not insist on a declaration about independence by the British but offered to assist in the defence of India if a fully national government were established.' 8 Gopal notes that initially Nehru was opposed to this resolution moved by Rajagopalachari who won over Azad and Patel but later decided to abide by it. 9 That even the limited individual civil disobedience movement was launched with an eye to achieving concessions and not to disturb the British war efforts could be proved from the official Congress resolutions. One such resolution stipulated:

... Mahatma Gandhi desirous of avoiding embarrassment to his opponent as far as possible, especially during the perils and dangers of war, limited the satyagraha movement which he started to selected individuals who confirmed to certain tests he laid down.... 10 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

In the Working Committee resolution of Wardha it was clearly mentioned,
Ever since the outbreak of the world war, the Congress has studiedly pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character, in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment, carried to its logical extreme, would be duly appreciated, and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives, ... It has also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's stranglehold on India. 11

(Emphasis added - U.G.)

But the adoption of a policy of deliberate non-embarrassment did yield no result. And the Cripps Mission also failed. The major features of the Cripps proposals were: (a) Post-war Dominion Status with right of secession; (b) a 'Constitution-making Body' party elected by provincial legislatures and partly nominated by the princes; (c) right of any province or any State to remain outside and negotiate directly with Britain. And for the present (i.e., during the war) Cripps proposed retention of power by Britain with consultative co-operation of Indian representatives. The proposals were strikingly similar with the 'August Offer' of 1940. On April 9 it seemed that an agreement would be reached. But Cripps ultimately announced that only an expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council was intended; consequently, every important Indian organisation turned down the Cripps proposals. But even after the failure of the Cripps Mission the INC made a fresh appeal to the government and declared their willingness not to hinder British war effort if
their demand of a national government was conceded. It put forward the Proposal of 'withdrawal of British Rule'. But it also stated in the same breath:

In making the proposal for the withdrawal of British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increased (sic) pressure on China by the Japanese or any Power associated with the Axis Power group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the Allied powers. The Congress is thereof agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression, and to protect and help China. 12 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

This excerpt is produced only to vindicate that the INC was also eager to fight the Axis with weapons provided its demand of a wartime national government was conceded. The excerpt also reveals that the INC allowed the British and other Allied powers the stationing of armed forces in India 'to ward off and resist Japanese and other aggression.' In fact, it meant indirect support to war efforts. If any one takes into account these resolutions he will be struck by the militancy of the 'Quit India' resolution passed just one month after the Wardha session of the Congress Working Committee. In Bardoli (1941) Gandhi was relieved of the charge of leadership and the INC rejected the Principle of non-violence, the idea being that of extending co-operation to the war efforts. "The
Congress Working Committee had, on several previous occasions, disagreed with him (Gandhi), Nehru stipulated, "on the question of non-violence, and was anxious to have a national government to cooperate in the war and especially in the defence of India." (Emphasis added - U.G.) Gopal informs us that even after the failure of the Cripps Mission Nehru announced that the Congress would pursue the policy of non-embarrassment and war production should not be impeded. Though Nehru was dissuaded by Azad from broadcasting from All India Radio on these lines he promised Louis Johnson, Roosevelt's personal representative in India, that he would start for Calcutta to secure the termination of industrial strikes. Even he favoured the idea of guerrilla resistance to the Japanese but was forced by Gandhi to withdraw such suggestions. It was declared that in case of any invasion it would be resisted non-violently. "In places wherein the British and the invading forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. Not to put any obstacle in the way of British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the invader", it was stipulated. It was stated that the success of such a programme would 'largely depend on the intensive working out of the Congress constructive programme' and the programme of 'self-sufficiency and self-protection'.

The merit of the Quit India Resolution should be judged in the light of this historical perspective. The Bombay AICC session held on 7-8 August 1942 sanctioned 'the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale' and emphasised that the people must remember that 'non-violence' was the basis of this movement.\footnote{18} (Emphasis added - U.G.) On the eve of the Bombay session of the AICC in the Working Committee held on 7-14 July 1942 Gandhi suggested that by launching satyagraha movement peaceful withdrawal of the British Government might be demanded. Prominent Congressmen like Azad, Nehru, Pant, and Ali did not endorse a Quit India type movement because, writes Kripalani, they thought that the British Government "would not consent to withdraw and any satyagraha movement would be misunderstood by the other Allies, particularly China, America and Russia... They would also misrepresent that the Congress was out to disorganise India's forced war effort..."\footnote{19} According to Kripalani, Gandhi understood the difficulty of the INC and suggested a way out. He decided to go ahead with the idea of the movement alone and suggested that the Congress should pass a resolution calling Congressmen to join his movement if they so desired. This very idea gave a relief to the dominant Congress leadership and then the Quit India resolution was passed unanimously. But the adoption of the resolution did not imply immediate launching of the mo-
movement; Gandhi intended to start it after two or three weeks. Gopal informs us that though in public Gandhi and Nehru declared that there was no further scope for negotiation in private the Congress leaders hoped for Roosevelt's intervention for such discussion. Even Nehru was in favour of the British promise of Dominion Status on condition of a Chinese-American guarantee. Though the Congress sessions of Allahabad, Wardha and Bombay, especially Bombay, betrayed unusual militant attitude there was no concrete detailed programme for launching the mass movement. Even Gandhi, writes Gopal, had no clear idea as to the measures to be adopted to force the British to quit India. Nehru in his *The Discovery of India* has noted that Gandhi 'said nothing at all about the nature of his actions' and 'began to lay greater stress on the possibilities of an agreement with British Government.' Nehru mentions that the advice of non-violent non-co-operation with the invaders was not 'put forward as an alternative to the armed resistance. That advice was meant only for the unarmed civilian population'. Not only that. He also alleges that 'Gandhiji's general approach also seemed to ignore important international considerations and appeared to be based on a narrow view of nationalism.' (Emphasis added - U.G.) Rajagopalachari notes that Gandhi was not 'particularly attracted by the ideological view of the war as one between democracy and fascism. He thinks purely on nationalist lines..." Even the programme believed to be prepared by
the Andhra PCC on 29 July 1942 put emphasis mainly on traditional Gandhian schemes like salt satyagraha, boycott of courts, schools and government services, picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, shapping of telegraph and telephone wires etc. In the last speech of Gandhi before the arrest there was no concrete plan of action. And in the early hours of August 9 before his arrest Gandhi had left two parting messages: (a) "Do or die" and (b) "you can go the furthest limit under Ahimsa." On the early morning of August 9 all the Congress leaders were arrested. When this news spread all over the country the masses revolted spontaneously, throwing to the winds the Gandhian scheme of non-violent non-co-operation. Though such a call was futile from a national-revolutionary standpoint, argues Kosambi, from the class standpoint the action appeared to be quite significant. Firstly, the jailing of all important Congress leaders absolved the Congress from any responsibility for the happenings of the ensuing year. That is, the temporary isolation helped the Congress leadership to avoid taking a clear and public stand on the war issue; it helped the Congress in a great way to avoid taking any clear stand against Subhas Bose's INA which reached the borders of Assam in 1944. Secondly, 'the glamour of jail and concentration camp served to wipe out the so-so record of the Congress ministries in office'. And thirdly, the
attack on the mass movement by the British Government did not 'in-
jure the Indian bourgeoisie'. 29 All this leads us to share Sumit Sarkar's observation that 'Rightist Congress leaders who througho-
ut the late 1930s had urged more and more co-operation with the
British and pursued increasingly conservative policies as ministe-
rs could now bask in the halo of patriotic self-sacrifice, as much
as the Socialists who had done most of the actual fighting in 1942
while the Communist critics of both were branded in the eyes of a
big section of nationalist public opinion as collaborators and tr-
aitors.' 30

That Gandhi and the INC had no plan of action is evident from
British official documents. Nehru, Rajagopalachari, Mrs. Naidu and
Bulabhai Desai thought that British withdrawal in the midst of war
would invite Japanese aggression. 31 Linlithgow in a telegram repo-
rted to Amery that the troubles were 'Spontaneous reactions' to the
arrest of Gandhi and that the main participants were students, how-
 oligans and 'not mill hands.' 32 (Emphasis added - U.G.) That Pat-
el favoured violence is evident from another document. 33 Linlithg-
ow wrote to Amery that the movement was "wholly revolutionary in
caracter, well organised by people working underground and deter-
red by no considerations of non-violence or the like..." 34 (Emph-
asis added - U.G.) In September 1942 in a report to Secretary of
State it was stated:

Our intelligence authorities do not at present see any master hand behind disturbances and attribute them largely to cumulative effect of Anti-British agitation... intensified by Congress leaders..., and partly also to intervention of Congress Socialist Party, forward block (sic) and extreme revolutionary parties... 35 (Emphasis added - U.G)

One month later, Linlithgow wrote:

... Specific mention can be made of Congress Socialists and Forward Bloc. Former were active in preparing for movement in Bombay, Central Provinces, United Provinces and Bihar, ... Forward Bloc came out in support of campaign in Bihar, Central Provinces and United Provinces... 36

Lumelmy doubted whether there was any real plan behind the movement.

He wrote on September 24, 1942:

... I cannot help being impressed by the feebleness of the attempts at sabotage with which we have had to cope. There appears, too, to be no real plan behind it - just stirring up, particularly of the young, to do something with no very clear idea of what it should be. 37 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

And as subscriptions to the Third Defence Loan continued to come in as before Linlithgow wrote to Amery (October 6, 1942) that "there was no visible sign of loss of confidence by the investing public in the stability of the Government." 38 Anyway the movement was suppressed and Wavell wrote to Churchill in 1944 that negotia-
tion with the Congress should be initiated before the end of the war brought a release of prisoners and threw many people out of employment." They (the Congress and League - U.G.) will find a fertile field for agitation, unless we have previously diverted their energies into some more profitable channel, i.e., into dealing with the administrative problems of India and into trying to solve the constitutional problem..." It is thus evident that the British authorities understood that it would not be possible to hold India by force after the end of the War.

II

Compared to the compromising and vacillating attitude of the INC the CSP had a full-fledged scheme of rebellion. Jayaprakash in his 'A.B.C. of Dislocation' pointed to three factors for the decline of the August movement: (i) 'lack of an organisation to lead the resurgent masses; (ii) absence of a full programme of the Revolution; (iii) failure of all parts of the country to rise together.' Overcoming the basic deficiencies Narayan Planned to organise the revolution for the second time. He planned to create in every district a band of shock troopers - 'Azad Dastas' - as equivalent of the European guerrillas capable of becoming the leaders of the mass insurrection and the nucleus of revolutionary
people's army of the Republic of India. Similarly, Rammanohar Lohia thought that militant activities were 'the only feasible method' in that circumstances of India. Acknowledging the 'decentralised, individualistic and anarchical' nature of the movement he observed that the anarchy was 'deliberate and purposeful'. He also recognised the need for a class war but noted:

... The class war may have to come, but that is not yet, not till after the riddance of foreign exploitation... that the organisation required for central guidance of the movement in its present stage is not the rigid organisation of an exclusive party... What we need is a coming together of parties not their suppression by a new body. What we need is a combination, a joint enterprise, a common stand. ... the Freedom Struggle Front... 42

Lohia found no objection in taking assistance from the 'rich mill-owner or banker' if he was "willing to finance the revolution..." He did not want that the class issues should stand in the way of taking such help. Obviously, the plan was for a national movement led by a 'Freedom Struggle Front'. The plan of action - depriving government treasuries of money, raids on centres of enemy authority, sabotage of communication, industrial sabotage - as proposed in the 'A.B.C. of Dislocation' and the actual happenings clearly revealed that the C.S.P. actively supported the mass upsurge.

The Congress did not issue any formal call for the movement
and taking no precaution against their imminent arrest managed to slip into the jails and somehow avoid loss of face. However, the call for a strong anti-imperialist movement came from Subhas Chandra Bose who escaped from India in 1941. He reached Singapore from Germany in July 1943 and gave his famous call 'Delhi Chalo' (Forward to Delhi - U.G.) ; he announced the formation of the Azad Hind Government and the Indian National Army (INA) on October 21, 1943. During 1941-1943 he vehemently criticised the Anglo-American imperialism and repeatedly announced that the Axis powers were sympathetic to India's freedom movement. Bose saw no harm in seeking the help of the Axis powers as his principle was 'Enemy's enemy is my friend'. He had no illusion about the Cripps Mission. In a speech he said: "I feel perfectly convinced that it is now quite clear that Sir Stafford has gone to India to try the one-long policy of British imperialism - 'divide and rule'...." He mentioned that the demand for provincial national government was put forward by him as early as October 1939, but to no avail. He clearly stated: "British Government is not ready to part with power at the present moment. By raising the issue of the minorities or the Princes or of the so-called Depressed Classes, they can at any time find a plea that Indians are not united..." He had also no illusion about the Labour Party leaders and thought that they were 'as imp-
eralistic as the Conservatives' were. He was 'convinced' that the Axis powers were not enemies of the Indians and thought, "if India does not participate in Britain's war there is not the least possibility of India being attacked by any of the Axis powers." Incidentally, Gandhi's draft proposal for the Allahabad session of the Working Committee (April 21 - May 1, 1942) strikingly resembles Bose's line of thinking. To quote the draft resolution:

Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British empire... If India were free, her first step would be to negotiate with Japan. The Congress is of opinion that, if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of Japanese or any aggressor attacking India....

Gandhi, however, proposed 'complete non-co-operation' if Japan attacked India. Bose kept close watch on the developments of India and when the Quit India movement began he enthusiastically supported it and also expressed his surprise in the Congress offer of conditional co-operation. Bose appealed to Jinnah, Savarkar, Muslim League, Akali Dal and other parties to get united against the British. He described the events of 1942 as 'Non-violent guerrilla warfare' and put forward his proposal of action which was strikingly similar to Jaiprakash Narayan's 'A.B.C. of Dislocation'. He pointed out:
... If the non-violent guerrilla war should continue sufficiently long, freedom will come because British Imperialism will ultimately break down owing to the cumulative effect of defeats sustained on different fronts ... 51

Compared to the Forward Bloc and the CSP the stand taken by the AIML appears to be highly communal. Sharply reacting to T.B. Sapru's suggestion to transfer Power to the parties willing to constitute the Executive Council, a Working Committee resolution of the League stipulated that if the government accepted this "... Muslim India would without doubt revolt against any such decision, for these proposals clearly mean the virtual transfer of all power and authority to the Central Government to be set up... on the basis of India being a single national unit... thereby establishing Congress or Hindu Raj for all practical purposes... to prejudice and torpedo the Pakistan demand of Muslim League." 52 As to the Cripps proposal of the right to secede from the proposed Federation Jinnah made it known that...

... Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the right of national self-determination is unequivocally recognised. It must be realised that India was never a country or a nation... The alleged power of the minority in the matter of cessation suggested in the documents is illusory as Hindu India will dominate the decision in favour of one All-India Union in all the Provinces... Thus the Muslims will be doomed to subjection in all the provinces... 53 (Emphasis in original - U.G.)
Sharply reacting to the Quit India resolution of the INC the Working Committee of the League observed: "... this movement is directed not only to coerce the British Government into handing over power to a Hindu Oligarchy... but also to force the Musalmans to submit and surrender to the Congress terms and direction." It was thought that the Quit India movement was not directed for securing 'the independence of all the constituent elements in the life of the country' but to establish a Hindu Raj and to give a death blow to the Pakistan Plan. The Working Committee declared its willingness to negotiate with any party for the setting up of a Provisional Government to mobilise India's resources for her defence "provided the demands of Muslim India... are conceded unequivocally." Thus the League was deadly opposed to the Quit India movement as it thought that any such movement was detrimental to its demand for Pakistan. This attitude stiffened during the next four years.

From the above discussion we can identify some of the trends prevalent among the major non-communist political parties of India on the question of the War, Cripps Mission and the Quit India movement as manifest in their party documents of 1942-1943. First, the INC, until July 1942, appealed to the government for negotiated settlement; many top-ranking Congressmen were opposed to the idea
of any large-scale mass movement against the British at that stage of the War. Men like Raja Gopalachari, Nehru, Prasad, Azad and Patel were in favour of co-operating in the war and were opposed to the idea of launching a mass movement, since it might harm the Allied cause. The most significant thing to note is that neither the Congress nor Gandhi had any plan of action. In 1945 the Congress acknowledged that 'no movement had been officially started by the A.I.C.C. or Gandhiji' and the A.I.C.C. in 1945 regretted the violent and spontaneous activities of the people. The resolution runs thus: "... The Committee regrets that in some places the people forgot and fell away from the Congress method of peaceful and non-violent action..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) That is, the Congress disowned the movement indirectly. It also deserves attention that the movement was spontaneous one organised by the CSP, the Forward Bloc and other 'extreme revolutionary' parties. The findings of the Subaltern Studies also corroborate the above view. Stephen Henningham writes that in Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces the movement was initially started by the students and other 'elite nationalists', e.g., high-caste rich peasants. Later it was supported by subaltern groups including 'people who had engaged in market looting earlier in the year and who had recently swelled the figures for petty crime.' He also observes that
"...The social breadth of the insurrection gave it the appearance of a cohesive upheaval and many historians have accepted this appearance as the reality...." Secondly, the AIFB and the CSP supported and actively organised the movement while, and this constitutes the third feature, the AIML vehemently opposed this movement as it thought that it might end in the establishment of a Hindu Raj.

III

The politics of the CPI during this period happens to be one of the most debatable issues in Indian freedom movement. During this phase the CPI abandoned its previous position regarding the War. On June 22, 1941 Germany attacked the Soviet Union and, consequently, she joined the Allies. So far the CPI was following the policy of united front as enunciated by the Comintern. The CPI was in two minds. The all-India leaders of the CPI were behind the prison bars. Those who remained outside the jail did not want to help the British war effort. In December 1941 the CPI adopted the policy of 'people's war' and wholeheartedly supported the war, of course from a different point view. It opposed the Quit India movement and criticised the CSP and the FB for organising sabotage. This very approach of the CPI repudiated its stance as proposed in
The Draft Platform of Action in 1934. As a result of this the CPI's relationship with other parties got soured and for this very role the CPI was dubbed by the Congress and other parties as a 'traitor'. The first systematic criticism came from the INC in the form of a charge-sheet against the CPI. Amongst various charges the most important two were that: (a) the CPI by contravening the Congress constitution opposed Congress policy and programmes "from June 1942 onwards, and more especially, actively resisted the policy and programme laid down by the A.I.C.C. in August 1942"; and (b) "they carried on incessant propaganda through newspapers, pamphlets and books, meetings and otherwise in favour of the war effort, calling the war as it affected the people of India a 'People's War', when the Congress had advised the people not to co-operate in war activities." Ultimately the communist members were expelled from the AICC. Madhu Limaye alleged that "The Communist activities throughout the August struggle of 1942-1945 were directed towards active sabotage of people's resistance to imperialist tyranny and opposition to struggle in every form... Their support of Imperialism had become so shame-faced that they even actually helped the police hunt down the revolutionists." Masani, an ardent critic of the CPI, saw in the policy shift of the CPI 'the bonds that tied the destinies of the Party to the Kremlin'. In 1984 Arun Sh-
ouri, a journalist, has renewed these charges. Shouri put forward the following charges that: the communists crossed over and helped the British crush the Quit India movement; they did so solely to serve the interests of the Soviet Union; they 'deliberate-ly' tried to hide their real motive under the cover of nationalist propaganda like 'release the Congress leaders', 'form a national government' etc.; they lied about what they were doing; the delay in declaring the war as 'People's War' was due to the delay in getting the Soviet guidelines; 'when their joining the British to crush the Quit India Movement began to hurt them', the CPI began to champion the Muslim League 'to acquire a following among the Muslims'. While the CPI officially acknowledged that its political line was not wholly correct during this period, the debate still continues:

By June 1941 Germany conquered the Eastern and Central European states; Great Britain was at bay. With the entry of Japan the war situation took an altogether new dimension. From the European soil the war now reached the Asian and African continents. For the CPI, Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 and the latter's subsequent entry into the anti-Hitler coalition transformed the very character of the war. According to P.C. Joshi, the then General Secretary of the CPI,
We called it a transformation in the situation and not a mere change of degree. We said that the war which was so far an imperialist war now became a people's war because of the changed regrouping of forces, changed prospects before the world. 60 (Emphasis original - U.G.)

He wrote that the CPI did not change its policy "for the sake of the Soviet Union", but instead it saw "the new prospect for humanity that opened through the Soviet entry into the war." 69 He observed that "When the imperialist war turned into people's war, the world entered into a new revolutionary period... When Hitler attacked the Soviet Union the crisis of capitalist system deepened into a crisis of the capitalist ruling class itself." 70 The situation was so grave, observed Joshi, that the British and American governments were 'forced' to enter into an alliance with the Soviet Union 'the very power which they had attempted to destroy!'. 71

He maintained that the British and the American imperialists still tried to save and 'maintain their colonial empire but they are passing more into the grip of the people's unity.... Crisis and division in the camp of world imperialists and the growing unity of the people on a world scale to win the War against Fascism as a war of people's liberation - this is the main feature of the new revolutionary period of the People's War." 72 He also maintained that during the imperialist phase of the war the 'conditions in each country were maturing towards a revolutionary situation." 73
(Emphasis original - U.G.) But the entry of the Soviet Union "immediately precipitated a revolutionary situation, which meant crisis and split for the bourgeois ruling class nationally and internationally and a world-wide unity and a revolutionary war for the people of the world." Archival materials show that an article published in *World News and Views* entitled 'A Policy For the Indian People' for the first time proposed a change of line for the CPI. The article emphasised that the entry of the Soviet Union in the war and consequent regrouping of the nations had 'created a totally new situation' on the basis of which 'peoples in all the countries of the world' could be united and thus fascism could be smashed. Though the character of British imperialism had not changed, so the article stipulated, this fact "must not obscure for us the real nature of the conflict..." The alliance between U.K., U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and China, it was argued, 'radically transformed the character of the war, and of the peace that will follow the war'. It was stipulated that

The issue today is not whether any imperialist system shall gain or lose ground, but whether Fascism... is to prevail, or whether the alliance of the peoples in association with the Soviet Union shall gain the victory over Fascism and thus create the most favourable world conditions for the final liberation of all nations.

The war has thus not only entered a new phase but ... that
It must be viewed now as England's war against Fascism, the success of which is of supreme importance to every nation. 78 (Emphasis added - U.S.)

It was observed that the anti-war attitude was 'detrimental to the true interests' of the Indian people, that the hope of freedom of India 'is bound up with an anti-Fascist victory' that 'they stand to lose everything if they neglect to render that front impenetrable'. It was observed that,

In tune with this understanding a resolution on India adopted by the CC, CPIM observed:

The world conflict which has now opened, will determine the fate of all peoples. The victory of Nazi Germany and its Axis partners would mean not only the enslavement of the peoples of Europe, but also a veritable slavery of the people of India that anything that they have ever known before.

The victory of the alliance of the peoples in association with the Soviet Union means not only the liberation of the nations enslaved by Fascism, but the most favorable world conditions for the final liberation of the Indian people and all nations under foreign domination.
Harry Politt, on behalf of the CPGB, made it clear that, "it (war opposition and fighting for national government - U.G.) was a policy that was correct in the circumstances in which it was operative, but to-day (sic) those circumstances no longer exist." 81 As the attitude of the British Government towards the USSR changed, wrote Politt, the situation changed qualitatively. Politt wrote "... we are prepared to give this government our full support as the serious earnest of our intention to do everything in our power to achieve a united national front, that alongside the Soviet Union can defeat Hitler-fascism." 82 That the CPI took cue from Politt's article is evident in another article entitled 'Our New Line On War - British Comrades Correct Us' which was published in Party Letter No. 55. To quote from this article:

... These documents which have just come to our hands are an eye-opener to us: They make us at once see that we, the polit-Bureau (sic) and the leadership of the Communist Party of India have been putting forward a completely wrong political line on the supreme issues before all mankind, namely the joint war against Hitler - fascism. 83

It was admitted that so far the CPI failed to see "the plain blunt fact that with the new re-alignment of world imperialist forces vis-a-vis the Soviet Union the war as a whole ceased to be an imp-
erialist war but was in fact an all people's war against ... Hitler-fascism..." 84 The reason for this wrong perception, it was main-
tained, was due to its 'blind bourgeois-nationalist hatred of
British imperialist government' which prevented the CPI from gras-
ping the fact that "government was now in the same progressive ca-
mp with the Soviet Union ranged against Hitler-fascism." 85 But in
the same document it was maintained that the British Government
was not progressive enough to see that the final victory of the
new front "demanded the freedom of India and her voluntary partic-
ipation in the war. That is just the reason why the progressive
Indian people and the Communist Party of India have to take the
initiative in their own hands to be in that front, to put forward
and to fight for the demand that the Indian people achieve ... that
freedom which would enable them freely and voluntarily mobilise
their entire resources for the all people's war ...." 86 (Emphasis
added - U.G.) It was also stated that the victory of the Allies
'can not but pave the way for (sic) the complete liberation of the
Indian people as well as other oppressed peoples of the world." 87
(Emphasis added - U.G.) The erstwhile policy of non-co-operation
against the British Government's war efforts was now rejected and
three demands were put forward for organising the people in favour
of the new strategy, viz., (i) 'recognition of India's right to in-
dependence', (ii) 'establishment of democratic liberties and release of all political prisoners' and (iii) the transfer of power 'to popular representatives which would enable them to recognise the resources and economic life' of the country. It was also proposed that a national charter of demands should be drawn up which would be the "basis of mass struggle for demanding its acceptance by the British government in the interest of unfolding India's voluntary war effort to secure victory in the war against Hitler-fascism." 88 (Emphasis added - U.G.) This line of action, it was stated, fulfilled both the nationalist and internationalist aspirations of the Indians.

The CPI leaders were fully conscious of the implications of the policy shift, since the new policy of the people's war and India's national interest, i.e., freedom from colonial domination, seemed to be essentially contradictory. Pointing out this possibility the 'jail document' maintained that "any change in its attitude towards it (i.e., war - U.G.) appears contrary to its (of India - U.G.) national interests, as a slackening of its work for national liberation and assumes the colour of compromise and even "co-operation" with its national oppressor." 89 (Emphasis added - U.G.)
The 'jail document' bears the imprint of the political line as proposed in the *World News and Views* articles mentioned above. It sought the genesis of the World War II in the "intense imperialist rivalries to dominate and exploit the world." The most important feature of this war was, according to the document, 'the failure of the plans of imperialist encirclement' of the Soviet Union to destroy socialism and redistribute Soviet Union among the powers and the Soviet-German Non-Aggression pact, it was argued, was the 'proletarian counterthrust' against the conspiracy of encirclement. As the Anglo-American policy to play off Germany and Soviet Russia against each other failed, so it was maintained, the crisis of the world capitalism deepened. The Soviet Union appealed to the nations of the world to form a common front against fascism at home and abroad. A distinction was for the first time made, it was stipulated, between aggressor and non-aggressor nations and 'the parties of the proletariat in imperialist countries agitated for extension of democratic rights and civil liberties in the colonies, liberal concessions etc'. The 'immediate programme' of national independence was shelved, as it was argued:

... It could not be done just because the widest possible front against interventionist reactionaries, a front which extended to sections of imperialist bourgeoisie themselves, had to be built. The party must first remember this point. The colonial masses were expected to participate on two
fronts, without national revolution having been first achieved... 90

The document noted that the USSR was not just a nation-state but 'the biggest and the only breach in the steel wall of capitalism.' According to it the interest of the proletariat was to widen the gap between socialism and capitalism which represented two distinct and contradictory class forces and "The fate of the proletariat, of the enslaved nations, depends on keeping the breach open and then widening it. That is why the defence of the only proletarian state, the only Fatherland of the proletariat, is the fundamental task of all proletarians." The alliance between the Soviet Union and the Anglo-American bloc is temporary and as the defence of the Soviet Union is of 'fundamental importance' a distinction between the aggressor and non-aggressor nations can be made. It was clearly stated that:

...Had the Nazi aggression not been a potential danger to the Soviet, had it taken the form of expansion at the expense of some other imperialism, it would have been and frankly an imperialist quarrel and neither the Soviet nor the proletariat would have made the distinctions that were made for the reorientation of the entire proletarian strategy and tactics... 91

Every proletarian policy, it was stipulated, was to be made with an eye to defending Russia:
Distinctions between bourgeois states, between two types of bourgeois dictatorship - the fascist and democratic - become valid only in the context of their attitude towards the proletarian state, otherwise democracy is bourgeois-democracy and nations and states are either bourgeois or proletarian. 92

That is, the proletarian strategy in such a critical situation meant isolation of 'that section or sections of the bourgeoisie which take a lead in organising a direct assault on the Soviet.' 93 As the proletarians 'measure their national advance by the general international advance of their class' 94 and as the national proletariat constitutes a part of the international proletariat the colonial proletariat in determining their course of action, it maintained, must take into account the question of internationalism ('Proletarian Unity and proletarian internationalism subordinate national considerations to international ones.'). It was stated: "...Let it be remembered that alliance with the Soviet is contrary to the final and ultimate interests of imperialism, though it may appear to help immediately this or that imperialism." 95 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Great Britain accepted Soviet Russia as an ally only because Britain's safety got endangered, it was argued. This very approach towards the war led the CPI to formulate the policy that the attack on Soviet Russia was a grave threat to the international working class, including the working class of the colonies, since the defeat of Soviet Russia would lead the international working class
towards perpetual enslavement by 'the most barbarous type of imperialism' and also "will immeasurably weaken the incubating revolutionary forces, waiting to be unleashed" and 'will immensely strengthen the world imperialist system.' \(^96\) the defeat of Nazism, on the other hand, would immeasurably weaken world imperialism. Defining the term 'people's war' it was stated that the term 'people' stood for a 'multi-class unity'. "The expression "peoples' (sic) war" has only one meaning - the alliance of the Soviet Proletariat with the peoples of different countries to beat down Fascism..."\(^97\)

(Emphasis added - U.G.) The main issue, the 'jail document' maintained, was the "attack on the proletarian state" and the 'main antagonism' was "between the violent section of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as a whole. All other contradictions temporarily submerge in this main antagonism..." It was said that "If this temporarily helps one imperialism against another, it nonetheless weakens it against the international proletariat ... Irrespective of the fact that certain imperialist powers are interested in fighting Nazism out of imperialist motives, the issue involved, the safety of the USSR is a class issue, an issue for the millions and make the war a peoples' (sic) war notwithstanding (sic) British participation."\(^98\) It was also observed that "The very alliance of the USSR brings about on the one hand, a division in the ruling
class of Britain and America and on the other, a powerful unity of the peoples nationally and internationally..." 99 It was maintained that participation in the war effort did not imply compromise but co-operation with the USSR. Adoption of any other course would have meant helping the isolation of Soviet Russia and her destruction. It was observed that "To draw distinctions between the British and Indian workers on the score of democratic rights, etc. is to be guilty of breaking the international front and of failure to understand the international class interests which convert the proletariat into partisans of the war." 100 (Emphasis added - U.G.) It was clearly stated that this time the dominant antagonism was not between the colonial masses and imperialism. So co-operation with the British and American imperialism was proposed with a view to utilising the 'allied robbers' against the 'German robbers'. It was said:

... Let there be no doubt. By declaring the war as a peoples' (sic) war the party will not strengthen British imperialism but strengthen the world proletariat against imperialism as a whole and thus weaken every section of world imperialism as against the working class... 101

Though it opposed the policy of conditional co-operation it was suggested that the CPI should not 'cease to demand civil liberties, democratic rights, transfer of defence to Indian hands, Indian-
isation of the Army, National Government at the centre.' The docu-
ment suggested that the CPI should demand drastic curtailment of
industrial profit, adequate dearness allowance and increase in wa-
ges for the industrial workers; stoppage of debt realisation till
the end of the war; stoppage of rent increase and evictions was
proposed: "Without these the government cannot be kept on straight
path." 102 But it cautioned that,

At the same time the party must be ever ready to compromi-
se. We do not want disorganisation of the war effort. The
struggles are not intended to hamper disorganisation of
war effort .... They should not degenerate into anti-war
rallies.... They should not degenerate into attempts at
petty national advance at the cost of international advance.... 103

Evidently, the primary emphasis was on the extension of sup-
port to war effort, not on national freedom. It dubbed the Congress
proposal of conditional co-operation as a 'bourgeois slogan' and
noted that the "attitude of the proletariat towards the internati-
onal development of war is then independent of national considera-
tions and concessions...." 104 Hence unconditional support was pro-
pagated. Though it was acknowledged that any war-time national go-
vernment would enable the Indians to organise the war effort bett-
er it gave a caution that it would be, after all, a "government of
compromise between imperialism and the bourgeoisie." It appealed
to recognise the limitations of this line from the viewpoint of internationalism and suggested to shed off all 'national illusions'. And it hoped that India's "own chance of national liberation will come with a victorious Russia and with a weakened imperialism, facing colonial revolt..." So the CPI was advised to 'temporarily withdraw' its earlier slogans and work for a new type of united front consisting of highly antagonistic elements and classes viz., 'the foreign bureaucratic government' and the people. That is, advice was given to "apply the logic of united front to imperialism - the same logic which they applied to the national bourgeoisie all these days." However, there was no illusion about the true nature of imperialism:

... To-day (sic) when the proletariat is on the defensive, British Imperialism is its ally, but a wavering and suspicious ally who requires vigilant watching, an ally who would consistently attempt to safeguard his own interests at the expense of the people's war, i.e., a proper conducting of it.... (Emphasis added - U.G.)

The co-operation of the imperialist countries was described as 'a political windfall' and 'a historic accident'. 'This accidental ally', it was maintained, 'is not a permanent ally even in the phase of the Soviet-German war.' (Emphasis added - U.G.) And for realising this 'immediate' goal of winning the Anti-Nazi war the CPI was advised to withdraw the slogans of immediate national rev-
olution, general strike, armed insurrection etc. As it thought th- at the bureaucratic imperialist state apparatus was the most unfit organisation for organising a people's war it emphasised on the need of transferring it to popular hands. It advised the CPI to demand Congress withdrawal of 'the farcical satyagraha, support to war, resumption of ministries and a Congress-League agreement.' About the national bourgeoisie it wrote:

The national-bourgeoisie looks upon the present war as go- d-send (sic), and will be jubilant over further Soviet reverses, rendering Britain's position more difficult.... The national bourgeoisie is thinking in terms of co-opera- tion with imperialism... Even if there is no immediate compromise, the proletariat must come forward with the slogan of 'Win the peoples' (sic) war'.....

But, it appears, the CPI had no illusion about its strength. As the proletariat was 'weakly organised', the 'jail document' noted, it "cannot neglect the Congress which still continues to be the cent- re of political India... The demand of the proletariat for a national Government at the centre or some variant of it, for vigo- rous prosecution of the war... can not be achieved unless the Con- gress is, won over to them ..."

The line put forward in the 'jail document' was fully adopted by the politbureau. In Party Letter No. 56 was published a resolu- tion of the Politbureau which formulated the policy and tasks of
the CPI. Following the logic of the 'jail document' the resolution stipulated:

The present politbureau adopted a completely wrong policy to the war in the present phase because it forsook the standpoint of proletarian internationalism and adopted unconsciously that of bourgeois nationalism... We looked at the war from the point of view of narrow bourgeois-nationalism and theorised that Britain was still conducting an imperialist war..... and refused to see the blunt fact that the war was already a peoples' (sic) war.... Failure to see that now it was a peoples' (sic) war led us to put forward the slogan: our freedom first and then we will fight for the Soviet, which was in practice the policy of Nehru-ism....

It rejected the erstwhile policy of converting the 'imperialist war' into a civil war, since this would mean "the splitting of the world front of struggle against fascism and its sabotage." The Congress policy of conditional co-operation was dubbed as a policy born of 'narrow nationalism', as 'bourgeois nationalism' in the phase of the people's war. According to the resolution the policies of the CSP, the FB were nothing but variants of 'the policy of bourgeois leadership' directed to serve the purpose of 'keeping the radical nationalist elements under the influence of Gandhis-m.'

An Editorial of the People's War stated:

We reject the path of those who say no resistance is possible without National Government first as cowardly defeatism....
We reject the policy of those who say that co-operation in war efforts, strengthens British rule over us, as a remnant of the old non-co-operationist mentality. 113

Consequently, after the failure of the Cripps Mission when Gandhi had been thinking in terms of organising a non-co-operation movement, the CPI thought that such a course of action would open the door to the Japanese army and that "struggle or talk of struggle does not bring nearer international intervention for India's national demands... and help the British reactionaries to propagate the myth that Indian patriots are Fifth columnists...." 114

The CPI thought that the proposal of any mass struggle would divorce the Congress from the contact of the people and the latter would remain leaderless at the mercy of the bureaucrats. Criticising the proposal it was stated:

The sort of struggle Gandhi is visualising... is not a plan of action but a gamble, it is not fighting for freedom but escape into jails, it is not leading the people but forsaking them... such a "struggle" will not get us Freedom but Fascism. 115

The CPI opposed the proposed struggle...

... because it breeds disunity, it breeds disruption, it strengthens the hands of the reactionary bureaucracy, and it leaves the peoples defenceless and destitute against the advancing Japs. It will bring us NOT freedom but the Japs. 116
R.P. Dutt subsequently appreciated the CPI for its correct interpretation of and firm stand on the new line. He wrote:

... We have the impression that you have correctly interpreted and firmly stood for the necessary line of active support of the fight of the United Nations....

... The general line is clear: maximum mass mobilisation against fascism; full co-operation with all who oppose fascism, irrespective of political differences; no action of the present rulers, so long as they stand by the alliance and resist fascism, should deflect us from this line, which is in the interests, not merely of the world front of the peoples, but of the Indian people whose future can not be separated from the world front of the peoples....

The basic meaning of the CPI's line was evident in a 'Memorandum On Communist Policy and Plan of Work' which noted that the CPI had no doubt that the cause of the United Nations - a term used as a synonym of the Allies - was one and 'the interests of all freedom-loving nations indivisible and thought that in the immediate future the Allies would 'agree with the patriotic Indian opinion that the only way to effectively meet and crush the fascist hordes on Indian soil' was to win the whole-hearted co-operation of the Indian people 'by persuading the British Government to concede the demand for a National Government.' It was stipulated that all the communists - free or underground - were very eager to co-operate with the war effort if they could 'do so honourably.' To quote:
"We know that a large mass of our fellow-patriots consider such a course of action anti-national. We differ with them and we are convinced that the most patriotic duty today is to do all we can to halt the fascist invaders, whatever the political conditions be... This is our policy... What stands in our way is the policy of the Government towards us...." 119 (Emphasis added - U.G.) The CPI demanded unconditional release of all communist prisoners, removal of restrictions on all communists, withdrawal of warrants against underground communists and withdrawal of bans on party journals etc. It vowed to carry out countrywide propaganda in support of the war, recruitment in the army and organisation of suicide squads, cooperation with the Air Raid Precaution and increase of production by swinging 'the working class wholeheartedly behind the war efforts'. 120 The line and course of action proposed in the 'Memorandum' perhaps had its roots in a manuscript prepared by Ajoy Ghosh when he was imprisoned in the Itanagar Central Prison. The manuscript 121 stipulated that: (a) the rejection of the Cripps offer by the INC was a betrayal and all sections of the leadership were party to it; (b) defence of India 'in co-operation with' government was the prime need of that hour and from that standpoint the leadership of Gandhi and Nehru should be judged; (c) the policy of the CPI would be to expose the entire Congress leadership by tull-
ing the Congress rank and file how their policy meant 'no defence and therefore subjugation of the country by Japan'; (d) the CPI should not take the opportunity of the war situation to weaken the government. Point 14 proposed a line of action which was strikingly similar to the proposals found in the 'Memorandum' and *Forward to Freedom*. Ghosh then discussed the 'two trends' inside the INC as represented by Gandhi, Rajagopalachari and Nehru respectively.

We have already seen that Gopalachari and Nehru were opposed to mass movement during 1942-1944. Ghosh wrote: "... Are these two trends the results of the different interests of two sections of the bourgeoisie - one more or less unconnected with British capital and the other intimately connected with it? That is, are these two policies the policies of two sections of the bourgeoisie - two economic sections?" 122 (Emphasis original - U.G.) According to Ghosh,

The true explanation of the differences is this; (sic) faced with a crisis of unprecedented magnitude, the bourgeoisie as a whole is panic-stricken. Its vacillations and waverings have never been so great....

Ideological sympathies - pro-fascism and anti-fascism - play an extremely subordinate role in determining these policies except in the cases of one or two individual leaders. Subordinate also is the role played by the sectional conflicts of the bourgeoisie (economic). 123
He noted that 'unity despite differences' was the 'dominant consideration of all sections of the leadership' because such an approach was very helpful both to bargain with Britain or in impairing the 'likely new master' Japan. Hence, he wrote "nothing would be more fatal than the pursuance of a policy by the party which seeks to give a so-called "economic interpretation" of the differences, over-emphasise (sic) them and represent them as something deep and fundamental... Such a policy would tie the hands of the Party and reduce it to impotence." 124 However, this did not mean, wrote Ghosh, that the party would not make proper use of the contradictions in Nehru's and Rajagopalachari's statements. "But all these", he argued, "not in order to make the opportunist distinction between Gandhi and Nehru but in order to expose and isolate both. No valid distinction between them is possible as long as to the crucial question - defence in co-operation with Govt. (sic) - they give identical replies. The only distinction that can and must be made is between these leaders and the Congress rank and file, middle leaders etc." 125 (Emphasis original - U.G.) Clearly, Ghosh found no conflict of interest between the national bourgeoisie and the comprador bourgeoisie in the different roles of Gandhi, Patel, Nehru and Gopalachari. On the contrary, he thought that the entire bourgeoisie was in great confusion and followed a policy which fu-
rthered their interest to bargain with British imperialism.

IV

In the Bombay AICC meeting (August 9, 1942) the CPI voted against the Quit India Resolution. To have a clear view of the opposite approaches followed by the INC and the CPI we quote below relevant portions of the Congress resolution and also of the communist amendment. The Congress resolution stated:

The A.I.C.C. ... feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of the humanity...126

The Communist amendment said:

The A.I.C.C. ... feels no longer justified in holding to policies of inaction and passivity, and that it must now take initiative in building the United National Front of Parties and sections of the people, who want to secure India's immediate freedom to meet the present peril and who are prepared to participate in or support the formation of a provisional national government, which will undertake the organisation of armed as well as non-violent people's defence against the Fascist aggressors in closest co-operation with the United Nations and their armies. 127

After the adoption of the Quit India Resolution Joshi wrote that the proposed civil disobedience movement was "no national struggle
but national anarchy and national disruption which would help the Fascist aggressors and not India's defence and freedom.... It (the nation - U.G.) was left to a mad regime to act." 128 Not only that, he also wrote:

THE WORKING COMMITTEE HAD TIED THE ROPE ROUND THE NECK OF THE NATION AND HANDED OVER ITS ENDS TO THE IMPERIALIST BUREAUCRACY. THIS WAS THE LEAD THAT WAS BEING GLORIFIED AS "NATIONAL" STRUGGLE. 129 (Capitals original - U.G.)

Despite such severe attack the CPI nevertheless did not spare the government. To quote Joshi: "The insolent imperialists have struck the first blow. The Congress kept the door for negotiations open. The bureaucratic Government has answered it with the arrest of the entire national leadership and worse. The Government is the provocateur... it seeks to create an anti-national anti-Congress front." 130 (Emphasis added - U.G.) It was unambiguously stated:

We communists firmly believe that the lead for struggle given by the Working Committee was not the path of national struggle but of national suicide. Nevertheless the national leadership... had expressed the eagerness to strive for settlement to the very last moment. It is the insolent alien Government that has precipitated the crisis. 131 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

Declaring that the CPI would do everything to release the leaders Joshi appealed:
We appeal to every fellow-countrymen and every people's organisation to rise to the occasion. Today our very patriotism is on trial. The bureaucracy seeks to buy and destroy organised national movement, our only weapon against the fascist invaders... 132 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

The Editorial blamed the INC for launching a non-violent struggle 'blinded by the sense of frustration' but it vehemently criticised the government: "... It is a criminal culmination of the imperialist policy of keeping our nation paralysed and powerless even on the eve of the Fascist aggressors' onslaught. They denied us National Government and now they are out to crush the only organised force, the Congress, which could unite the nation and snatch National Government from their unwilling hands... A blow at the Congress is a blow at the Indian people, their unity, their potential anti-fascist resistance... To crush the Congress, therefore, is to aid the Fascists." 133 (Emphasis added - U.G.) It was pointed out that the INC had neither given the actual call nor prepared the country and that no call had been issued for 'anarchy and senseless violence'. However, in tune with its new line it appealed to the workers to stick to their jobs and advised the students not to 'participate in acts of violence'; it demanded the release of the Congress leaders for negotiation and for Congress-League unity.

A common allegation against the CPI is that by not participa-
ting in the Quit India movement and by helping the British war effort it betrayed the national cause; sometimes it is also alleged that the CPI conspired with the government and helped arrest the Congress leaders and their campaign for release of the Congress leaders was nothing but a make-believe device. The latest criticism has come from Arun Shouri who observes that the CPI 'tried to hide their real motive under the gilt of nationalist propaganda - 'release the Congress leaders', 'form a national government' - that they did so deliberately and consciously as they felt that the Indian people, given their lamentably low level of consciousness, would not appreciate the truth that was evident to every communist, namely that the interests of 'the only fatherland' must override everything else; ...' Clearly, Shouri imputes motives and his description of the activities of the CPI is highly partisan. Joshi's reaction bears strong anti-British and pro-Congress bias. As the Editorial and other articles show, the CPI did never question the anti-fascist character of the INC and its capacity to launch mass movement - the Congress perspective of war was vehemently criticised though. That is, the difference between the two parties was nothing but difference of approaches to the war. There is no denying the fact that the CPI supported the war efforts and followed an anti-strike, anti-peasant policy and was partially
successful in its efforts. The main reasons behind such a policy were — as A.K. Ghosh's manuscript reveals — first, the defence of India with the help of the government and second, to help the Allies, not only the defence of its 'only fatherland', the USSR, as Shouri would have us believe. Again, one fact should not be overlooked that at a certain point the INC was also ready to co-operate the Allied forces to resist fascism on condition that the British would form a national government at the centre and assured the British that in that case the INC would not demand the withdrawal of the Allied forces from the Indian soil. The CPI also supported the demand but it also put prime emphasis on the defence of India and also, of course, on the defence of the Allies including Soviet Russia. Thus the difference between the two parties was about the approaches, viz., conditional and/or unconditional co-operation with the government. Guided by the logic of unconditional co-operation with the government for the defence of India the CPI criticised all those (e.g., the Forward Bloc and the CSP) who organised mass agitations as 'traitors', 'disruptionists' and 'fifth columnists'. Thus P.C. Joshi wrote:

... To call upon the workers to go on political strikes is not to exert pressure upon the British Government but to disrupt the country's defence and starve the workers for nothing. Continued production is a vital war necessity whatever the Government might be.... 137
"To play with Indian production, to tamper with Indian transport", wrote Joshi, "is to help fascist invaders and not to fight India's freedom." 138 (Emphasis original - U.G.) He also noted that the Government repression had created a patriotic mass basis for real fifth column activity, that the patriots suffered from an illusion that the sporadic mass movement was national struggle and thus creating a situation in which every patriot was "a potential recruit for Fifth column activity..." 139 but nevertheless he demanded release of national leaders and denounced the government for its repressive activities. A CC Resolution stipulated:

.... The Communist Party warns the British Government that if it persists in this policy of repression ... it will only succeed in creating a common disaster for the British and the Indian peoples. The only way out ... is to stop this offensive of repression against the people and the Congress, to release Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leaders, to lift the ban on the Congress and to open negotiations... for the establishment of Provisional National Government .... The Communist Party of India.... appeals to the workers and progressive peoples of Britain and America to bring pressure upon the British to concede these just national demands of the Indian people.... 140 (Emphasis added - U.G.)

The Resolution opposed sabotage and anti-war activities on the grounds mentioned above. The Resolution proposed Congress-League Unity and suggested that if the right of self-determination to the Muslims was conceded by the INC bureaucratic oppression would collapse; the
Resolution proposed to organise the people on these lines. The CPI was opposed to Bose and the FB because, it thought, Bose "..... is securing for the Japs the best victory they could ever get over us; he is corrupting our morale; he is creating the most horrible illusion that our independence can be secured through Japanese intervention..." 141 Driven by this logic the Draft Political Resolution of 1943 dubbed the FB as 'the party of the traitor Bose', the CSP as an opportunist party which betrayed socialism and 'ended in the camp of the Trotskyite traitors' and the Trotskyite groups (perhaps the reference is to the S.N. Tagore group - U.G.) as 'criminal gangs'. 142

Generally, communists are blamed for their anti-Forward Bloc and anti-CSP attitude. But Nehru was no less critical of Bose than the CPI. In the Communist Reply Joshi quoted Nehru from the Bombay Chronicle of April 13, 1942 wherein Nehru almost dubbed Bose as a Jap agent. To quote: "the way he (Bose - U.G.) has chosen is utterly wrong, a way which we not only can not accept but must oppose, if it takes shape. Because any force that may come from outside, really comes as a dummy force under Japanese control. In effect it helps the invader..." 143 (Emphasis added - U.G.) In an interview with a journalist Gandhi betrayed anti-Axis and anti-Bose sentiment:
... As regards the Japanese, I am certain, that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would resist the British... Was there the slightest suspicion that we wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India destroyed? 144

The CPI was quite insistent on the release of the Congress leaders from detention. This was manifest when it denounced Amery's appeal to non-Congress parties, the princes, the Hindu Mahasabha and the depressed classes to unite. The CPI dubbed this as an appeal to "join in an unholy coalition against the National Congress and thus disrupt national unity completely. It was stated:

... Every party including the League realises that to work against the Congress, to join a government which crushes the Congress, is to sign one's own death warrant as a political organisation....

... They (Britain - U.S.) refuse to settle with Congress, when without Congress there can be no National Government nor effective national defence.... 145

All this shows that CPI's campaign for releasing the Congress leaders was not empty rhetoric. Despite criticisms of the Congress the CPI was conscious of the fact that without the Congress no political crisis could be solved. Those who write that the CPI was conspiring against the INC either miss or deliberately distort the spirit of the CP documents.
What is noteworthy is that this interview took place long before the August rebellion. It is a truism that the ban on the CPI was removed in lieu of confirmed assurances of help in the war efforts but it is also true that the CPI did not surrender slavishly. That the government was always suspicious of the CPI's aim is strongly evident from the documents. Any objective assessment of CPI's role should not overlook this aspect. Thus Stewart wrote to Linlithgow:

... I have my suspicions that the Communists are playing a double game. On the surface they are anti-Fascist and pro-war; below the surface they are anti-imperial and their demands for arms may have as much relation to one as to the other of these lines of thought.... 148

Lumley observed

... I am inclined to the view that the support we would get from the communists is probably not great enough to justify the social uneasiness which might result, and that we should therefore, go slow about it... 149

Similarly another note referred to the CP demands of recognition of India's right to complete independence, release of all 'anti-fascist' political detenus, withdrawal of emergency legislation restricting freedom of speech, press, organisation, and the right to strike etc. and noted that a 'disagreement among communists themselves over a change in policy' prevailed and that "The terms attached to the 'unconditional' support now offered, show that Indian
communists have been prompted to declare their support for the war more in the prevailing spirit of bargaining than through any genuine conviction .... The generous interpretation is that the communist leaders are anxious to co-operate (without surrendering their ultimate aims)...." 150 It is also evident that the government took strong exception to the critical tone of the People's War, warned the editor and finally decided on January 14, 1943 to stop further release of prisoners for the time being, not to increase newsprint quota for People's War, to instruct the Bombay Government that "they may proceed to demand security from the 'People's War'...."151 In August 1943 the Home Department wrote to all provincial governments:

... We have no reason to believe that their long-term revolutionary goal has ever been set aside... that the majority of the party are revolutionary first and communists second, and that they will make every effort to take advantage of the troubled conditions that are bound to accompany the difficult processes of demobilisation and changing over from war time to peace time economy. 152

On September 20, 1943 Tottenham wrote to all Provincial Governments that so far the communist co-operation in war-effort had been quite satisfactory since its legalisation especially, he noted, before the August rebellion the communists vehemently criticised 'the defeatism of Congress'. But, he wrote,
... subsequently, they have vociferously condemned the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Working Committee and have persistently demanded their release. The demands have been supported by a campaign for reconciliation between the Congress and the Moslem-League with the professed object of forming a national government. The attacks on Government which have accompanied this propaganda in the Communist Press have undoubtedly at times been embarrassing....

... that during the campaign for release of political prisoners there was a tendency to overemphasise the repression theme.... 153

Distinguishing between CPI's long-term and short-term policy he wrote:

... It is primarily a Nationalist Party working for Indian independence notwithstanding the lip service to Internationalism; and a large proportion of its members are attracted to its fold because it stands for the overthrow of British rule.... 154 (emphasis added - U.G.)

Again

... It is clearly impossible to expect communists to adopt a wholly loyalist attitude; as Communists and Nationalists they are fundamentally opposed to Imperialist domination.... 155 (emphasis added - U.G.)

Sometimes it is argued that the CPI had been paid financially for anti-Congress propaganda and for pro-war attitudes. Even Gandhi had his doubt and he wanted to check the finances. 156 The Home Department was rather amused to note this allegation and wrote:
... They profess to be averse to the acceptance of financial or other assistance from Government in their pro-war campaign and they seem determined not to submit to official control or direction in any sphere of their activity. 157

Gandhi later observed that he was 'completely' satisfied as to the party finances. 158 The Gandhi-Joshi correspondence and the Home Department file together dispel this doubt.

Any dispassionate scrutiny of the archival materials shows that Arun Shourie and others have not correctly interpreted this question. Shouri saw in the six-month delay between June 22, 1941 when Hitler attacked Russia and December 1, 1941 when the CPI changed its policy as an indication of the CPI's waiting for Russia's advice in favour of a policy shift. The release of Achhar Singh Chinna from the Punjab jail on May 1, 1942 who went to Moscow and brought the message of the change of line, 146 Party Letter no. 54, 55 and 56, the 'jail document' and Palme Dutt's subsequent article in the People's War eulogizing the CPI for correct understanding of the new line, and a CC, CPGB resolution published in World News and Views 75 establish beyond doubt the fact that initially there prevailed a confusion among the party cadres about the transformed character of the war and they stuck to the erstwhile line of war opposition till definite advice came from the CI and the CPGB. Be-
sides one has to take into account the fact that most of the then CP leaders were in the jail and government repression made any communication impossible between the interned leaders and the underground workers. Moreover, generally before any major policy shift every communist party pursues intensive inner party discussions. It constitutes one of the most vital elements of the CP organisation. So we see ample logic in Basavapunniah's observation that the delay was 'due to inner-party discussion at the level of the Central Committee and the Polit Bureau.' Saroj Mukhopadhyay, the Secretary of the West Bengal unit of the CPI(M), also shares the view.

Archival materials establish another fact that though the British Government sought help of the CPI for anti-war propaganda it had no illusion about the aims and objectives of the CPI. Almost all the documents cited above betray CPI's strong anti-imperialist and pro-nationalist leaning despite their pro-war policy. In fact, the record of the CPI's opposition to imperialism until 1941 is at any rate unparallel. However, for a short period from 1942 - 1944, the CPI's attack on imperialism became a bit blunted. This was due to its new policy of people's war. Let us now examine the theoretical validity of the new line. As we have stated earlier
the second phase of the War took on a highly complicated character when Russia joined the Allies. There is no denying the fact that this new development transformed the character of the war - the major nations of the world now being united against fascism. And it is also evident that the capitalist Britain or America did not want any alliance with the USSR during the first phase of the War but the subsequent events drew both these states nearer. Not only the CPs of all countries welcomed this but also almost all bourgeois governments followed the same line. In India the INC passed several resolutions which were strongly anti-fascist and pro-Allies and even it deliberately pursued a policy of non-embarrassment 'at the risk of making the satyagraha ineffective' because, so it was stated, the Congress had 'no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in the prosecution of the war.' It favoured stationing of Allied armies 'in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression, and to protect and help China.' In every session of the INC during 1940-1942 sympathy was betrayed for favour of Russia and China. Though Gandhi lacked clear internationalist vision, as Nehru correctly pointed out, he nevertheless opposed fascism. That fascism was a menace to the entire civilization was clearly appreciated by the Indian nationalist leaders. As we have seen above Nehru and some other leaders
were very eager to participate in this anti-fascist war. In the Bardoli session of the Congress Working Committee a resolution entitled 'Soviet Union and China' was passed where it was acknowledged that: "The Soviet Union has stood for certain human cultural and social values which are of greater importance to the growth and progress of humanity. The Working Committee consider that it would be a tragedy if the cataclysm of war involved the destruction of this endeavour and achievement..." As one scholar informs us that despite his pro-Axis sympathies Subhas Bose refused to allow the Indian legion to be used against the USSR and Burma. For the CPI the question of Indian freedom was linked with the victory of the Allies against the Axis. Tacitly acknowledging this Wardha session of the Congress Working Committee observed that "The freedom of India is thus necessarily not only in the interest of India but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism (sic), militarism and other forms of imperialism and the aggression of one nation over another." Though, however, it was stated that India could not join the war against fascism as subject nation the willingness to join the war was verily manifest. The difference between the CPI and the INC is that while the former not only betrayed concern for the Allies it actively supported the war efforts, made propaganda in favour of the war...
and even followed a class compromising line the latter propagated the theory of conditional co-operation, waited for negotiated settlement and last of all passed a resolution for civil disobedience. Even the 'Quit India' resolution betrayed great concern about the deteriorating situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts. Anyway, it proves that though the INC put prime emphasis on national freedom it could not overlook the rapid changes in the international scenario. It is quite difficult to logically explain the activities of the CPI during 1942-1945 especially its partial abandonment of class struggle and placing secondary importance on the goal of achievement of freedom. But in all fairness to the CPI it can however be said that it was quite natural for a communist party to be sensitive about Russia. Soviet Russia, the first socialist state of the world, was attacked and at a certain point of time it appeared that she might be defeated. Despite all criticisms it can be said that Russia's defeat would have meant the virtual destruction of socialism and the international working-class movement and the post-war world would have been different. The then state of mind of the communist parties world over could be surmised from the following excerpt of a Spanish communist leader:

For me, at that time, the defence of the USSR came before everything else, to such an extent that if I had been asked in 1936: 'Are you in agreement that the revolution sho-
uld triumph in Spain at the cost of that in the USSR collapsing? I should not have hesitated to answer: "No", because the USSR was a continent in itself, an immense force capable of carrying the world movement on its shoulders, whereas in little Spain our triumph would only have been ephemeral. One has to remember what that period was like. 

(Emphasis added - U.G.)

Moreover, it cannot be denied that so far the Comintern contributed a lot to the development of working class movements world over. The doom of Russia at the hands of fascist powers meant also the doom of the future of international working class movement. Hence at that zero hour there arose a paradoxical situation - nationalism and internationalism collided with each other. It is not a fact that during 1942-1944 the CPI completely abandoned the goals of complete independence and class struggle. It, however, placed secondary importance on these goals. Scanning of the documents show that the CPI was well aware of the true nature of British imperialism and repeatedly pointed out that co-operation with the British was temporary because the ultimate aim of British imperialism remained the same, i.e., domination of the colonies. But in the same breath it should also be mentioned that during 1942-1944 the CPI's main attack was on 'bureaucracy' not 'imperialism' as such and there is no denying the fact that their pro-war, anti-strike and grow-more-food campaigns were aimed at helping the war in which Soviet Russia was a party. Subjectively, it was aiming at defending the
USSR, objectively it strengthened temporarily the British imperialism. The CPI failed to appreciate the Leninist teaching that in the colonies the national movements led by the bourgeoisie against imperialism should be supported because it was revolutionary in the colonial context, though it might not be a natural ally. Again forging alliance with the working class and the peasantry was also necessary. The key to success of the Vietnamese communist party lay in the effective forging of unity between the working class and the peasantry. But in India the CPI failed to forge any such alliance. Its anti-strike and anti-peasant class compromising stand did much damage to the ultimate cause. It was never able to win the peasant masses from the influence of the bourgeoisie-nationalist party, the INC, which its Vietnamese counterpart did very effectively. But it should however, be noted that the CPI's policy of grow-more-food was not altogether meaningless in Bengal and Orissa where terrible famine took place.

As to the nature of the second phase of the War it can be said that even most of the non-Marxist historians have duly appreciated the transformed war situation. But perhaps its characterisation as 'people's war' is not correct. The CPI was thus mechanically counterposing the national and class question instead of a dia-
lectal fusion of the two. This, however, does not mean that the CPI's opposition to the launching of a mass movement in 1942 was wholly incorrect. The Congress and the official documents reveal that there was no plan of action, that it waited for a compromise, followed a policy of non-embarrassment and later disowned the responsibility for disturbances. Even Nehru and Azad dissuaded Gandhi from launching a mass movement but failed. Referring to this Namboodiripad rightly demands that "Communist movement therefore has nothing to be ashamed of in having adhered to the last to the position originally adopted by such top leaders of national movement as Nehru and Azad." The CPI visualised that after the war there would emerge a powerful freedom movement everywhere in the world, India being no exception. And in this regard the CPI's assessment was not wholly incorrect. But the CPI committed a fatal mistake by not supporting the spontaneous rebellion and thereby further alienated itself from the people. Joshi and Adhikari later made an attempt to find out the causes of the almost total failure of their new political line. For Joshi it was due to the 'Left nationalist deviation' in the understanding and carrying out of party policy, failure to educate Congress patriots and make them see where the policy of mass struggle was leading to, due to their 'wordy exposure of bureaucracy', their failure to activate the people and also
due to the fact that the edge of their 'struggle to isolate the fifth column from the patriotic masses was blunted' and that the slogan of mass production 'could not inspire the entire working class section'. The 'jail document' stipulated that the national bourgeoisie was following an opportunist war policy and wished to reap benefit from Soviet defeat. But it was not true. Adhikari later acknowledged:

... Our attitude of keeping away from the movement was both theoretically and tactically wrong. Was the neutralist and conditional stand of the national leadership — pro-fascist and opportunist? Or was it basically anti-fascist and anti-imperialist? We have to admit that it was the latter... (Emphasis added - U.G.)

He also observed:

.... The only path of preventing worst sabotage and developing real militant anti-fascist, anti-imperialist movement in peasant areas... was the path of being with the national movement and not of opposing it. Our wrong start via-via this turn in the national movement arose from our dogmatic understanding of proletarian internationalism and sectarian attitude towards the national movement. (Emphasis original - U.G.)

Ajoy Ghosh's manuscript placed prime emphasis on the need of defence of India (not freedom) 'in co-operation with the government' and maintained that the vacillation within the leadership on the question of co-operation should not be dubbed as a vacillation of
the two sections of the movement, rather both the sections emphasised unity of the people for bargaining. No doubt the PCI opted for bargaining by following the tactic of conditional co-operation. But it does not imply that it was not sufficiently anti-imperialist or it wanted India's freedom at the cost of the defeat of the USSR or the Allies. While the CPI's attack against imperialism got blunted during 1942-1944 the PCI did never abandon its strong anti-imperialist attitude. Basavanniah is correct when he says that the CPI "had gravely erred on certain tactical measures. In the course of the struggle against the world fascist bloc, its edge against the British rule became somewhat blunted. Its support to the anti-fascist war efforts became indistinguishable from support to the "British policies' war policies and efforts. It was rightly misunderstood by vast sections of the patriotic masses." 170 (emphasis added - U.D.)

To sum up, the CPI during 1942-1944 rejected its earlier policy of converting the war crisis and thus free India through guerrilla insurrection and gave unconditional support to the war and also followed a class-compromising line. This policy shift was due to their changed approach to the war. From their point of view, i.e., from the viewpoint of internationalism they were correct. But their class-compromising line was self-defeating. As
they failed to recognise India's immediate national interest -freedom from the colonial yoke - and thought that the INC had been following an opportunist policy and dissociated themselves from the mass movements they made a grave tactical error which alienated the CPI from the mainstream of Indian politics and greatly damaged its erstwhile record of militant anti-imperialism and sacrifice. One of the major weaknesses of the CPI appears to be its heavy dependence on external guidance. Despite Basavapunniah's and Seroj Mukhopadhyay's logical claim that the CPI adopted the people's war policy after prolonged inner party discussions other archival materials clearly indicate that it took cue from the external instructions as sent by the Comintern and the CPGB.

Secondly, it requires emphatic stipulation that despite many short-comings the CPI never abandoned the goal of Indian national freedom and never failed to point out the true nature of British imperialism. The official documents also show that the British was also aware of this strong nationalist and revolutionary character of the CPI. Though it supported British war efforts it nevertheless made it clear that the interest of the British, the 'accidental ally' of the Soviet Union, remained the same, viz., domination over the colonies - their tone of anti-British propag-
anda got lowered down though. For it, the co-operation with the British was purely temporary.

Thirdly, it vehemently opposed Congress approach to war not because of its softness towards the British imperialism but because it thought that any mass movement would harm the Allied cause and in turn harm the Soviet Union. Despite criticism of the Congress it did never forget that alienation from the INC would mean political wilderness and that no nation-wide struggle could be launched without the INC. It should also be mentioned that 'its 'release the Congress leaders' campaign and attack on bureaucracy was genuine and they had no ill will against the national leaders. But it definitely wronged when it dubbed the heroes of the Quit India movement - men belonging to the CSP, INC and the FB - as fifth columnists and traitors. This was an expression of their political short-sightedness.

Fourthly, the CPI thought that participation in the anti-fascist war would facilitate India's freedom after the end of the war. In the First World War Gandhi also cherished the same hope and helped recruitment of men in the British army. Even during the first phase of the Second World War Gandhi too favoured the idea of unconditional co-operation. And Nehru was ready to accept
'Dominion Status' (not complete independence) under the Chinese - American guarantee and strongly desired to help the Allies. Subhas Bose, on the other hand, planned to achieve freedom with Axis help which every Indian political party - rightly or wrongly - detested. No single political party had any clear vision about its proper course of action at that critical historical juncture. Given all these facts the question of 'betrayal' on the part of the CPI for rejecting the early revolutionary goal and for not participating in the Quit India movement does not arise. In fact, the Quit India resolution intended, so it appears, to threaten the British and did not aim at starting any serious movement. And, as the recent historiography shows, the movement was spontaneous.

And finally, the CPI's mechanical counterposing of the national and class question, instead of a dialectical fusion of the two, helped the INC in a great way. The CPI could now be described as collaborator and traitor and the INC could run away with the halo of patriotism without doing much in practice during 1942-1945.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See M. Basavapunniah, 'Arun Shourie's Hollow Exposures I', People's Democracy (henceforth PD), 8(28), 8 July 1984, p.6. Also see his rejoinder 'In Defence of Lost Honour. The Marxist Reply' in Illustrated Weekly of India (henceforth IWI), 3 June 1984, p.31.

2. See Basavapunniah's rejoinder in IWI, 3 June 1984, p.31.


4. ibid., p.395.


9. Gopal notes that "In their eagerness for a solution Azad and Rajapalachari stretched the resolution beyond warrant and interpreted it as an offer to assist not only in defence but in the war effort as a whole..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) ibid., pp.265-66.


11. Summary Proceedings of the Working Committee, Wardha, 6-14 July 1942 in ibid., p.121. Nehru also writes that "During the three years of war we had deliberately followed a policy of non-embarrassment, and such action as we had indulged in had been in the nature of symbolic protest..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India (Bombay, 1977), p.472.


15. ibid., p.289.


17. ibid., p.27.

18. ibid., p.34.

20. ibid., p.204. Sitaramayya notes that the Congress was not "...in any indecent haste or unnecessary hurry to inaugurate Mass Civil Disobedience before fully exploring the last chance of a peaceful and friendly settlement by a talk with the Viceroy and if necessary by addressing China and America, the other members of the United Nations, on the subject." P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, vol. 2, (Bombay, 1947), pp.346, 352.


22. ibid., p.292.

23. Nehru, op.cit., p.476. In the words of Nehru: "... Neither in public nor in private at the meetings of the Congress Working Committee did he (Gandhi - U.G.) hint at the nature of the action he had in mind, except in one particular. He had suggested privately that in the event of failure of all negotiations he would appeal for some kind of non-co-operation and a one-day protest hartal, or cessation of all work in the country, something in the nature of a one-day general strike, symbolic of a nation's protest. Even this was a vague suggestion which he did not particularize, for he did not want to make any further plans till he had made his attempt at a settlement. So neither he nor the Congress Working Committee issued any kind of directions, public or private, except that people should be prepared for all developments, and should in any event adhere to the policy of peaceful and non-violent action." (Emphasis added - U.G.) Also see Azad, op.cit., pp.73-74.

25. ibid., p.472.


27. ibid., pp.252-3, 255, 266. In fact, Chopra in this book has edited the Wickenden's Report which was prepared under the behest of the British Government and also some other information collected from different sources and tries hard to prove that the Quit India Movement was more or less a planned and organised one.

28. ibid., p.266.

29. D. D. Kosambi, *Exasperating Essays* (Calcutta, 1977), pp. 16-17. Gandhi and other Congress leaders got the news of their arrest beforehand due to some leakage from official sources. See Chopra, op.cit., p.89. Gopal comments: "... It was as if the Working Committee wished to escape to prison and to avoid decision at... the zero hour of the world." See Gopal, op.cit., vol. I, p.300.


31. H. Hallett to Linlithgow 31.5.42 in Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, vol.2, p.157. Several important letters and reports included in this volume reveal that Gandhi and the Congress had no plan of action. G. Ahmed notes that no copy of instructions "came to police notice at all in the course of searches or otherwise during the Congress disturbances." See Home Political File No 3/24/1945. NAI.

33. R. Lumeley (Bombay) to Linlithgow 24-27 August 1942 in ibid., pp.805-6. Also see Home Department File No 3/31/42 Poll(I), NAI.


35. Government of India to Secretary of State 5.9.42 in ibid., p.905.


37. R. Lumeley (Bombay) to Linlithgow 24.8.42 in ibid., p.41.

38. Linlithgow to Amery, 6.10.42 in ibid., pp.110-1.


40. Home Department File No 3/64/1943 Poll(I) NAI. This is the only detailed scheme of guerrilla operation during the 1942 movement.

41. ibid.

42. Rammanohar Lohia, 'The Freedom Struggle Front' in Home Department File No 3/63/1942 Poll(I) NAI. In a proscribed document entitled 'The War: Imperialist or People's? Attitude of the Congress Socialist Party Towards the War' it is found that the CSP did not agree with the CPI that with the participation of Soviet Russia the character of the war had changed. It is noted: "... The alliance of Russia with En-
The gland has not changed a bit the war... The truth of the matter is that each one of the allies is fighting to safeguard its own national interests." It was stipulated that "In no case can the present war be regarded as a people's war. The war in the main continues to be an imperialist war...... A genuine people's war should lead to the destruction of both imperialism of Capitalist Democracy and of Fascism.... we can render really effective aid to the Soviet Union only as a free people." pp.8-12. This pamphlet (no author) was published by the CSP in Bombay in 1942 and is available in NAI.


44. Home Department File No 3/64/1943 Poll(I) NAI.

45. 'The Cripps Mission' in Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose (Delhi, 1983), p.170.

46. ibid., p.122.

47. 'Open Letter to Cripps' 31.3.42. in ibid., p.124.

48. ibid., p.126.

49. For the Draft Resolution see Kripalani, op.cit., pp.198-200.

50. 'The Axis Powers And India' in Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, p.132. Similarly R.S. Ruikar, a Forward Bloc leader, wrote to Sjt. Hemanta Kumar Bose on 1.8.42 : "Congress Working Committee's move welcomed. Mahatma Gandhi is today following Subhas Chandra Bose and the Forward Bloc." And in a press statement (n.d.) he said "... Subhas Chandra Bose was no doubt defeated at Tripuri in 1939, but has emerged triumphant at Wardha in 1942." See Chopra, op.cit.,
pp.253-54.

51. 'The 'Quit India' Movement' broadcast from Azad Hind Radio, Germany, on 31.8.42 in Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, pp.145-48.

52. The Third Resolution of the Working Committee Meeting of the AIML at Delhi on 21-22 February 1942 in Indian Annual Register (IAR), vol.1, (Calcutta, 1942), p.313.

53. Presidential Address of Jinnah in the annual session of the AIML, Allahabad, 3-6 April 1942 in ibid., p.319.

54. Working Committee Resolution, Bombay, 16-20 August 1942 of the AIML in ibid., vol. 1, p.283.

55. ibid., p.284-85.


59. Summary Proceedings of the A.I.C.C. Bombay, September 21-23, 1945 in The Indian National Congress (March 1940 to September 1946), p.39. However, the Resolution stipulates that the people rose 'spontaneously'. Against this very Congress attitude towards the movement Jaiprakash wrote: "That Gandhi-ji should dissociate himself from violent activities, should even condemn them, was natural and nobody can have any bitterness on that score.... Already those who performed deeds of sabotage, have been condemned as enemies of their country's freedom. Those unknown soldiers... did not stop to consider whether the upheaval that caught them in its surge and flung them onward, was technically and in accord-
ance with the niceties of political formula, a Congress mo-

vement or not....

"That they erred is possible; they did no doubt err, judged
from Gandhiji's unapproachable standards. But, because of
those errors is the Congress justified in disowning them
and their struggle?...." This is an extract from Narayan's
article 'A Revolution is disowned because it failed' writ-
en during his detention in Lahore (5.8.44). See Home Politi-
cal File No 4/3/1945 NAI. This very mood of despair was al-
so shared by Aruna Asaf Ali. She wrote to Gandhi on 23.3.45
"Like driftwood caught in stagnant waters, rootless, banis-
hed, from all spiritual moorings.... that is how one feels
these days. There was a time when we of the August Revolt
thought and felt like Gods.... For the first time we feel
broken... We know ours is the voice of lost souls that cha-
mpioned a lost cause...." Cited in F.G. Hutchins, Spontane-

60. Government of India to Secretary of State 5.9.42 in Manser-

61. See Stephen Henninham's article 'Quit India in Bihar and
the Eastern United Provinces: The Dual Revolt' in R.Guha(ed.),
Subaltern Studies. Writings on South Asian History and So-

62. ibid., p.151.

63. ibid., p.150.

64. For the draft of the charge-sheet and a resolution expelli-
ing the communist members of the AICC see Congress Bulletin
(24 January 1946), pp.35, 4-5. Also see S. Sardesai's lett-
er to G.B. Panth of 13.10.45 wherein is also enclosed a do-
cument entitled 'Charges against Communists.' Shrikurtas Pap-
er, File No 177/1936-43. NMML.


67. Arun Shouri, 'The Great Betrayal', a four-part article published in *IWI* from 18 March to 8 April 1984. The charges are specifically mentioned in the 3 June issue of the weekly. p.33.


69. ibid., p.45.


71. ibid., p.362.

72. ibid., p.363.

73. ibid., p.363.

74. ibid., p.363.

75. Home Political File No 7/2/1942 NAI. This file includes extracts from *World News and Views* No.40, 4 October 1941. In the notesheets of the file it is stated that this anonymous article published as contribution by an Indian resident in London was in fact written by R.P. Dutt on the basis of Michael Carritt's article entitled 'India and the People's
War Against Fascism' which was never published.

76. ibid.

77. ibid.

78. ibid.

79. ibid.

80. ibid. This resolution was published in the World News and Views, 21(42), 18 October 1941.


82. ibid.

83. See Party Letter No. 55 in ibid.

84. ibid.

85. ibid.

86. ibid.

87. ibid.

88. ibid.
89. See 'A Note from Jail Comrades', popularly known as 'Jail document' (published in Party Letter No. 55, 1941) in Home Department File No. 44/32/1942 Poll(1), NAI. This was written by the communist leaders who were detained in the Deoli detention camp in December 1941 and was published in Party Letter No. 55 on 13 December 1941. This document was instrumental in the change of policy of the CPI during 1941-45 and was further developed by 'Hansraj' (pseudonym), Against Fascism. Forward to Freedom. India in the War of Liberation. (Delhi, February 1942). Henceforth Forward to Freedom. This jail document was also later circulated by the CPI on 20 February 1948 (Information Document No. 11/48) and the original cyclostyled copy of the same is available in FCJA, JNU.

90. ibid.

91. ibid.

92. ibid.

93. ibid.

94. ibid.

95. ibid.

96. ibid.

97. ibid.

98. ibid.

99. ibid.
112. ibid.


118. 'Memorandum On Communist Policy and Plan of Work' in Home Department File No. 44/32/1942 Poll(I), NAI. This document (23 April 1942) is marked as 'confidential' and 'not for publication' and concluded with this line: 'This memorandum has the general support of the Communist leadership of India and is an informal draft of our policy and plan of work.' Also see Hansraj, *Forward to Freedom*, pp.50-70. According to this author, "Neutrality in the existing war efforts is the policy of the bargaining bourgeoisie and not of the struggling people...." However, the author does not propagate uncritical co-operation. He wrote: "We co-operate where it is in the people's interest to do so. We resist where it is demanded by people's interests...." (Emphasis added - U.G.) ibid., pp.64-65.
119. 'Memorandum On Communist Policy and Plan of Work' in Home Department File No. 44/32/1942 Poll(1). NAI.

120. ibid.

121. This is a rare document entitled 'Manuscript in the handwriting of A.K. Ghosh' to be found in PCJA, JNU.

122. ibid., p.3.

123. ibid., pp.4-5.

124. ibid., p.5.

125. ibid., p.5.

126. For the Congress resolution see The Indian National Congress (March 1940-September 1946); p.34.

127. For the Communist amendment see Joshi, Communist Reply, p.95. The INC resolution is also quoted here.

128. P.C. Joshi, 'Bombay A.I.C.C. Session: Struggle or Suicide?'. PW, 1(6), 16 August 1942, pp.5-7.

129. ibid., p.7.


131. ibid., p.1.
132. ibid., p.1.

133. 'Fight Anarchy! Rally the People', Editorial, ibid., p.2. That the reaction of the CPI was no less patriotic and that its respect for and/or confidence in the INC was not fake is evident from an issue of Janajuddha, a Bengali weekly of the CPI. Referring to the previous number (12 August 1942) wherein it wrote that the Congress leaders had escaped their duty by managing to enter the jail at a crucial time it wrote in the 19 August 1942 issue, "... This is not wholly correct because though the leaders' proposal for movement was adopted, they did not start the same. On the contrary, they were trying for a negotiated settlement. Meantime all on a sudden the bureaucracy started arresting ... Bureaucratic repression took them away and thus smashed the attempt of negotiated settlement." (Translation mine - U.G.) See 'DamannitiRad Karao' (Stop the Reign of Repression), Editorial, Janajuddha, 1(16), 19 August 1942, p.1.


135. See Arun Shouri's reply to EMS Namboodiripad's 'Our reply to Mr. Arun Shouri' sent to IWI for publication in IWI 3 June 1984, p.33. Namboodiripad's article, however, was not published in IWI.

136. To vindicate the anti-peasant stand we cite a portion of an article published in Janajuddha of 8 July 1942. It wrote: "... The problem of the Jap fascist attack is much more important than the zamindari system. If the fascists can capture this nation they will revive anew the decaying zamindari system... The peasants have not forgotten the zamindars and the money-lenders even today they would exact their just demands—but they would not start any large scale movement now for the abolition of the zamindari system because that would slacken national unity, weaken the power of resistance and all this would help the enemies." (Translation mine - U.G.) See 'Bangiya Pradeshik Krisak Sammelaner Ahaban: Fascist Dasyu Age Jamidar Pare' (The
call of the Bengal Krishak Conference: Fascist Robbers First zamindars Next) in Janajuddha, 1(10), 8 July 1942.

Similarly, the Editorial of the Janajuddha of 14 October 1942 advised the workers to increase production and settle disputes through negotiation with the help of their unions. The political resolution adopted in the first Congress of the CPI noted:

"Though the crisis has deepened and broadened during the last 10 months, the country has been saved, though temporarily, from a national disaster. The main factor which is responsible for bringing about this change is the heroic fight of the Communist Party against the fifth column and its slogans, the fight to isolate it from the patriotic masses, to unite the latter for defence production, food and the release the leaders....."

Again,

".....Except in two centres (Ahmedabad and Jamshedpur) where the stoppage was powerfully engineered from the top, saboteurs whether from the top or from the bottom nowhere succeeded in stopping production.... Communists went into action.... with the slogan: "Stick to your jobs, for the defence of the country under the banner of the party."

The rout of the fifth column was complete. The Communists held the industrial front against the assault of the fifth column because of their long standing political and trade union leadership among the working class...." But the Resolution also admits that success was partial: "But the Communists have not been able to advance from this defensive position. They have not been able to rouse a patriotic upsurge among the working class enabling it to play its leading role in the defence of the country. Unless the working class itself girds its loins and comes forward to implement a patriotic Production policy, for raising production for the army, and for the people...the nefarious activities of the fifth column can not be finally defeated..." See Political Resolution. Amended and revised draft submitted to the First Congress of the CPI, May 1943. The original cyclostyled copy of the Resolution is available in the PCJA, JNU."
Also see 'Isolate the Fifth Columnists', Editorial, ibid., p.2. Adnikari later wrote: "Our programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection helps the Government, but that can not be helped. We do not embarrass the British war-effort because that in itself may mean aid to the invader."

G. Adhikari, 'Panditji Think Again', PW, 4(1), 1 July 1945, pp.5-6. In this connection we should also recall the Congress policy of deliberate non-embarrassment until 8 August 1942.

'Solve National Crisis Thru (sic) National Unity' Resolution of the first open session of the CC, CPI after the legalization in August 1942. It was adopted on 19 September 1942. See PW, 1(12), 27 September 1942, p.1. Also 'Turn The Tide', Editorial, PW, 1(8), 30 August 1942. It was observed: "... The first step is to win the national leaders back in our midst. The imperialists lie when they say the Congress leadership threatened civil disobedience; they were pledged to honourable co-operation...." p.2.

S.G. Sardesai, 'Patriots Beware: To Free India or Japanese Slavery?', PW, 1(10), 13 September 1942, p.1. For the same line of argument see 'The Way Out', Editorial, PW, 1(12), 27 September 1942, p.2; 'New Danger', Editorial, PW, 1(13), 4 October 1942, p.2. Joshi observed: "In the menacing situation then of actual Jap aggression and the very bad morale of the people, we considered it our duty to denounce the pro-Jap ideas and plans as treachery to our country...

Joshi, Communist Reply, p.16. Elsewhere he wrote: Anti-Fascist propaganda is missing from the Forward Bloc's policies, even when Fascism is at our door. Instead of roasting the people to the menace, their legal press carries on defeatist propaganda.... indirectly it paves the way for the Fascist invader. What kind of patriotism is this...? Or is it that these people nurse the illusion that
Fascism is coming as a liberator of our people?" P.C. Joshi, The Indian Communist Party. Its Policy and Work in the war of liberation (London, 1942), p.31.


144. Quoted by M. Basavapunniah in his 'Arun Shouri's Hollow "Exposures" III', in PW, 8(30), 22 July 1984, p.5. He also quotes from Harijan of 2 August 1942 where Gandhi wrote: "... I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis Powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can, therefore, be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists..." ibid., p.6.

145. 'The Last Word Is With Us - Mr. Amery ', Editorial, PW, 1(15), 10 October 1942, p.2. In an article 'Stop Sabotage ! Build Unity' P.C. Joshi made a distinction between the Congress patriots and the fifth columnists and observed that the fifth columnists hid their faces behind the Congress Satyagraha plan. See PW, 1(21), 29 November 1942, p.1, Palme Dutt later approved activities of the CPI during 1942. See his 'Free India's Millions - For Common Victory' in PW, 1(23), 13 December 1942, pp.1, 6.

146. Home Department File No. 44/32/1942 Poll(I). NAI. For the interview between P.C. Joshi and R.M. Maxwell see Home Department File No. 7/2/1942 Poll(I), Enclosure 5. This file also reveals that a security prisoner - Achhar Singh Chhina - was released from Punjab jail and went to Russia.
and 'Passed on the message he got from Moscow' to Deoli Prisoners. It is also mentioned that he got the message from the Comintern. Achhar Singh went to Moscow sometime before December 1941. Also see Home Department File No. 226/1942 Poll(I). NAI. That the British Government removed ban on condition of help in war effort is evident in Home Department's telegram to Secretary of State on 7 July 1942. See Mansergh, Transfer of Power, vol.2, p.345.


149. R. Lumely (Bombay) to Linlithgow 4.5.42 in ibid., p.22-23. Referring to a police report from Bihar J. Herbert (Bengal) wrote to Linlithgow on 23.7.42 that the Bihar CPI intended to support Gandhi's movement and he doubted that the CPI in Bengal might also follow the same line. ibid., p.440. In a letter dated 5.9.42 the Home Department wrote to the Secretary of State: "... Communist Party of India remains doubtful factor. Its official policy is still pro-war... but behaviour of many of its members proves what has always been clear namely that it is composed far more of anti-British revolutionaries than of genuine believers in communist creed...." ibid., p.906. The file which deals with Achhar Singh's release (7/2/1942 Home Poll(I)) also reveals that the British Government initially thought to approach the Soviet Government "with a view to seeing whether the Russian Government would be prepared to make a public pronouncement on the lines of the secret message Achhar Singh brought..." But it was also noted that "in any such action there was a grave underlying danger, that communists and other subversive workers while having no intention of obeying Russia's instructions would seize the opportunity provided to them for agitating for their release.... that before such persons are pro-Soviet or pro-anything else, they are essentially anti-British and that all the strivings are directed not towards helping Communism or Socialism or Soviet Russia as towar-
"...undermining and destroying the British empire..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) This note was written on 8.12.41. A Home Department, Delhi, telegram No. 6586 of 20 August 1942 to Madras, Bombay, Bengal, U.P., Punjab, Bihar and other provincial governments noted: "Information from various sources shows that individual communists, if not Communist Party of India as an organisation, are siding with Congress and either taking active part in present movement or inciting others to do so...." See Home Department File No. 7/15/1942 Poll(I). NAI.

150. 'Indian Communists and the War. Preliminary Note' 10.1.42 in Home Department File No. 7/2/1942 Poll(I).

151. Home Department File No. 7/15/1942 Poll(I). NAI. We quote from the periodical assessments on the activities of the CPI. On the activities of the CPI in Punjab in the second half of October 1942 it was noted: "Communists continue to conduct propaganda in favour of national unity, release of Congress leaders, criticism of government, and appeals to resist Japanese aggression..." Tottenham commented on November 25, 1942 on the role of the People's War of November 22, 1942: "It seems to me that the tone of this paper is... more and more anti-Government and therefore less and less anti-Fascist..." Another official commented on FW of December 27, 1942: "My own feeling is that the Communists and their journals are now doing much more harm than good, and have gone well beyond anything which was contemplated by Government when the ban was removed in July." (Emphasis added - U.G.) As to Joshi's letter to Tottenham of 19.10.42 for release of Dange, Batliwala et al. Tottenham wrote: "I am afraid that the reports we have received have been by no means uniformly satisfactory. In its written propaganda in its party organs, the pro-war theme has usually been subordinated to attacks on government and the same has been reported of many of the speeches made by communist workers." All citations are from Home Department File No. 7/15/1942. NAI. Though the 'Communist Survey' of August-September 1942 included in this file notes that "On the whole the labour, student and kisan sections of the communist "front" may be said to have survived the critical test of the past two months...",
it also mentions that "... the situation following the arrest of the Congress leaders led to a rapid deterioration in communist propaganda. The "struggle" became the all important topic, all others, including the war, receding very much into the background; contemptuous criticism of the civil and military authorities was reinforced... Anti-Fascist propaganda... diminished almost to vanishing point..." (Emphasis added - U.G.) See Home Department File No. 7/5/1942 Poll(I). NAI.

152. Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, vol. 4, p. 1212. This note was signed by R. Tottenham on 21.8.43. In this connection reference can be made to the willingness of the government to use the communists against the capitalists. Amery wrote to Linlithgow (7.7.42) : "...It may be that the elements we encourage now may not be reliable in the future: but they may be influenced in a better direction... Even if that does not happen, their emergence as a favoured political power, likely to dominate the future of India in a very left-ward sense, may exercise a decidedly steadying influence on Birla et hoc genus omne (and all that class)..." ibid., vol. 2, p. 350.

153. Tottenham's letter to all Provincial Governments (20.9.43) in ibid., vol. 4, pp. 289-90. Tottenham appreciates the help the CPI tendered during 1942 but also takes exception to its anti-Government tone and suggests adoption of a policy of neutrality towards the CPI and also for close vigilance over its activities. The 'Communist Survey' of April-June 1943, among other things stimulated: "... The eighteen months history of the "pro-war" policy shows that its development was dictated as much by nationalist considerations and motives of self-interest as by a desire for the continued integrity and further promotion of the Soviet Union. It is, therefore, too early yet to estimate how much additional support to the war effort may accrue from the latest modifications in their policy." See Home Department File No. 7/23/1943 Poll(I). NAI.

Gandhi to Joshi 11.5.44 in Correspondence Between Mahatma Gandhi and P.C. Joshi (Bombay, 1945), p.2. Joshi agreed to let Gandhi see the party finances and wrote that there were some anonymous donors and put down: "... But to dispel any suspicion that 'anonymous' may be code for Government cash I am prepared to give you (not your representative) the names." ibid., p.8. In his letter to Joshi (30.7.44) Gandhi let Joshi know that Joshi's answers were 'completely satisfactory' and that "I will not ask you further proof about your finances," ibid., p.18. Archival documents also reveal that as to the question levelled by Seth Damodar Swaroop and afterwards by M.R. Masani as to the alleged pact between Maxwell and P.C. Joshi and also regarding financial help given to the CPI by the Government for anti-Congress propaganda Sir John Thorne answered 'No'. And the Home Department notes on the file dated 12 March 1946 put on record that such allegations were incorrect. See Home Department File No. 22/40/1946 Poll(I). NAI.

See 'Communist Survey May - June 1942' in Home Department File No. 7/5/1942 Poll(I). NAI.

Gandhi to Joshi 30.7.44 in Correspondence Between Mahatma Gandhi and P.C. Joshi, p.10.


For Saroj Mukhopadhyay's views see Saroj Mukhopadhyay, Bharatpur Communist Party O Amra (We and the Communist Party of India), (Calcutta, 1985), vol.1, p.229. He says that the jail document was not the unilateral product of the communists detained in Deoli camp. He notes that the entire party began discussion on the changed character of the war and direction was given to every committee and leader to send their respective opinions. He writes: "... I can still remember that Joyti Basu et al. who were out
of the jail also sent their written opinions. Everyone of us sent our written opinion. The detenues of Deoli prepared a thesis after due deliberation. It was mainly B. T. Ranadive who wrote the thesis and sent it to the Bombay party unit. S.A. Dange, Ajoy Ghosh et al. sent their respective individual written opinions. Thus on the basis of discussion and written opinions the Central Committee adopted the policy of people's war. Meantime, of course, the opinion of the Communist Party of Great Britain reached the Central Committee of the party..." (Translation mine - U.G.)


162. Gautam Chattopadhyay, Subhas Chandra Bose and Indian Communist Movement (Delhi, 1973), p.17.

163. Proceedings of the Working Committee, Wardha, 6-14 July 1942 in Indian National Congress (March 1940 - September 1946), pp.120, 122-23. Again, on 27.5.43 Gandhi wrote to Maxwell: "The mass movement as the resolution sanctioning it said in so many words, was sanctioned in order to promote an India-wide effort on behalf of the allied cause, including the cause of Russia and China, whose danger was very great in August last, and from which in my opinion, they are by no means free even now." (Emphasis original - U.G.) Quoted by K. Basavapunneiah in PD, 7(29), 15 July 1984, p.8.


167. P.C. Joshi, 'For the Defence of the Motherland', PW, vol. (missing), No.49, 13 June 1943, pp.7-10. Also see G. Adhikari's speech 'Forge a Single Camp of National Defence and Liberation'. He wrote: '...the edge of our struggle to isolate the fifth column from the patriotic masses blunted and thus we were not able to transform the mass urge for unity into a mass swing for unity in action...' ibid., p.9.

168. G. Adhikari, Communist Party of India and India's Path to National Regeneration and Socialism (Bombay, 1964), pp.84-85. For Basavapunnaiah's stance see his 'Reply to Shouri II' in PD, 3(29), 15 July 1904, p.10.

169. ibid., p.85.