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to the
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of the Formation
of the USSR*

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CPI'S GREETINGS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF USSR*

(Speech of Comrade C. Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary
of the CPI in the Celebrations Meeting)

Chairman,
Dear Soviet Comrades,

I am extremely happy that our party's delegation is participating in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the first socialist state on our planet. Please allow us to thank the leadership of the CPSU for having invited us to this historic function.

Born in the wake of the Great October Socialist Revolution led by immortal Lenin, the Soviet Union has acted as a beacon-light of hope and inspiration to the toiling people of the world, for the last sixty years. Building a developed socialist society, which gave a life of happiness to the people, it has shown the way out for the people groaning under capitalism with all its scourges of unemployment, poverty, misery and oppression. It has given all possible help to the people fighting against imperialist domination and for freedom. Humanity is indebted to the Soviet Union for having played a major role in the rout of Hitler's fascism by sacrificing 20 million of its sons and daughters in the Second World War.

The heroic defence of Leningrad, Moscow and Stalingrad against the nazi hordes had received the admiration of the people all over the world. The superhuman sacrifices of the people of the city of Lenin in braving the 900-day nazi siege, in which over 600,000 people laid down their lives, are written in letters of gold in world history.

We are glad that 14 countries, constituting over one-third of humanity, have already embraced socialism, following the path blazed by the Great October Socialist Revolution. Many more countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America are taking to that path, after freeing themselves from the imperialist domination. Capitalism and imperialism are doomed because of the deep all-round crisis and the inability of the ruling circles to solve any of

* The CPI delegation to the celebrations in Moscow consists of General Secretary Comrade C. Rajeswara Rao and Secretary of the National Council, Comrade Jagannath Sarkar.

the problems of the people. It is only a matter of time when other countries sooner or later, will go over to socialism, fulfilling the dream of Marx, Engels and Lenin. 324.2

Seeing the writing on the wall, imperialist warmongers, headed by US President Ronald Reagan, are pushing the world towards a nuclear holocaust, intensifying the arms race, creating armed conflicts in various parts of the world and blackmailing peace-loving countries like India to fit into their reactionary global strategy for world domination, endangering the very future of human civilisation.

World peace forces are quite strong and can bridle the warmongers if they are united and act without losing time.

The socialist community headed by the Soviet Union is a mighty bastion of world peace. If the imperialist warmongers have not so far dared to plunge the world into a thermo-nuclear holocaust, it is mainly because of the armed might of the Soviet Union. For this, peace-loving humanity is deeply grateful to the Soviet Union.

Moreover, the timely and consistent peace initiatives taken by the Soviet leadership have given a great fillip to the world peace forces. The pledge of the USSR not to use the first nuclear strike against any country, made in its message to the UN and asking other nuclear powers to respond, was acclaimed by the entire peace-loving humanity.

It is a good augury that very broad-based united demonstrations against the nuclear arms race have taken place in Western Europe, USA and other countries of the world. In our country also, big demonstrations took place under the leadership of the Left parties, in which our party played a major role. In all 2.5 million people participated in various cities of our country, our capital city of Delhi taking the pride of place with well over half a million participants before our Parliament. We hope the campaign for peace will be further intensified and peace forces will be united on a world scale to bridle the warmongers.

It is a matter of great pride for us that our country, carrying forward the best traditions of independence struggle, has been playing a significant role in the preservation of world peace since the days of late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, along with the great Soviet Union, the countries of the socialist community and anti-imperialist regimes of the developing countries. The time-tested and close friendly relations between our two countries are a big factor in ensuring the stability of Asia and in the preservation of world peace. People of our country are grateful to the Soviet people and its leadership for the help they have rendered and are rendering for the industrial and technological advancement of our country. The eighty giant industrial

complexes in various parts of our country stand as monuments of unbreakable friendship between our two countries. The Indian people are also grateful for the help the Soviet Union rendered at the most critical moments in foiling the conspiracies of US imperialists against our country.

The recent visit of our country's Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, to the Soviet Union and the agreements signed have further consolidated the political, economic and cultural relations between our two countries.

There are many things in common between our two countries. They are not only big but are also multilingual, multiracial and multireligious countries. The successful solution of these complicated problems and the welding of a unified mighty Soviet state, comprising diverse racial and linguistic stocks, offers us an inspiring example of building a united India, in contrast to capitalist states which failed to solve the religious, racial and linguistic conflicts.

In conclusion, once again, thanking the leadership of the CPSU for having extended an invitation to our party's delegation to participate in this great function, I, on behalf of our delegation and the National Council of our party, wish further successes to the great Soviet people, Soviet communists and their leadership, headed by Comrade Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the CPSU on this solemn occasion.

SOCIALISM, DEMOCRACY AND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

M. Farooqi

The formation of the USSR in 1922 (December 30) was a historic landmark in the development of the struggle for building a new, socialist society in the Soviet Union. By then the first Workers' and Peasants' State, created by the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 headed by the immortal Lenin, had successfully beaten back the foreign interventionists (the imperialist forces of Britain, France, Germany, USA, Japan and others) as well as the forces of internal counter-revolution (i.e. capitalists and landlords). In the *first* armed encounter with capitalism, socialism had come out victorious.

In the course of the bitter struggle against the interventionists and the counter-revolutionaries the various nations and nationalities of the former Czarist empire who had established their own

Soviet republics after the victorious October Revolution realised the supreme need for greater cohesion and unity to successfully meet the dangers emanating from the imperialists (upto the end of the second world war the Soviet Union continued to face capitalist encirclement) and to carry out in a coordinated way the task of building socialism.

This laid the basis for the formation of the multinational USSR, comprising a number of Republics which joined together on the basis of *complete equality*, with the *right* to secede. Some other republics joined subsequently with the same rights. All this was enshrined in the constitution of the USSR adopted in 1924.

The USSR is indeed a unique type of federal state and only under socialism was it possible to build a federation in which all the constituent republics have equal rights, and there is no scope for any discrimination against any unit. We in our country have not yet been able to resolve the question of centre-state relations. In fact during the 35 years of our independence, complaints against the arbitrary powers of the centre have continuously piled up, leading to increasing conflicts which are being exploited by all manner of separatist and chauvinist forces.

The USSR's is the most democratic constitution in the world in every sense of the term. The imperialists and other bourgeois propagandists have in recent years, in particular, launched a big propaganda barrage against the Soviet Union for the so-called violation of human rights and even absence of rights for the people. This, of course, they do to divert attention from their own black record in this respect.

What is the truth? Among the first decrees and declarations promulgated after the Great October Socialist Revolution was the Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People. The fundamental rights of the people laid down by the Revolutionary government headed by Lenin included an eight-hour working day and social insurance, free education, freedom of religious belief, freedom of the press, right of recall of elected representatives of the people, etc.

All these were incorporated in the constitution of the Russian Federative Socialist Republic in 1918. Speaking about this constitution Lenin pointed out that "all constitutions that had existed till now safeguarded the interests of the ruling classes. The Soviet Constitution was the only one that served and would constantly serve the working people and was a powerful weapon in the fight for socialism."

In 1936 the Soviet Union had another constitution, reflecting the new stage in the building of socialism. The successful realisation of the targets of the first Soviet plan in the spheres of in-

dustry and agriculture and the defeat of the kulaks was a historic event. The rights of the people (including the right to personal property and the right to work) were further broadened in the new Constitution. Having defeated the class enemies it was now possible to introduce universal, adult franchise and voting by secret ballot.

In the course of its development the Socialist system entered a new stage by the stage of *developed socialism*. This stage necessitated new constitutional changes reflecting the new reality. The Soviet state which started as the dictatorship of the proletariat (to crush the resistance of the exploiting classes) and was called the Workers' and Peasants' state, has now grown into the *State of the Whole People*, denoting the fact that the differences between workers and peasants (and the new intelligentsia who are sons and daughters of workers and peasants) have been erased.

This new factor is reflected in the new constitution of the USSR which was adopted in 1977. The new constitution was not a lawyers' handiwork. It was made by the *whole people*. This point needs to be particularly emphasised. The Draft of the Constitution was thrown open for discussion. More than 14 crores of people (i.e. more than 80 per cent of the adult population of the USSR) participated in the discussion in the course of meetings held in every factory, farm, institution, military units, residential area, etc. About 4 lakhs of proposals for amendments to various articles of the draft constitution were made in these meetings. As a result 110 articles of the draft constitution were redrafted and a new article introduced.

Does a thing like this ever happen in a bourgeois country? Are the people in bourgeois countries ever consulted in this manner? The nation-wide discussion in the USSR on the draft shows the profound richness of socialist democracy. While bourgeois democracy is at best *formal*, the socialist democracy *actively* draws the whole people in the processes of its functioning.

In regard to the rights of people, these can be really guaranteed only in a society which has abolished exploitation of man by man. In a society based on exploitation, the majority of people have really no rights.

Having done away with unemployment and illiteracy and provided for a constantly rising material and cultural standards for the people, the USSR (and other countries of the Socialist Community) have become a shining example for the people exploited by capitalism.

The new Soviet Constitution (of 1977) has further widened the scope of human rights. Now the Soviet citizens not only have the right to work (and enjoy the right in practice), they also have the right to "choose their trade or profession, type of

job, and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training, education, with due account of the needs of society" (Chapter 7 of the Constitution).

Now the Soviet citizens have a working week not exceeding 41 hours (shorter working day in some trades and industries and shorter hours for night work). Thus the right to rest and leisure is further guaranteed—and there are plenty of facilities to enjoy the right to rest and leisure.

Free education, free medical aid and right to maintenance in old age (old age pensions) and sickness are among the other rights enjoyed by the Soviet citizens.

A new thing added in the 1977 constitution is the *right to housing*.

And these and other rights are not on paper. The state has provided for the enjoyment of all these rights.

Is there any capitalist country in the world which can claim to having given any one of these rights?

Citizens of the USSR are equal before law "without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type and nature of occupation, domicile or other status".

And of course "women and men have equal rights in the USSR".

Bourgeois propagandists allege that in the Soviet Union there is no freedom of criticism. However, the fact is that the constitution not only provides for the freedom of criticism, but also protects that right.

"Every citizen of the USSR has the right to submit proposals to state bodies and public organisations for improving their activity, and to criticise shortcomings in their work.

"Officials are obliged, within established time-limits, to examine citizens' proposals and requests, to reply to them, and to take appropriate action.

"Persecution for criticism is prohibited. Persons guilty of such persecution shall be call to account." (Article 49)

Besides, "citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of speech, of the press and of assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations".

All this is a complete refutation of the malicious bourgeois propaganda.

The Soviet people in a short span of time have become a highly educated and cultured people, enjoying various social, economic and political rights. This is the great gift of socialism to human civilisation.

ECONOMIC PLANNING IN THE USSR

Indradeep Sinha

I

According to the classical theory of bourgeois political economy planning of the national economy was unnecessary, unsound and even impossible. For, the chief merit of the capitalist system was that it worked by itself. "Free competition" in the market constantly produced an equilibrium which made the system "self-acting", as if it was being regulated by an "unseen hand". Periodical crises were the result of deviations from the basic canons of political economy. Hence, the best policy was to allow the economy to adjust by itself. State intervention was not only unwarranted but positively harmful. *Laissez Faire, Aller Passe* was the credo of classical bourgeois political economy.

Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, had exposed the utter hollowness of this bourgeois apologia for capitalism. Already, in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), they had referred to the "commercial crises... that by their periodical return put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society" (SW, I, p 113).

In his celebrated work, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* written nearly three decades later, Engels laid bare the anarchy that ruled in capitalist production. "Every society based upon the production of commodities", he wrote, "has this peculiarity: that the producers have lost control over their own social interrelations. Each man produces for himself with such means of production as he may happen to have, and for such exchange as he may require to satisfy his remaining wants. No one knows how much of his particular article is coming to the market, nor how much of it will be wanted. No one knows whether his individual product will meet an actual demand, whether he will be able to make good his costs of production or even to sell his commodity at all. Anarchy reigns in socialised production. But the production of commodities, like every other form of production, has its peculiar, inherent laws inseparable from it; and these laws work despite anarchy, in and through anarchy" (SW, III, p 138).

Even the emergence of big joint-stock companies and giant trusts and cartels and state owned enterprises does not abolish this anarchy. "The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation now presents itself as an antagonism between the organisation of production in the individual

workshop and the anarchy of production in society generally" (*Ibid.*, p 140).

This antagonism can be removed only through a socialist revolution. "By this act", Engels concluded, "the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialised character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialised production upon a pre-determined plan becomes henceforth possible" (*Ibid.*, p 151).

It is quite natural, therefore, that the first land of victorious proletarian socialist revolution should also become the first country to adopt economic planning as an instrument of state policy for achieving rapid economic development at minimum social cost.

Already during the course of foreign intervention and civil war Lenin sloganised the task in the famous dictum: "*Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country.*" He explained, "only when the country has been electrified, and industry, agriculture and transport have been placed on the technical basis of modern largescale industry, only then shall we be fully victorious" (quoted in Lenin's *Plan of Building Socialism in the USSR*, pp 36-37).

In accordance with this dictum, the State Plan for the electrification of Russia (GOELRO) was drawn up in 1920 which visualised the construction of 30 new electric power stations with a total capacity of 1,500,000 kwh within the next 10-15 years.

The GOELRO plan was followed by setting up of a central planning authority (the GOSPLAN) which started work on the preparations for the first Five-Year Plan. After settling various policy questions raised in connection with the preparation of the plan document, of which as many as six drafts were prepared one after the other, the final draft was approved by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on 28 May, 1929. The scene of the presentation of the plan has been described in the following picturesque words in a Soviet publication:

"On 20 May, 1929, the final decision was taken in Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre. Gleb Krzhizhanovsky delivered the main report. A huge map stretched right across the back of the stage, showing the Soviet Union as it was to look in five years' time. Eventually, the map spoke its own story, when dozens of stars, dots, squares and lines lit up right across it. This conjured up pictures of new electric power stations, coal mines, oil wells, tractor and motor plants, collective and state farms, railways and new towns. A roar of cheering filled the hall when at the end of the report all the lights on the map lit up, as if a magic wand had lifted the curtain that concealed the country's future

and revealed the Soviet Union of 1933—a mighty industrial and agrarian power. The delegates greeted this picture with thunderous applause and rose as a man to sing the *Internationale* in a mighty chorus. Discussions continued for several days. Finally, on 28 May, 1929 the plan was adopted by the country's supreme legislative organ" (*A Short History of Soviet Society*, p 152).

The USSR thus launched itself on the path of planned economic development.

II

But the path of planned economic development was not easy. There was no precedent to fall back upon. Bourgeois economists and politicians denounced Soviet planning as "utopian", "unpractical" and even as "a gamble" which was "doomed" to failure".

There were differences inside the party leadership about the strategy and the course of planned economic development. One section headed by Trotsky denied the possibility of building socialism in a backward country like Russia. Another section held the view that in view of its backwardness, USSR was bound to remain an agrarian country for a long time to come, exporting agricultural produce and importing machinery and capital goods. Hence, the plan must give priority to agriculture and light industries.

Both these points of view were rejected by the Fourteenth Party Congress (1925). According to the official History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1960), "The Fourteenth Congress of the CPSU(B) has gone down in history as the *industrialisation Congress*. Its decisions expressed the Leninist line of the party—the rapid development of heavy industry, largescale socialist machine industry, capable of equipping the factories and agriculture with up-to-date machinery and reorganising peasant farming along socialist lines. 'The conversion of our country from an agrarian to an industrial country able to produce the equipment it needs by its own efforts—that is the essence, the basis of our general line', said Stalin at the Congress" (p 399).

The resolution adopted at the Fourteenth Congress enunciated as the leading principle governing economic construction "that the Soviet Union be converted from a country which imports machines to a country which produces machines, in order that by this means the Soviet Union in the midst of capitalist encirclement should not become an economic appendage of the capitalist world economy but an independent economic unit

which is building socialism"; and it called for "a fight against disbelief in the construction of socialism in one country". (Quoted in Maurice Dobb: *Soviet Economic Development since 1917*, p 192.)

Another question on which there were sharp differences was the method of raising the necessary financial resources. As the official history of the CPSU points out, "largescale capital construction in industry called for investment of thousands of millions of rubles, but the Soviet Union was not a rich country at that time. The capitalist countries had built their heavy industry by plundering the colonies and semicolonies, by exacting war indemnities, by ruthlessly exploiting the working people in their own countries. The Soviet Union could not as a matter of principle resort to such means of obtaining funds; they were incompatible with the socialist system. Foreign loans had played a big part in the industrialisation of the capitalist countries. The Soviet Union could not count on foreign loans, because the capitalist countries refused to grant it any. The funds needed to radically reequip the old factories and to build new ones had to be found inside the country. And they were found, thanks to the gains of the October Socialist Revolution" (p 407).

The sources of accumulation were "profits from state-owned factories, transport, banks and state-controlled home and foreign trade".

As a result of radical land reforms, the Soviet peasantry had made a gain of 700 million gold rubles per year, which it used to pay to the landlords. But there were sharp differences on how and how much of these resources could be mobilised for the industrialisation of the country.

The Trotskytes, parading the false banner of "the economic dictatorship of industry" over agriculture, demanded "primitive socialist accumulation of capital" through the "exploitation" of small-scale industry and peasant agriculture "by extracting from the latter a greater sum of values than was given to it of industrial products in exchanges", *Maurice Dobb*, op cit, pp 182-85).

This, as we know from the bitter experience of the peasantry in our country, was a policy of denying remunerative prices to the peasants by imposing on them a regime of unequivalent exchange. This policy was rejected by the Thirteenth Party Conference which endorsed "the official policy of expanding exchange between town and village by lowering industrial prices". This concession to the peasantry was denounced by the Trotsky-

tes as "appeasement of kulaks". This criticism was rejected by the Fourteenth Congress which advanced the slogan of turning "the face to village" in order to strengthen the alliance of the working class with the middle peasantry.

After defeat of the "left" deviationists headed by Trotsky and the right deviationists headed by Bukharin, the CPSU (B) led the Soviet working class in the struggle for socialist industrialisation and the peasantry in the struggle for voluntary collectivisation of agriculture. Mass enthusiasm was so great that the first Five Year Plan was completed ahead of schedule—in four years and three months.

By the time the Second Five Year Plan was completed in 1937, "USSR had become an advanced industrial state. By that time the country had commissioned 6000 new plants and factories and the output of industrial products went up 4.5 times. It took the United States... nearly 40 years (from 1890 to 1929) to reach the level of industrial production which the Soviet Union reached in just 10 years" (*Lenin's Plan of Building Socialism in the USSR*, pp 66-67).

According to figures cited by Stalin, the national income of USSR increased from nearly 25 billion roubles in 1928 to 105 billion rubles in 1938, the number of workers and employees increased from 11 millions to 38 millions, unemployment which stood at 1,720,000 in 1928 was abolished in 1930, foodgrain production increased from 50.3 million tonnes in 1922 (as against 86 million tonnes in 1913) to 95 million tonnes in 1938, the average annual wage of industrial workers increased from 1513 rubles in 1933 to 3447 rubles in 1938, which was over and above an increase of 67 per cent achieved during the First Five Year Plan. According to other official data, the per capita national income which stood at 18.70 rubles in 1921 (as against 48.20 rubles in 1913) increased to 216.20 rubles in 1940. State budget appropriation for social and cultural services increased from 5,839 million rubles in 1933 to 35,202 million rubles in 1938. All figures are in constant prices, because there was no inflation in the USSR (*Problems of Leninism*, pp 416 and 619).

The spirit of this great endeavour was summed up by Stalin in the following words: "We are advancing full steam ahead along the path to socialism leaving behind the age old 'Russian backwardness'. We are becoming a

country of metal, a country of automobiles, a country of tractors. And when we have put the USSR in a motor car and the *mouzhik* upon a tractor, we shall see which countries may then be 'classified' as backward and which as advanced" (quoted in *Dobb*, op cit, p 245).

It was this spirit which made the Soviet Union victorious over the highly developed Nazi Germany during the Second World War to the surprise of the entire capitalist world.

III

The story of postwar planned economic development of the USSR may be briefly told. As an introduction, however, it is necessary to state that the Nazis destroyed nearly 40 per cent of the productive equipment built during the twelve prewar years of planned economic development. Hence, after the end of the war, the Fourth Five Year Plan (1946-50) set the task of rehabilitation, modernisation and further expansion of the national economy. By 1948, industrial output reached the pre-war level and by 1950 it increased further. In agriculture, however, the pace was slower and the pre-war level of output was barely touched even in 1950.

Compared to 1940, national income in 1981 had increased 14.6 times, industrial output 22 times, agricultural output 2.4 times and real per capita income 6 times.

Foodgrains production in the USSR, which had stood at 95.6 million tonnes in 1940 and had gone down to 47.3 million tonnes in 1945, increased to 64.8 million tonnes in 1950 and to 237.4 million tonnes in 1978, though it fell down to 179 and 189 million tonnes respectively in the subsequent two years.

But spectacular progress was made in the output of animal products. For example, between 1945 and 1980, the output of meat increased from 2.6 to 15.1 million tonnes, of milk from 26.4 to 90.7 million tonnes and of eggs from 4.9 to 67.7 billion numbers. The pattern of per capita food consumption has radically changed. For example, between 1913 and 1980, while the per capita per annum consumption of foodgrains *declined* from 200 kilograms to 139 kilograms, the consumption of meat *increased* from 29 to 58 kilograms, of milk from 154 to 314 kilograms, of fish from 6.7 to 17.6 kilograms, of sugar from 8.1 to 44.4 kilograms and of eggs from 48 to 239 numbers. In such a

situation, any talk of the existence of a "food crisis" in the USSR can only be the result of either ignorance or prejudice or of both.

In rates of growth the USSR has left the most advanced country of the capitalist world far behind. For example, between 1950 and 1981, while in the case of the USSR, the annual rate of growth of national income was 7.3 per cent, of industrial output 8.5 per cent and of agricultural output 2.9 per cent, the same in the case of the USA was only 3.4 per cent, 4 per cent and 1.8 per cent respectively. Consequently, the USSR is fast overtaking the USA in total volume of industrial production and in many fields is even ahead of it. Today, the USSR accounts for nearly 20 per cent of the world industrial output as against 1 per cent in 1922.

The minimum monthly wage in the USSR has increased from 33.1 rubles in 1940 to 172.5 rubles in 1981. Including social benefits, it has increased from 40.6 to 238 rubles or by 6 times. The real income of the population as a whole has increased 6.1 times.

The Soviet Union is far ahead of even the most advanced capitalist country in the world in the field of science, education and culture. In 1980 it had 14 lakh scientific workers as against 1 lakh in 1940. In the latter year, it had 100 million students in a population of 268.8 millions. It had 38 doctors per 10,000 of the population as against 22 in USA, 16 in Japan and 16 in Great Britain.

In 1929 Stalin talked of putting the USSR in a motor car. Half century of planned economic development has brought the USSR to the space age and put the Soviet youth in the sputnik.

Soviet experience of planned economic development has quite a few important lessons for the world and specially for India. Its epoch-making success in building an advanced socialist society in one of the most backward countries of Europe in a historically short span of time and solely by its own efforts, has acted as an inspiring example to all countries that have succeeded in throwing off the yoke of imperialist exploitation. Planning in India has drawn its inspiration primarily from the successes achieved by the USSR in the field of planned economic development.

It is tempting to compare the results of Indian planning

with the successes achieved by the USSR during comparable periods of development.

According to a competent observer, "with respect to its initial situation, Russia prior to 1917 was not unlike a country such as India (*Dobb, op cit, p 11*).

And yet, as noted above, during the first ten years of planning (1928-38), the USSR was transformed from an agrarian country to an industrial country, the percentage of population engaged in industry *increased* from 17.6 to 50.2 per cent while the percentage engaged in agriculture *declined* from 77.8 per cent to 49.8 per cent, and unemployment and poverty were abolished for ever.

But in India, even after 28 years of planning, national income grew at the low rate of 3.5 per cent per annum, industrial production at the rate of 6.1 per cent per annum and agricultural production grew at the rate of 2.7 per cent per annum. The percentage of population dependent on agriculture remained more or less stationary at 73 per cent, the number of registered unemployed increased from 3.37 lakhs to 12.5 lakhs and more than 50 per cent of the population was pushed below the poverty line, while a handful of monopolists grabbed nearly half the private corporate wealth in the country. All this happened despite massive and disinterested assistance from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in such key sectors of the economy as steel, coal, oil, electricity, engineering, non-ferrous metallurgy, which enabled our country to stand up against imperialist pressure and blackmail. Without this assistance our position would have been far worse than it is today.

The political resolution adopted by the Sixth Congress of the CPI made a basic critique of the plan policies as being pursued by the ruling bourgeoisie. Characterising the plans as "fundamentally defective" the resolution stated: "Apart from the defects inherent in all plans for capitalist development (due to the conflict between planning and the spontaneous laws of capitalism), the other shortcomings of the plan consist in the refusal to adequately mobilise the resources in possession of the rich propertied classes, to ban the wasteful and luxurious expenditure by them and above all, to bring out such institutional changes as nationalisation of the most important foreign concerns, of banking and such other sectors of economy as are neces-

sary, as well as land reforms in the interest of the peasantry" (p 5).

This criticism remains valid even today. Despite demagogic talks about socialism, the national bourgeoisie has more and more inclined towards compromise with the monopolists, the landlords and even the multinationals. Despite certain limited measure of reforms, it has failed to free the productive forces from the stranglehold of landlords, monopolists, profiteers and black-money operators. When faced with an all pervading crisis of its plans and policies, the bourgeoisie has sought to "improve" the situation by granting even more harmful concessions to the vested interests. This is intensifying the crisis still further.

Even from a cursory comparison of the Soviet and Indian experience in planned economic development, a few broad conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, successful economic planning requires control by a popular state over all the main levers of production, distribution and exchange. Secondly, rapid economic growth requires a policy of extended reproduction which depends upon faster development of basic means of production on a priority basis. Thirdly, mobilisation of resources depends upon effective plugging of all loopholes through which social production flows into the hands of the reactionary vested interests. Fourthly, full popular mobilisation for the implementation of the plan requires removals of all burdens that oppress the people, a steady improvement in their living conditions, and institution of a system of popular democratic state apparatus. Lastly, effective, speedy and smooth implementation of plan policies depends upon clarity of vision and unity of will in a ruling party which is ideologically committed to planned economic development and politically determined to overcome all hurdles with the support of the people.

HOW THE NATIONAL QUESTION WAS SOLVED IN THE USSR

N. Rajasekhara Reddi

The superiority of socialism over capitalism has been confirmed in many fields like the solution of social problems, abolition of exploitation of labour, establishment of an economy free from crisis, abolition of unemployment and making a better and fuller life available to all people and giving full scope for the education and cultural progress for not just a privileged few, but to all people.

The list of social problems in the solution of which socialism has proved its superiority can be further lengthened. But to the mind of people who till yesterday were groaning under the heel of colonial domination and who still carry the deadweight of the colonial past and have to face the neo-colonialist offensive in the present period, one achievement of socialism stands out most prominently, that is, the solution of the national question.

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics it is necessary to remind oneself about this glorious achievement of socialism and also learn a lesson or two for the benefit of the revolutionary struggle of our own country, with its numerous nationalities.

Before the October Socialist Revolution, Czarist Russia was in a real sense of the term a prison-house of the peoples. It embraced a large number of peoples, some of whom had already attained nationhood, some nationalities in the process of development, some yet to take the first steps in that direction. A few were at the middle level of capitalist development and some at its very initial stage. Peoples of Central Asia (today's Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, etc.) lived almost in a feudal society. There were also people living a tribal or nomadic life. Over all of them was the oppression of the master nation, the Great Russians. Political inequality was aggravated by economic and cultural inequality. Most of the areas of the national minorities were agrarian and raw material appendages of Great Russia, the familiar position of colonial countries. Industry in most of them was hardly more than embryonic. Cultural and educational level of these nationalities, particularly those of Central Asia, was appallingly low. In pre-revolutionary Tajikistan there was one literate person for every 2,000! There was one doctor for every 50,000 of popula-

tion in what is now Uzbekistan. In the North, many nationalities had not even heard of medical aid. There was not even one higher educational institution (college) in Byelo-Russia, Azerbaijan, Kirghizia or Tajikistan. There was only one such institution in Georgia. Among the Uzbeks, before the revolution, only two individuals had higher education! Over 40 nationalities had no written script. Naturally life of these oppressed peoples was intolerably hard. National oppression of Great Russian officials and governors, compounded by the social oppression of their own aristocrats (who always sided with the Great Russian rulers), made their life miserable. Grinding poverty, perpetual hunger and cold were their lot.

There were frequent eruptions of struggles for national liberation. Though the Russian revolutionary democrats sympathised and supported them, the imperialist army and troops always suppressed them. Not until the emergence of the revolutionary movement of the Russian working class led by the Bolsheviks and the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia did their own struggle succeed.

Since then conditions of these oppressed nationalities have changed at a tempestuous speed. Illiteracy disappeared in all these nationalities as early as 1930. Today each of these nationalities has its own institutions of higher learning and academies of sciences. In Kirghizia, which has only a population of 3.5 millions, over a million pupils and students are in schools and colleges and yet before the revolution the Kirghiz language had no script. Today in Kazakhstan 654 persons out of every thousand engaged in economy have either a higher or secondary education. In Kazakhstan today there are $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as many specialists with higher education as in the whole of Czarist Russia before the revolution.

In Uzbekistan it is 848 per thousand, which is higher than the average of the whole Soviet Union. It is incredible but true that in Uzbekistan, where at the beginning of the century literacy was only 2 per cent today the number of students per thousand of the population is almost twice as many as in France, three times as many as in Britain and Italy.

Economic development of these outlying nationalities has been no less breathtaking. Great advance has been made in agriculture and industry. In places where industry was practically non-existent, huge modern industrial esta-

blishments have come up and a class of industrial workers has emerged. These places have become modern industrial republics within the lifetime of one generation.

Take the case of Uzbekistan again. It has more than 100 branches of highly mechanised production and more than 1500 modern industrial enterprises. Uzbekistan now produces every day more than 20,000 tonnes of mineral fertilisers, 70 tractors, 25 cotton harvesters, 400 electric motors, electronic equipment, excavators, textile machinery, etc. Other Asiatic republics and regions also have made similar progress. In the capitalist West, it was being said that the Asian countries were not capable of industrial progress. Indeed, under the imperialist rule not one Asian or African country had developed industrial economy.

The lightning speed, historically speaking, with which the economic and cultural advance of these former colonies of Czarist empire, has taken place would have been impossible without the Great October Socialist Revolution and the programme of the CPSU on the question of nationalities which Lenin laid down. These achievements are the result of the correct line followed by the CPSU—a line based on the noble principles of proletarian internationalism. Without this line even the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would have been out of question, not to speak of the giant strides made since then.

It is necessary, therefore, that Communists and also true democrats, study and understand the essence of these Leninist principles and the practice and experience of the CPSU in resolving the problem of building a multinational state.

Even before the Revolution Lenin and the Bolsheviks gave the question of nationalities great thought from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism. They worked out a Marxist programme, which called for an end to all national and religious oppression and the right of all oppressed nations to self-determination. Self-determination was clearly defined as including the right to secede. Bolsheviks did not advocate secession of any nation because a strong centralised state was most suited for rapid economic and social development. But they fought for the right of the nations to secede if they so choose. They were against any central authority which forcibly kept the nationalities under it. Without conceding the right to self-determination, the oppressed nationalities of Czarist Russia

would not have reposed any confidence in the revolutionary bonafides of the Russian proletariat. It is because even before the Revolution the Russian working class led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks fought against all kinds of privileges, discrimination, national inequalities and oppression in actual practice that they were able to rally the working people of all nationalities in a united revolutionary front. "One must not think of only one's own nation but place above it the interests of all nations, their common liberty and equality." Such were the noble aims which Lenin proclaimed.

It is because of such internationalist ideas that the Bolshevik organisation struck roots also in areas of oppressed nationalities of Czarist Russia. During the revolutionary struggle of 1917, of the 350,000 members of the Bolshevik Party, more than 100,000 were in these areas. Thus, unity between the Russian proletariat and the people of oppressed nationalities was realised even in the period of the revolutionary struggle. Oppressed peoples considered the revolution in Russia as the beginning of their own emancipation.

One of the first documents of the Soviet Government, issued on coming to power, was the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia. It was something unknown in human history. It declared that all national and religious privileges were abolished; that all peoples of Russia were equal and free and sovereign; that they had the right to determine their own future, including the right to secession that any union of peoples could be only on a voluntary and free basis. This message went from area to area, to all the oppressed nationalities like a prairie fire and made them realise that they had stake in the victory and consolidation of the revolution. This was no empty declaration in words. Subsequent events showed that the Communist Party implemented it in all earnestness. In many nationalities, independent and sovereign Soviet Republics did get established. They were free and sovereign and had their own revolutionary armies, too. But their freedom was also threatened by the very same counter-revolutionaries and foreign intervention (armies of 14 capitalist countries led by the British imperialists were intervening to crush the revolution) who wanted to destroy the infant socialist state in Russia.

Thus, in the struggle against the counter-revolution and foreign intervention, the Russian proletariat and peasant-

try found allies in the revolutionary republics of the outlying nationalities. This alliance was conditioned by the historical necessity and common revolutionary aims. Before this alliance took the final shape of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in December 1922, full five years after the October Revolution, relations between these national republics and Soviet Russia, as well as between themselves, underwent several changes and forms. Some of the Transcaucasian Soviet republics formed into a federation of their own for some time. Such independent republics came into existence in Central Asia also. Gradually learning from their own experience these republics realised the advantage of uniting into a larger Union of Socialist states.

In the beginning it was a federation based upon bilateral treaties between these sovereign republics and the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic. Later the need for a planned economic development and other requirements of rapid growth determined the form this union took. Finally, in December 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed, comprising the RSFSR, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Subsequently, more national republics opted to join the union and new national republics and autonomous areas were formed.

In spite of all these changes, the federal principle of voluntary union has been strictly maintained. Equality of all peoples is not only a legal right, but has actually been translated into material reality. That is why, in spite of vastly different levels of development before the Revolution, today all the nationalities have reached an approximately equal level of development. This has been made possible by the fact that the Russian working class and peasantry, following Lenin's directions, subordinated their own demands to help the more backward peoples to catch up. Vast sums were allotted to build the economies of these nationalities and to enable them to overcome their backwardness and to achieve parity with the more advanced regions. The result is there today for any sceptic to see. The most backward and darkest regions of pre-revolutionary period have now attained a level of economic and cultural development on par with that of any region of Russia. This is a glorious achievement of socialism and the CPSU.

This explains the strong unity and strength of the USSR, a unity of peoples of two different continents and several different nations, of different races, colours and languages, a unity the durability of which the bourgeoisie cannot comprehend and therefore constantly keep questioning it. But the durability of this unity was proved first during the civil war and foreign intervention and later during the Nazi invasion. The Nazi invasion was no ordinary test. All the nationalities of the USSR stood like one man, made unprecedented sacrifices in the course of the Patriotic war and defended their Soviet motherland. They knew that independence and progress of each of their nations depended on the survival and strength of the family of free equal socialist republics.

The bourgeois propagandists, foreign and Indian, cannot understand how a federation of such diverse peoples can survive because they can only apply the criterion of bourgeois nationalism. Unity based on proletarian internationalism is beyond their comprehension. Yet the multinational state of the USSR is a shining and glorious example of how the national question is solved by socialism.

There are many other countries which have this problem. Our own country has its own diversities of many cultures, nationalities, languages, religions and an extraordinary degree of regional imbalances. Failure to solve these problems is giving rise to many kinds of disruptive and divisive movements, which threaten not only the ultimate unity of India, but more immediately the unity of the working class and democratic movements.

Hence, we can no longer postpone a serious consideration of these problems. Communists and democrats must apply their mind to the fundamental problem of nationalities which comes to the surface often as regional animosities, feelings of one's region being ignored or dominated by others; doubts and suspicions regarding language, allocation of fund and job opportunities, etc. That regional parties in some states have come to power and are taking shape in others is not to be ignored.

A creative application of the basic principles, which animated the policy of Russian Bolsheviks and Lenin on this question can help us very much. It is true that India is a newly independent country and not an imperialist country, as Czarist Russia was. It is true the specific features in India differ greatly from those which prevailed in pre-revolutionary Russia. That is why a mechanical application

of all the details of the policy of the CPSU to our conditions will be dogmatic. But the basic principles which guided them on this question should also guide us to solve the problem of diversities that we are facing in our country.

SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

S. G. Sardesai

Never before in history had the problem of war and peace, and hence the question of foreign policy, assumed such a vital importance for all countries, indeed, for mankind itself, as during the last quarter of a century.

All politicians, all military experts, all scientists connected with the development of atomic energy who are not lost to elementary reason and sobriety are now of the unanimous opinion that a nuclear war will not only ruin human civilization but threaten the very existence of human life on earth.

They are also agreed that the danger of local wars spilling over into a general nuclear conflagration is extremely grave.

Why should such a situation arise? What must be done, not only by governments but the common people of the world to avert the threatening catastrophe? These are the crucial questions of foreign policy today, this is the simple meaning of the words, foreign policy.

Crores and crores of people all over the globe are agonised by these questions. The majority of them in the capitalist countries still feel that problems of foreign policy are too complicated, that, in any case, they are in the hands of powerful forces and politicians beyond their control. They feel confused and helpless. But millions in Europe and in America, and now, lakhs in India have begun to move, to intervene in the sphere of foreign policy, the sphere of nuclear disarmament and peace.

Clarity is needed on the issue of the foreign policies of the USSR and the USA not as a doctrinaire or dry intellectual exercise. Clarity is needed so that the millions who have begun to act are transformed into crores so that

their movement gets a clearer direction. Peace cannot be saved by good intentions or by pious appeals to the powers that be. The people must know who wants war and why, they must know who wants peace and why. Combined efforts by governments that strive for peace and the popular peace forces in the world alone can halt the advance of the forces of war and guarantee peace. Nothing less can save peace in the days ahead. The question of the foreign policies of the Soviet Union and the United States is crucial because they are, unquestionably, the two most powerful states in the world.

Everyday our mass media keep on screeching that both the giants, the two super powers, want to dominate the world. Their national interests clash. Faced with this rivalry, what more can we do than to raise our voice in the name of sanity and hope that good sense will dawn on both of them?

Those who talk in these terms, however, are not quite so pious or innocent when it comes to brass tacks. There their "altruism" boils down to the venal position that India should play the Soviet card against the USA and the latter against the former, and cash in on the conflict between both. There is a satirical Indian proverb which says, "when your neighbour's house is on fire, better bake your bread on it."

The spokesmen of the USA, of course, do not speak of super-power rivalry. They claim to be god's angels wanting to save the "free" world from "Russian terrorism". They even promise to do so by resorting to a "neat little", "tactical", "limited" nuclear war.

Teller, one of the leading scientists who helped to make the first atom bomb, and now a mouth-piece of the Reagan administration, has recently "assured" us that an atomic war will not kill "the majority of the human race". And further, that the consequent radio-active fall-out can be rubbed off the skin of affected persons like mud.

So, let us rest in peace. World population now is roughly over four hundred crores. The "father" of the first atom bomb assures us that only two hundred crores, not one more, will die in a nuclear holocaust. And those of us who are unfortunate enough to survive, with lumps of mangled flesh and bones dripping with blood, can cure ourselves with a Pear's glycerine soap! So, everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

Such is the sadistic, cynical stuff daily dinned into our

ears by the bourgeois mass media—the papers, the radio, and the television.

Meanwhile, common mortals, unlike the monopolist of atomic wisdom, Teller, want to live. They do not want to die. At least, they want their children and grandchildren to have a chance. That is where the question of clarity on who is who, and what is what, comes in.

National Interest

Let us begin with the simplest and unexceptionable concept of national interest. Let us see how it can be, and is used, both for noble and ignoble purposes.

It is said the Soviet Union has its national interest. In fact, those who want to make a poisoned theory out of it, do not use the word "Soviet Union". They say, the Russians have their national interest.

All right. Let us also say, the Russians have their national interest. The question is, what is that interest?

The first thing the Russian workers and peasants did after achieving power in November 1917, was to take possession of the vast lands of the landlords and the nobility and distribute them to the toiling peasantry. They also nationalised the banks. In the beginning, Lenin did not want to nationalise mills, factories, etc. He only wanted workers' control over them. But the capitalists hit back with fierce and violent resistance, on which capitalist industry was also confiscated and nationalised.

If Russian workers and peasants chose to do so, it was their own internal affair, and no foreign country had any business to interfere in the matter.

Simultaneously, the first decree of the victorious October revolution in 1917 was a call to all the belligerent countries of Europe and America to end the war and start negotiations for peace. Soviet Russia did this both to end mass bloodshed in Europe and also because it needed peace for socialist reconstruction.

But the Lloyed Georges and Clemenceaus of Western Europe declared that the Russian Revolution was a virus which would spread to the rest of Europe. That was impermissible. They organised armies and marched them into Russia, which, together with the Czarist generals, were routed and packed home by the Russian workers and peasants.

Twenty-two years later, Hitler thought he could do better. He also tried, with sad results which are well

known, though in that life and death struggle, the Soviet people were bled white.

It is said, "All this may be true and justified. But how about Russian domination over Eastern Europe and Afghanistan?"

Now, domination is for exploitation. Or else, it is meaningless and purposeless.

But the very first decree that the Congress of Soviets issued after the capture of power in 1917, gave complete national freedom to all the countries previously conquered by the Czars.

They included the most backward, nomadic, illiterate peoples of the Czarist Asian empire, the Kazakhs, the Turkmens, the Tadjiks and many others. A few years later, they all became Soviet Republics, and together with the Russian and other Soviet Republics, formed the USSR.

Today, all these republics are on a par with Russia, in industrial production, standard of living, education, health, culture and everything. If that is "domination and exploitation", what is socialist advance, freedom and brotherhood called?

I am purposefully giving the instance of Central Asia, because, if the "Russians" had wanted to practise colonialism, they would surely do so in Asia, not in Eastern Europe.

There is no need to describe the great industrial advance made by East European countries since their liberation from Nazism, and the rapid strides the Afghans are making despite all the pillage and incendiarism to which their country is being subjected by brigands from their safe asylum in Pakistan. The counter-revolutionaries, as everyone knows, are armed and financed by the USA.

So, it is a matter of clear evidence spread over more than sixty years, and not just of some altruistic theory, that the national interest of the Soviet Union lies in peace, in being left in peace to build a prosperous and happy life for its own people.

This is so far as its internal interest is concerned. How about the national interest of the Soviet Union on questions of foreign policy? It is an experience of history that the foreign policy of a country is rooted in its internal interest.

Following from the evidence given above, the Soviet Union is most certainly, and most vitally interested in the

preservation of world peace. In two ghastly wars inflicted on it by imperialist powers, it has had to pay more, in human lives, and the destruction of material property, than any other country in the world. No country and no people can be so misanthropic as to invite a similar disaster for a third time.

Those who suspect Soviet intentions because of the saturating Western propaganda about the "Soviet threat" and "Soviet expansionism" should once visit the Soviet Union to see for themselves how passionately every Soviet man, woman and child yearns for peace, how Soviet mothers shudder at the very thought of war.

Foreign Policy

But, of course, there are many other questions involved in foreign policy. What are the foreign policy interests of the Soviet Union?

Clearly, in so far as the Soviet Union is interested in the weakening of world imperialism, it is naturally interested in the national liberation of countries which have been under the yoke of the imperialist colonial powers for the last two hundred years. It is interested in supporting peoples and governments all over the third world who are fighting colonialism and neo-colonialism. And since racism, whether in South Africa or Israel, is an obvious agency of imperialism, the Soviet Union is definitely opposed to racism.

Almost all these countries are now politically independent, though even they are not free from direct or indirect military intervention by imperialist powers, above all, the USA. Angola is invaded by South Africa, Lebanon by Israel. All the Persian Gulf countries and India have the Democles' Sword of Diego Garcia and the Rapid Deployment Force off the Strait of Bahrein hanging over their heads. The Palestinian Liberation movement has still to pass through a long, fiery ordeal to secure a homeland for the Palestinians. In all these cases, the Soviet Union stands firmly by the side of those who are fighting for freedom, for the defence of their national sovereignty and integrity.

For the same reason, the Soviet Union consistently assists the newly-independent countries to build a self-reliant, industrialised modern economy, for loosening the stranglehold of the transnational corporations and imperialist financial agencies over their economies.

Is it an accident that in our thirty-five years of independence, it is the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that have all along helped us to build our basic and heavy industries, our defence industries? Is it an accident that the Soviet Union has stood by us on the questions of Kashmir, Goa and the liberation of Bangla Desh? We, in India, need no proofs from the experience of other countries to be convinced about the consistent support given by the Soviet Union for strengthening the economic and political independence of the third world countries.

The economic and political struggle against imperialism, the struggle against imperialist domination, aggression and threats of aggression, the struggle for peace, is the common interest of the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and the newly liberated countries. It is the expression of the basic unity of the forces of socialism and national independence against imperialism. There is no question involved, either of Soviet hegemonism or of the newly independent countries becoming satellites of the Soviet Union.

US National Interest

Now let us turn to the question of the national interest of the USA. Obviously, the interest of the common people in the USA, as of people all over the world, is to have jobs, a decent living, education for their children, medical facilities, cultural amenities, and so on.

But what operates as the national and "strategic" interest of the USA in foreign policies, is the interest of its ruling circles. This again is not a "theory", a "communist dogma". A mighty wave of protest demonstrations has been rising higher and higher in the USA, since the advent of the Reagan administration. Its resounding slogan is: "We want jobs, schools and hospitals. We want no guns, no neutron bombs, no war."

In "fairness" to the US rulers, they do not hide the aims of their foreign policy. They openly declare that their awe-inspiring armada stands before the Persian Gulf because they are not prepared to surrender their hold over the Middle East oil to the Arabs. Reagan bluntly declared in the recent North-South dialogue that third world countries must give free rein to the American multi-national corporations in their countries if they wanted economic "aid". He was not prepared to give them any aid on a

government-to-government level. When spokesmen of the third world said, "We want fair trade, not your aid," he banged the door for third world imports into the USA.

Such is the reality of US "national" interest.

Peaceful Co-existence and Non-Alignment

These two terms have now become common in the vocabulary of foreign affairs. There is hardly a speech in the United Nations General Assembly which can avoid using them. And yet, there is plenty of confusion regarding what they really mean.

It was Lenin who first spoke of the peaceful co-existence of countries with different social systems.

He made it abundantly clear that though capitalism and socialism were two different and contradictory social systems, the conflict between them need not, and must not be resolved by war. Marxism believed, and was confident, that socialism was bound to replace capitalism, all over the world, in the course of time. But the conflict had to be resolved by peaceful co-existence and peaceful competition between the capitalist and socialist countries. Socialism cannot be exported by the Soviet Union to capitalist countries. But neither must the imperialist countries be allowed to export counter-revolution to other countries to establish their colonial domination over them.

This is the transparent and unambiguous meaning of peaceful co-existence. The foreign policy of the Soviet Union has always loyally abided by this principle laid down by Lenin.

But what do the US rulers understand by peaceful co-existence?

Like the Amirs and Sultans in medieval times, they want to divide the world between themselves and "Russia"! The "Russians" may do what they want in the socialist countries (in reality, Reagan is not prepared even for such a division) and the Americans must be free to do whatever they want in Latin America, Western Europe, Africa and Asia! That is the American definition of peaceful co-existence, at its best.

But there is a fly in the ointment in this very "tidy" and "gentlemanly" division of the globe. The naughty third world countries do not agree to it. They want to throw off the colonial and neo-colonial domination of the USA.

And, immediately, Reagan and his puppets shriek, "Russian terrorism."

But what can the "Russians" do? They certainly do not want to, and they cannot, even if they had so wanted, prevent the national liberation movement moving on from the achievement of political independence to the achievement of the social liberation of the hungry and oppressed masses of Asia and Africa. And that cannot be done without shattering the shackles of US colonial domination. And when such countries request the Soviet Union to give them economic or military aid, the Soviet Union generously offers it to them. It would not be the Soviet Union if it did not.

One has to be absolutely clear on this question. When the Soviet Union helps the national liberation movement, it is "Russian terrorism"! When the Americans and their stooges rain napalm and bacteriological bombs on Viet Nam and Lebanon, it is the "defence of the free world"! This definition of peaceful co-existence cannot be accepted.

The same perversion is attempted to be brought into the non-aligned movement. To begin with, non-alignment is defined as sitting on the fence between the Soviet Union and the USA. It is said to be a policy of equi-distance between the two.

But why pose the question in this fashion? Basically, it is a question of the third world countries advancing from the achievement of political independence to economic self-reliance and the maintenance of world peace as a necessary requisite for the newly independent countries to be able to concentrate their resources on economic development instead of frittering them away on armaments.

It is the clear and unquestionable experience of third world countries spread over decades that the Soviet Union is helpful for the achievement of both these aims, whereas the USA obstructs both.

It is this reality that has led third world countries to steadily growing co-operation and friendship with the Soviet Union, and to an irreconcilable bitterness between them and the USA. No amount of talk of "genuine" non-alignment and avoiding a "tilt" towards the Soviet Union can erase this massive reality.

Actually, those who indulge in such talk have ulterior aims to achieve. With all their "equidistance", they constantly pour out venomous anti-Soviet slander. All that it means is that blood is thicker than water, and reactionary class interest is thicker than everything else. The country may go to dogs, but the handful of Indian monopolists

must have collaboration with US multi-nationals for filthy lucre. They want to sell their country for thirteen pieces of silver. They want to have the best of both the worlds. Hence the cynical talk of playing the Soviet card against the Americans, and vice versa.

Everything for Peace, the Soviet Proposals

Three successive Congresses of the CPSU, the 23rd, 24th and 25th, have put forward the most elaborate, the most minute proposals on every single problem related to the reduction of tensions, strengthening of detente, reduction of conventional and nuclear weapons, in a word, for the prevention of war and the preservation of world peace. A thousand times the Soviet leaders have repeated that they are prepared to sit across the table and discuss any other proposals put forward by the US leaders which are fair to both the sides, which provide equal security to all, which do not attempt to establish the superiority of the military strength of one power over the other. The Soviet Union does not have, and does not want superiority in military power over the USA.

In the ringing, sincere words of Comrade Brezhnev, "There is no human right higher than the right to live. There is no nobler aim, no higher aim, than assuring this right to the living, and to those yet unborn."

It would take, not one but many articles, even to enumerate, in summarised form, all the proposals made by the Soviet Union for the achievement of this lofty ideal.

Only two of the proposals need be mentioned. They are overwhelming in their sincerity, staggering in their generosity, and imbued with limitless faith in the intrinsic goodness of man.

The Soviet Union has proposed that the existing level of armaments of the NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries should be immediately frozen. That includes both nuclear and conventional weapons. And the Soviet Union has declared, for mankind to hear, that it has unilaterally undertaken the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons for all time to come.

The task is to compel the maniacs sitting in Washington to take identical positions. And there is not a moment to lose.

SOCIALIST BEACON LIGHTS

Mohit Sen

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the USSR on 30 December 1982 will be multidimensional and worldwide in scope. Among the most important reasons for this is that it will be an occasion to celebrate one of the greatest feats of history—the solution of the nationalities problem. In a way these sixty Soviet years have demonstrated that the nationalities problem is at the same time what can be called the possibilities of nationalities. The Soviet Union and its honoured Leninist leadership has not only solved an immensely complicated problem but simultaneously unleashed the potential of historically shaped peoples to add to the richness of the making of history. These sixty Soviet years have also demonstrated the dialectical unity of proletarian internationalism and the flourishing of nations. They have demonstrated the unity, also, of the advance of socialism and the blossoming of nations.

It is not easy always to realise the grandeur of this achievement and the place that it, along with other immense contributions, gives the CPSU and its leadership in the honour roll of human history. When confronted with the “puzzle” of the popularity of the CPSU in the Soviet Union and the refusal of its people to have another party, a young Soviet comrade told me recently that this “puzzle” can only be understood by those who have had or cared to know about the experience of the Soviet people with the CPSU. Where in history is there another example of a party that has consistently fulfilled all the promises it makes to the people for 65 years? Where in history is there another example of a party that has never failed to trust its people and to constantly raise their self-confidence as makers of their own destiny? This is true and, perhaps, truest of all in the sphere of the question of nations and nationalities.

Among the many aspects of this magnificent achievement mention would be made here of three. One is the creation of a “new historic entity of people, the Soviet people uniting all classes and social groups, all nations and nationalities on the basis of the principles of proletarian, socialist internationalism” (Boris Ponomarev, **Problems of Peace and Socialism**, September 1982).

Another is “the emergence of a classless social structure

in what is basic and most important already within the historical framework of developed socialism... It is in the light of this conclusion that we consider, among other things, the question of the future of nations. A historically new stage of their development will evidently be the formation of classless socialist nations" (*Ibid*).

And third is that "in the course of socialist construction, which continues to receive powerful impulses from the Great October Revolution to this very day, some of the once-retarded nations have travelled a way of development which it would have taken thousands of years to traverse in the past. That is one of the gains of existing socialism which only the blind can fail to see. The USSR's Union Republics have now risen to roughly the same level of national income per head, with approximately similar indicators of labour productivity and technical equipment in the economy. It was emphasised at the 26th Congress of the CPSU that the Soviet Union no longer has any retarded non-Russian fringe areas" (Dinumukhamed Kunayev, *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, June 1982).

A new historical entity, the formation of classless nations and the realisation of actual equality—great are these deeds and greater than them those who accomplished them!

Take the example of Kazakhstan and the Central Asian Republics of Uzbekistan, Kirghizia, Tajikistan and Turkmenia. The territory they occupy is quite large but their population is not large—Uzbekistan has over 16 million, Kazakhstan over 15 million, Tajikistan 4 million and Turkmenistan nearly 3 million—about 40 million out of the total USSR population of around 270 million. But these Republics have immense mineral wealth and are also indispensable as far as wheat, cotton and fruits are concerned. It is said about Kirghizia, for example, that all the elements mentioned in the famous fables of Mendeleev are to be found there!

It should be noted that these Republics are themselves multinational in their makeup. For example the Kazakhs constitute only one-third of the population of that Republic though they are the largest single constituent of the peoples living there. Apart from them there are Russians, Kirghizs, Uighurs, Koreans and Soviet Germans. Uzbekistan is scarcely different in this respect. This is the consequence of the specific historical settlement, and a result of the subsequent movement of the country's population caused by large-scale economic construction and develop-

ment of new mineral and raw material areas and districts. The development of the Karaganda coalfields and the opening up of virgin lands in Kazakhstan, the rebuilding of Tashkent (capital of Uzbekistan) after the devastating earthquake of 1966, the construction of the 1,000 kilometre long Karakum canal or the 1,500 kilometre Turkestan-Siberian trunkline are only some instances of multinational endeavour. And work brought people and made families and joined these to the land and made the Republics and all their inhabitants even more truly internationalist. One cannot refrain from pointing to the contrast provided by our multinational country where capitalist development produces such ugly phenomena as linguism, regionalism and the plunder by the "outsiders" specially of the tribal and other backward areas.

The three aspects of the achievement mentioned above are the result of literally staggering progress. Kazakhstan did not even have a name before the revolution—it was called the "steppe territory", along with the Kirghiz and other peoples it had no written language. Only two per cent were literate (the same in Uzbekistan). Twenty-two Kazakhs had higher education before the Revolution and the Uzbeks had one postgraduate who had somehow got to St. Petersburg (which was the then name of Leningrad). Life expectancy ranged from between 30 to 35 years. About Turkmenistan a "kind" Tsarist official predicted that it would require 4,600 years to eradicate illiteracy there! There was no industrial projects or institutions which could be properly so-called. Only manufacturies existed. Superstition and barbaric customs were all pervasive—women not only wore *burqas* in Uzbekistan but were forbidden to work outside the home!

Now all this is totally transformed. Not a shred of this backwardness remains. It has all been quite literally relegated to the museums. At Tashkent University apart from the "locals" thousands of young men and women from the Third World study. Some 250,000 persons are enrolled in the higher educational institutions of Kazakhstan. Life expectancy has doubled to over 70 years on an average. There are more doctors and students of college level per thousand of the population in these Republics than in France, Federal Republic of Germany and Japan. All have their own Science Academies. There are nuclear power plants, research centres and above all, the Baikonur cosmodrome. While there has been a 900-fold increase in industrial output in Kazakhstan over the past six decades,

there has been a 300-fold increase in the Central Asian Republics. Their rates of growth have been three to four times the general Soviet average—he who hath shall give to him who hath not!

Whole peoples have leapfrogged from the 18th century to the 20th but at the same time received for the first time their national heritage. If we leave out Leningrad there is no place to equal Samarkhand when it comes to the recovery and restoration of architectural monuments. Socialism truly gives peoples their identity while jet-propelling them into the future. It is all so staggering that as the wonderful Kirghiz writer Chingling Aitmatov put it "understanding our own existence remains the primary task".

Reflecting on all this, wishing the Soviet Union still greater feats, one has to end with a brief homily. Among the many gifts the Soviet Union gives to our people the most precious is their achievements and the history behind it. But do we do enough to make it known? And would not making it more known help our Motherland and the cause of the working people? Let our joy be turned into the work of learning and popularisation.

WOMEN'S STATUS OF GENUINE EQUALITY IN USSR

Vimla Farooqui

The most important event of the twentieth century has been the October Revolution which smashed the theory that in every society there were bound to be oppressed and oppressors, the exploited and the exploiters, the poor and the rich.

This revolution completely abolished exploitation and paved the way for genuine equality for men and women in society. Thus a new era opened in the history of mankind.

The socio-economic and political changes that followed the revolution also entailed the struggle for equality between sexes. This laid the basis for putting into practice the theory of the equality of all people irrespective of nationality, language, sex or religion in the USSR.

The new Soviet state in its earliest decrees totally dismantled the legal and economic edifice of discrimination.

Immediately after the revolution, the great Lenin emphasised that to enable women to achieve genuine equality it was not enough to give them equal rights in law, but it was necessary to provide them facilities to take advantage of these laws. One of the fundamental prerequisites for women's equality is her economic independence. It was necessary to offer opportunities of employment to the mass of women. Great importance was given to raising women's production skill.

Special facilities for women's education and training were provided, with the result that within one decade after the revolution illiteracy was eradicated among women and they were given vocational training and involved in work. This underlines the fact that if there is a system committed to fight illiteracy, it is possible to do it speedily.

The feudal and capitalist ideology of centuries which regarded women as inferior human beings was fought systematically, through mass media, through changes in the educational system and a net-work of cadres to mix with people and live with them to fight their outmoded way of thinking was built up.

It was of utmost importance to provide women with social amenities which would help them to reconcile their role as workers and mothers. With this aim in view the Soviet state made tremendous effort to create a net-work of social services—creches, kindergartens, factory, office and school canteens, to provide relief to working women and shift a part of the domestic burden to the public sector.

Every time I have visited the USSR, I have found greater and better facilities for relieving women of their domestic burdens. I think this is the great contribution of socialism, enabling women to acquire a status of genuine equality.

Sometimes there is propaganda by bourgeois thinkers that women are made to work under socialism to increase national production at the cost of neglecting their families. There is allegation of making them tools of production, deprived of femininity!

This is pure mischief.

Social facilities provided to working mothers under socialism are costly in terms of money and effort. No capitalist government is prepared to incur this expenditure. Capitalists employ women as cheap labour and expropriate the wealth produced by them. These half starved women, dressed in rags present a wonderful picture of femininity to these bourgeois propagandists! Socialism which is based

on the principle of complete equality for all citizens, men and women, views women's employment as part of their struggle for emancipation. Women by their participation in the process of production, are playing an important role in creating conditions for their equality.

The more women make use of their right to work, and by applying the knowledge they have acquired, progress in their jobs, greater is their self-confidence and the capacity to assert themselves.

It is for us a source of great encouragement that in the USSR, there is no earmarking of 'jobs for men' and 'jobs for women' or humanities and social sciences for women and science and high technology for men.

It is because of this policy that women under socialism are encouraged to study science and technology. It is no accident that the USSR is the only country to have sent two women into the outer space. It is another proof of the consistent efforts towards genuine equality for women in all spheres of life.

One of the oldest canards of anti-communists is that socialism destroys marriage and family. I was very much interested in studying this problem when, I first visited the USSR in 1953. Since then, I have had the opportunity of going there several times and have developed close friendship with a number of families.

I am convinced that it is socialism which enables everyone to marry for love and mutual understanding, and not for material and social dependence, which creates the basis for a stable and happy marriage.

The first question that needs to be answered in connection with the objectives and methods of struggle for women's equality is equality with whom? Women are not seeking only formal equality with men. Under capitalism, all men and women have equal rights in law, but in fact a large majority of men also—workers, peasants, working intelligentsia and other toiling sections—are living under oppression and exploitation. Nevertheless, there can be no emancipation of people unless it applies to both sexes. Therefore, the struggle for women's rights can only be treated in the context of the common struggle of all exploited sections to win full human rights.

The revolutionary struggle led by Lenin, from the very beginning included full equality for women as one of its aims.

The founders of the first socialist state in history did not overlook women's specific biological functions. But, this need not cause her subjugation. Motherhood is regarded as a national task and the state and society help women to fulfil it.

In the USSR, the Communist Party and the Government have always encouraged women to participate actively in the task of shaping the society in which they live and in which their children are growing. The Soviet Women's Committee has played an important role in developing the activities and initiatives of women for building socialism, defending world peace and solidarity with peoples fighting for democracy, national independence and social progress.

From the very beginning the struggle for peace has been a vital part of the policies of the USSR. Women have played an important role in this struggle. Women of the USSR, along with the women of the whole world, are making a decisive contribution to fight the aggressive designs of the US and other imperialists to plunge humanity into a nuclear war.

Activities of women of the USSR demonstrate a deep conviction that international solidarity must be a constant duty. This is seen vividly during the deliberations of the Women's International Democratic Federation. Representatives of the USSR make serious efforts to understand the lives of women of other countries and to develop friendship with them.

The USSR is a firm friend of India which has been proved during many difficult situations that we faced. It is giving us aid to build a self-reliant economy. There are close friendly relations between our two peoples.

A deep understanding exists between the women of USSR and India. In international gatherings, we normally fight together for the defence of world peace, disarmament and solidarity with peoples fighting for national independence and democracy.

The achievements of women in the USSR are a source of tremendous inspiration for all women fighting against discrimination.

Sixty years of the existence of the USSR has opened new vistas for the exploited sections of society all over the world. They have acquired new self-confidence and a new perspective.

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