

For
PEACE,
Real
INDEPENDENCE,
and
SOCIAL PROGRESS.



REPORT TO THE
NATIONAL CONFERENCE,
CEYLON COMMUNIST PARTY
TOWN HALL, COLOMBO
MARCH 9, 1952.

by Pieter Keuneman

REPORT TO THE SPECIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE, CEYLON
COMMUNIST PARTY, AT THE TOWN HALL, COLOMBO ON
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BY

PIETER KEUNEMAN - ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

Comrades,

This Special National Conference of the Communist Party meets on the eve of the General Elections.

Within a very short time the people of Ceylon will have the opportunity to give their verdict on five years of U.N.P. rule and determine the form and nature of the government to come.

The purpose of this conference is to formulate and present to the people of this country the programme, policy and line of action which the Communist Party has to suggest for the period ahead.

We are holding our deliberations openly and publicly. We have nothing to hide from the people. Our programme and policy are not our private concern but the common property of the people. We seek no sectarian advantage for ourselves, but the common advancement of our people.

We are very glad to have with us today people who are not members of our Party, but who are attending this conference to watch our deliberations .

We have with us sympathisers and friends. We have visitors, observers and fraternal delegates from other parties and public organisations. We have representatives of the Press and members of the general public.

On behalf of our Party, I extend our greetings to them and thank them for honouring us with their presence. We trust that they will find our deliberations instructive and conducive to developing further the ties of friendship and fraternal association between us.

We firmly believe that what is surely needed today is not the repetition by each party of its ultimate aims and objects, but a common programme and line, of action which can command the support of all progressive forces and unite them for the common advancement of our country and its people.

The programme and policy which we place before the country today is one which will meet the aspirations of all democratic organisations and of all those in Ceylon who desire Peace, real independence and Social Progress. We hope that this programme will become a matter for discussion, study and practical action throughout the entire progressive movement.

THE LAST PARTY CONGRESS AND AFTER

It is eighteen months since we held the IVth Congress of our Party at Matara.

Looking back on this period we can justly be proud that the events since that Congress have amply demonstrated the correctness of the analysis which we made and the policy we adopted.

What was the situation eighteen months ago?

Internationally, the camp of Imperialism and war, led by the U.S.A.

sought to intimidate the whole world and compel the people of all other countries to submit to its dictates. The war criminal, MacArthur, at the head of the American aggressors in Korea, are demanding "unconditional surrender" and confidently promised to subjugate that country by Christmas, 1950. The North Atlantic Treaty war alliance was being set up by the imperialists, and the insolent Yankee warmongers - under the impression that the atom bomb was an American monopoly - openly threatened to use this inhuman and dreadful weapon against any people who resisted their attempts to dominate them.

Nationally, the U.N.P. boasted of its invincibility. It claimed that its support for the Anglo-American war camp would bring concrete benefits to this country in the form of high prices for our exports and of foreign loans and investments to assist our economic development. It proudly contrasted its own stability and "unity" with the alleged "disunity" of its opponents.

Our IVth Party Congress rejected these theories of the inevitability of war, the strength of the Anglo-American war camp and the stability and unity of the U.N.P.

Internationally, we affirmed our belief that the camp of peace was stronger than the camp of war and could and would grow in strength, while the camp of imperialism and war would experience sharper contradictions and greater disintegration despite its much-publicised efforts at unity and integration.

In the national sphere, our Fourth Party Congress pointed out that the U.N.P. Government's willing subordination to the Anglo-American war camp would not only bring greater disasters and hardships to our people, but would also lead to the disintegration of the U.N.P. itself and to the end of its mythical solidarity and unity.

Our Congress set the Party the task of building a Democratic Front of the workers, peasants, intellectuals and sections of the capitalist class for the purpose of defeating Imperialism and its U.N.P. stooges. We affirmed that such a Democratic Front should be led by the working class and be based primarily on the unity of the workers and the peasants, but that it should also draw in other sections of the population who found that Imperialism and its running-dog, the U.N.P. menaced their interests and thwarted the development of this country.

Subsequently history has confirmed the correctness of our analysis which was guided by Marxism-Leninism and the rich experience of the Communist movement elsewhere. We again take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude to the Communist Information Bureau and the Communist Party of China, whose published documents assisted our Party to break with a sectarian policy and take a correct path.

Internationally, the camp of peace, led by the great Soviet Union, has made striking advances and successes. Based on an economy of peace and peaceful construction, the Soviet Union, New China and the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe have become mighty bastions of peace and a policy of friendly co-operation between nations.

Their very existence is not merely a deterrent to the instigators of a new war, but in the sphere of external relations and trade they have demonstrated their capacity to maintain peace and have given practical assistance to the development of other nations.

The enormous success of the world-wide signature campaign for a Five Power Peace Pact is a striking illustration of the overwhelming determination of the people of all countries that peace shall conquer war. The hundreds of millions of signatures collected so far greatly exceed even those obtained in support of the absolute prohibition of atomic weapons.

The Soviet Union's disclosure that the atom bomb is no longer an American monopoly has made the warmongers ponder on the danger of the game they are playing and greatly strengthened the chances of maintaining peace and outlawing the use of atomic weapons.

On behalf of the people of our country, we express our gratitude to the Soviet Union and its great leader, J.V. Stalin, whose wise and courageous guidance has so far saved the world from another war.

While the camp of peace advances, the camp of Imperialism and war has experienced further crises and antagonisms.

Thanks to the initiative taken by the Soviet Union, the American aggressors in Korea, who were insolently demanding unconditional surrender and threatening total annihilation 18 months ago, have been compelled to come to a conference for a peace settlement. MacArthur has been dismissed. Despite their attempts to drag out negotiations at Kaesong and prevent a settlement, the U.S. Imperialists have not been able to muster support among their satellites for extending the Korean War into an all-out assault on New China.

All the pressure, threats and promises which the U.S. Imperialists have used to consolidate and extend the aggressive North Atlantic bloc are not producing the results which they anticipated. The rearmament of Germany and Japan, the revival of the fascists and militarists of these two hot-beds of war, the admittance of the fascist butcher Franco into the North Atlantic bloc - all, mark you, in the name of peace and democracy - have sharpened, rather than lessened, the antagonisms between the countries of the North Atlantic Military Alliance.

A most significant development of recent times has been the mighty upsurge of popular anti-imperialist struggles in Iran and Egypt. The anti-imperialist liberation struggle of the colonial peoples has spread from Asia to the Middle East.

These predominantly Arab countries, whose people are Muslims, like sections of our own people, have been the main economic base of Western Imperialism since the weakening of its hold in Asia. Strategically, they have constituted a key area of imperialist communications and a concentration of imperialist bases, and troops.

In addition to this, the Atlantic Powers have announced their intention to establish a Middle Eastern Command as part of their general war set-up. This has naturally aroused the opposition of the Middle Eastern peoples, who have no desire to see their countries used as pawns in the war preparations of the imperialists.

The events in the Middle East have seriously weakened the position of Imperialism. They have intensified the antagonisms between contending imperialisms, notably Britain and the U.S.

On behalf of the Conference, I send our greetings to the anti-imperialist fighters of the Middle East and express our solidarity with them in their desire to have all the imperialist troops withdrawn

from their territories; and all unequal treaties abrogated, so that the Middle Eastern peoples can determine their own affairs.

We can thus see the growing strength of the camp of peace and freedom and the increasing confusion and division in the American-led camp of war.

It would be foolish, however, to underestimate the aggressive capacity of the imperialist war camp. Every defeat only increases its ferocity and desperation. Reckless military adventures by this camp are still possible.

For the people of Ceylon, and indeed, for the peoples of all countries, the fight for peace and for the prevention of a new war remains the central and paramount task.

The Communist Party fully accepts and adheres to the belief that it is possible for different countries to live together in the same world without resort to war, despite their differences in social systems.

We unreservedly endorse the appeal made by the World Peace Council for the immediate conclusion of a pact of peace between the Five Great Powers - the U.S.S.R., U.S.A., the People's Republic of China, Great Britain and France - as the prelude to a general peace settlement.

The conclusion of such a Pact of Peace and the consequent ending of the "cold" and "shooting" wars now in progress will be of inestimable benefit to Ceylon. It will remove the ever-present danger of our country being involved in hostilities and suffering the devastation which was the unfortunate fate of many of our neighbours in the last war. It will also make it possible to remove many of the economic burdens which we bear today, and which prevent our development.

The immense rearmament programmes of America and Britain and the curtailment of our trade due to the cold war have already cost us dear. They have meant increased exploitation, decreased export prices, rising costs of imports and the scarcity of industrial and agricultural equipment needed for economic development. This enormous rearmament at the expense of the production of consumer goods cannot but lead shortly to an economic crash, whose effects on our economy can easily be imagined by those who remember the dire plight of our people during the economic crisis of 1929-1933.

It will be the task of our Party during the period ahead to intensify its work for peace - for the campaign for the Five Power Peace Pact; for the opening of diplomatic and trade relations with the U.S.S.R., New China and the East European Peoples' Democracies; and for the ending of the situation by which the U.N.P. has made Ceylon a base in the war preparations of the aggressive imperialist bloc.

DEVELOPMENTS IN CEYLON

The developments in Ceylon since our Fourth Party Congress have demonstrated the correctness of our policy.

The national treachery of the U.N.P. has become increasingly apparent to the widest masses of our people.

Its fiction of an "independent" Ceylon has not deceived the vast majority of the Ceylonese, who realise that there can be no real independence while British bases and armed forces remain on our territory and the main means of production and the creation of wealth

remains in imperialist hands.

Though hypocritically claiming to follow a "middle path" of non-involvement in so-called rival power blocs, the U.N.P. has bound this country to the war camp of Anglo-American imperialism.

The U.N.P. Government has actively assisted the military adventures and plans of Anglo-American imperialism in Asia and the Middle East. It has permitted the posts of this country to be freely used by imperialist forces in their military campaigns against Korea, Viet Nam, Malaya, Iran and Egypt. On British insistence, it has squandered the money of the Ceylonese tax-payer in financing the civil war in Burma.

At San Francisco, Mr. J.R. Jayawardene, to the eternal shame of this country, performed a marionette's dance for Wall Street in order to give a colouring of "Asian" support for the U.S. imposed war settlement which masqueraded as a Peace treaty with Japan.

While the mass of our people demand the immediate outlawing of the atom bomb, the U.N.P. is prepared to assist its American masters in the manufacture of this monstrous weapon. Under Government auspices, a special processing plant is being set up to process monazite sands for the production of thorium, an essential element in the manufacture of atom bombs. The output of this plant is to be sold by the Government solely to the Anglo-American bloc. The recent press statement of the Yankee industrialist, Mr. G. Pettiross, disclosed that Ceylon plumbago, from which the Senanayake-Kotalawala families got their personal fortunes, is being exported in considerable quantities to the U.S.A., where it is being used in the manufacture of atomic weapons.

The U.N.P. traitors have enthusiastically joined forces with the Americans in their propaganda war against the Soviet Union, New China and other countries. They have handed the entire foreign transmission services of Radio Ceylon to the misanthropic "Voice of America", which is using our country as a propaganda base to prepare the minds of the people for a now war. The filthy warmongering ravings of the U.S. Embassy have been officially distributed through the Government machinery. The pro-U.N.P. press and the radio are being rapidly taken over by the Americans.

In the sphere of import and export trade, on which our present economy depends so much, the U.N.P. Government has completely subordinated the interests of the people to the Anglo-American bloc. Our external trade has been restricted to this bloc and its satellites. The Government has discouraged trade with the Soviet Union, China and the People's Democracies even though those countries have offered to supply us with the food, capital equipment and essential consumer goods which we used and in return, to purchase our rubber, tea and other exports at favourable prices. It has permitted the American Embassy to blackmail and intimidate Ceylon firms which took the initiative in selling our exports to these countries.

In pursuing this policy of assistance and subordination to Anglo-American imperialism and its war preparations, the U.N.P. promised practical benefits to Ceylon and particularly to the Ceylonese capitalist class. They held out the prospect of increased export prices and largo foreign loans and investments. Events have proved otherwise. The U.N.P.'s policy of support for America has led to the

enrichment of America and the impoverishment of Ceylon.

The Americans have used the monopoly position which the U.N.P. has given them in the purchase of rubber to force down the export price of this essential commodity. They made no attempt to reduce the prices of their imports to Ceylon, which has lost on the balance of payments. The devaluation of the rupee, which they forced upon the Government, made the position still worse. The Ceylonese "newcomer" firms to the import trade, who were thrown to the wolves when the Government removed import control at the behest of the imperialists, were promised a profitable trade with Japan in return for the Government signing the American dictated Japanese Peace Treaty. But even the hopes of such trade have been dashed by the American announcement that all such trade must be paid for in dollars and not in sterling.

The oft-promised and much-publicised scheme of foreign "aid" from the Anglo-American bloc have turned out in practice to amount to nothing substantial.

Take, for instance, the Colombo Plan. The U.N.P. is even now spending Rs 5 million on an exhibition to publicise it. But what exactly is this Colombo Plan?

The Colombo Plan is a scheme for returning to Ceylon a small part of our own money. During the war Britain purchased from Ceylon goods for which she did not pay. The amount she owed us for these unpaid purchases were called "sterling balances". After the war Britain refused to settle her debts with us. The greater part of our sterling balances were "frozen" in a No. 2 account in London.

Of the £88 million sterling assets which Ceylon has in London, a mere £19 million is to be paid to us over a period of seven years. But even though this is our own money, the Government of Ceylon cannot spend it as it likes. It has to be spent in a way laid down by Britain - 6% only for the development of electric power projects and so on. Britain has made it abundantly clear that we cannot use the Colombo Plan to finance the industrial development we so sorely need.

President Truman's "Point Four" aid plan has meant even less. Nothing has been granted and even the promise of aid has been withdrawn because the people of Ceylon compelled the Government not to obey the American order to cut off trade with New China.

It is clear even to the meanest intelligence, that these plans of foreign aid, which the U.N.P. hopes to get from the Anglo-American bloc, are not disinterested attempts to help underdeveloped countries. They are part and parcel of the Anglo-American plan to dominate the countries of Asia, maintain their colonial economy, exploit their resources and labour and use their territories for furthering military adventures.

The U.N.P.'s subordination of Ceylon to Anglo-American imperialism is leading the country towards economic crisis. Its protection of imperialist investments in Ceylon has made proper industrial or agricultural development impossible.

Its linking of Ceylon with the war economics of Western Imperialism have exposed Ceylon's economy to an orgy of inflation which has been assisted by the policies of the Central Bank, headed by the U.S. Treasury Official, Mr. John Exeter.

Look, briefly, at the miserable record of U.N.P. Government as

revealed by the statistics presented by its own departments.

Has the production of the tea, rubber, coconut and other agricultural industries increased? This is what the last report of the Central Bank says: "The volume of exports has shown hardly any increase since 1942" (p. 13.)

Has the production of paddy increased despite the millions of rupees ploughed into the various Senantake schemes? The Government's own economic survey, based on the census, tells us that there is less land under paddy cultivation (Economic and Social Development of Ceylon 1926-1934).

The miserable record of the Minister of Industries, who has closed down more factories than he has opened, is too well known to need comment.

All the tall talk of a "Six Year Plan" cannot hide the realities of the U.N.P.'s failure.

In its anxiety to smash the rising opposition to its criminal and treacherous policies and to guarantee foreign capitalists against all activities that will limit their profits, the U.N.P. has resorted to a ferocious policy of destroying democratic rights. This is directed principally against their most unwavering opponents, the working class, but it extends to every form of opposition.

It is as part of the U.N.P. policy of selling the interests of this country to foreign imperialist warmongers that we have to see its attempts to smash the trade union movement, to corrupt and regiment the public services, to ban strikes in essential industries, to disenfranchise over two lakhs of estate workers and to prevent several thousands of young people from being able to vote at the next elections.

There can be no doubt that the events of the last 18 months have revealed to yet wider sections of our people the truth of the Communist Party's characterisation of the U.N.P. as the stooge party of foreign imperialists, the party of Britain and America in Ceylon, the party of the betrayal of the national interests of all sections of the Ceylonese people.

CRISIS OF THE U.N.P.

The crisis of its imperialist masters and the bankruptcy of its own policy has produced a major crisis in the U.N.P. itself.

This crisis was high-lighted and dramatised by the resignation, in July 1951, of Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and his supporters from the U.N.P.

In view of the publicity which this event has received, it is necessary to state that it was not Mr. Bandaranaike's resignation that provoked the crisis, but the maturing crisis in the country that provoked Mr. Bandaranaike's resignation.

These resignations reflected the growing disillusionment of sections of the capitalist and middle class who had hitherto supported the U.N.P. The growing danger of war, the upsurge of the freedom movements in other parts of the world and their practical experience of four years of the U.N.P.'s corruption, despotism and national treachery had opened the eyes of these sections to the real character of the U.N.P.

The situation brought about by the Bandaranaike resignations constitutes the first major split in the capitalist class, throwing a section of it into opposition to the U.N.P. and its policies. It confirms the analysis made by our Fourth Party Congress that the U.N.P. cannot maintain the undivided support of even the Ceylonese capitalist class, sections of which would be thrown into opposition to its pro-imperialist policy which obstructs their own development, just as much as it obstructs the development of the rest of the nation.

Mr. Bandaranaike and his supporters have now formed the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. The published programme of this Party includes among its aims and objects such items as:

1. The establishment of an Independent Republic outside the British Empire;
2. The cancellation of the Defence Agreement, the withdrawal of foreign armed forces and the return of all bases to Ceylon;
3. A policy of friendship and co-operation with all countries;
4. "Progressive nationalisation" of essential industries and sectors of the economy.

It will thus be seen that the capitalist and middle class sections, who have now entered the anti-U.N.P. movement, have realised, to a certain degree, and associated themselves with the fundamental anti-imperialist demands of the people.

The Communist Party welcomes the fact that those sections have chosen to break with the U.N.P. and oppose its policies. It considers that this break assists still further the task of defeating the U.N.P. We repudiate the idea, publicly expressed by the U.N.P. and also regret to say by the spokesmen of the (Nava) L.S.S.P. like Mr. W. Dahahayake, that this break can be dismissed as a personal or family quarrel which is of little interest to the anti-imperialist movement.

The Communist Party believes that these sections can play a valuable part in the anti-imperialist and anti-U.N.P. movements. We express our readiness to co-operate with them for the common task of defeating imperialism and the U.N.P. and reconstructing our country.

At the same time, we must warn against the danger of imagining that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, as it now exists, can be regarded as a completely homogeneous political party whose continuous progressive orientation can be guaranteed.

Inside the Freedom Party at the moment there exists a progressive wing with a long record of anti-U.N.P. activity. At the same time there exist others who, though they have taken a position of Opposition to the U.N.P. still retain the hostility and fear of the Left movement which the U.N.P. had sedulously fostered in their minds and have not completely broken their former ties with the sections of the bourgeoisie who are clearly linked with imperialism.

It is this diverse composition of the Freedom Party - its mixture of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements - that explains the vacillations of this Party and its inability to enter into a clear and definite bloc with the Left movement so as to create a Democratic Front for the purpose of defeating imperialism and the U.N.P. and taking power.

There are certain people in the Freedom Party who have advanced the theory that this Party should function as some sort of "middle" or

"third" Party, distinguished from both the U.N.P. and the Left movement and opposed to both.

The Communist Party welcomes the fact that any section or class of the Ceylonese people should organise itself on an anti-imperialist and anti-U.N.P. basis. We seek fraternal co-operation with all such organisation and we are sure that whatever differences that may exist between us can be resolved satisfactorily in the common interest of defeating the U.N.P. and winning freedom.

Nevertheless, we must warn against those theories of a third party, of opposition to both the U.N.P. and the Left movement.

Firstly this is precisely what the U.N.P. wants. It knows that if its opponents unite, it is doomed. Its whole effort is now directed towards keeping its opponents from uniting. It attacks the idea of the Freedom Party uniting with the Leftists on the alleged grounds that the latter are irreligious and anti-democratic. It warns the Left against any unity with the Freedom Party on the grounds that the latter are a lot of untrustworthy capitalists.

Secondly, it is necessary for those Capitalists and middle class sections who have entered the anti-U.N.P. movement seriously to consider how they can win the freedom they claim to fight for. It is the height of absurdity for any one to imagine that the U.N.P. can be defeated and freedom won without the active participation and leadership of the workers and peasants in the struggle. The political experience of the workers and peasants' movement in Ceylon in the Left movement, its anti-U.N.P. and anti-imperialist bona fides are well known. It has nearly 20 years of active struggle and history behind it.

How, therefore, can there be any serious talk of defeating the U.N.P. and imperialism unless there is the closest co-operation with the Left movement?

Is such co-operation possible? Is it possible for the Left and non-Left opponents of the U.N.P. to work together, not only to defeat the U.N.P. but also to carry forward that unity towards the task of liberating and reconstructing our country and raising the standard of living of our people?

The Communist Party answers this question with an emphatic: "Yes".

We have before us the glorious example of China, whose achievements have inspired all sections of our people.

In China it became possible for a national liberation alliance to be forged, a bloc of four classes - the working class, peasantry, intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie.

This national alliance not only succeeded in defeating the traitor Chiang-Kai-Shek and his corrupt regime but also repulsed the military intervention of the American imperialists in support of Chiang-Kai-Shek. It set up its own People's Republic and a government whose representative of all these four classes find their due place.

On the basis of the friendly co-operation of these classes it began the gigantic task of reconstructing China after centuries of imperialist exploitation and enforced economic backwardness.

The success of this policy is well-known. For the first time, China was unified under a single government and able to exert its influence as a major power in world affairs.

In a matter of less than two years China was transformed from a land of famine and an importer of food into a land which not only produced more than enough food for its 450 million inhabitants but was in a position to have large surpluses to export to other countries like India and ourselves, whose food problem is acute. What a contrast to the miserable failure of the Senanayake food policy over the past 21 years.

Now China has also taken the path of development as an industrial power, as those Ceylonese who have visited the in the International Industrial Exhibition at Bombay had occasion to see. It will not be long before China will become one of the major industrial nations of the world.

All glory to the Government and people of China and their valiant leader, Chairman Mao Tse Tung.

The Communist Party is convinced that, with modifications made necessary by our local situation, the path of advance adopted in China is the most suitable path for Ceylon as well.

Ceylon and China are both Asian countries, with age-old civilisations and associations which go back into history. Both countries experienced the devastation of foreign imperialist rule, which deliberately kept their economics primitive and backward, mere appendages of the economics of the imperialist countries. Both countries produced the phenomenon of a section of the capitalist class which joined with Imperialism against its own people.

What China has done today, Ceylon can do tomorrow. The Communist Party is convinced that it is both possible and necessary to forge a Democratic Front of the workers, peasants, intelligentsia and those sections of the Ceylonese capitalist class who are prepared to take part in the struggle against Imperialism and the U.N.P.

In our opinion, such a democratic front should be led by the working class, the most indomitable opponent of imperialism and the U.N.P. It must be firmly based on a close alliance of the workers and the peasantry.

The U.N.P. has tried hard to prevent the formation of such a broad-based democratic front. They have suggested that the Communists are not sincere in seeking co-operation with non-Left opponents of the U.N.P. According to the U.N.P., we Communists are trying to dupe these sections, to use them to defeat the U.N.P. and then to turn against our former allies, destroy them and establish a socialist dictatorship.

The Communist Party repudiates this base slander. We believe that Left and non-Left opponents of the U.N.P. can and must co-operate, not only to defeat the U.N.P., but also to govern and reconstruct the country afterwards.

We Communists stand for the establishment of socialism. We consider the socialist system far superior to the capitalist system. But nevertheless we say, clearly and definitely, that the immediate task before the people of Ceylon is not the establishment of a socialist government or system.

The Communist Party does not consider that the stage has yet been reached in Ceylon where the establishment of a socialist government or system is the next item in the agenda. On the contrary, the immediate

task before us is:

1. To defeat Imperialism and its local allies - i.e. to destroy their political, economic and military power and

2. To develop, on a democratic basis, the productive capacity of our country by increasing industrial and agricultural output and national wealth in order to raise the standard of living of the people.

The Communist Party considers it necessary that all patriotic classes and sections of our people should and must co-operate to fulfil the tasks of this stage of development.

It is only by fulfilling the tasks of this stage of development that it will be possible to create the economic and other material foundations for the further development to socialist society.

Our economic programme for the period ahead is therefore aimed, not at the immediate establishment of socialism, but at the destruction of the imperialist stranglehold which fetters the development of our economy. Towards this end, we demand the nationalisation without compensation of all property owned by the imperialists and their local collaborators.

That is the type of economy which we Communists believe should be introduced immediately following the defeat of Imperialism?

We believe that all key industries and undertakings must be owned and operated by the State. It is only if the key sections of the economy are in the hands of the State that it will be possible to ensure that the State can direct the development of the entire economy.

Apart from these key industries and undertakings, which should be publicly and nationally owned, we believe that private ownership should be permitted to continue subject to the control of the State where the interests of the public and the welfare of the employees are concerned.

In the sphere of peasant agriculture, we Communists believe that, while private ownership should continue, efforts should be made, by persuasion and example, to secure the voluntary support of the peasantry for the introduction of co-operative farming.

We believe that the principle of confiscation, that is of nationalisation without compensation, should be applied to the imperialists and their local collaborators only. To compensate the imperialists for their property would be like compensating a thief for taking back what he had stolen. In the case of the collaborators with Imperialism, we believe that the confiscation of their property is a necessary act of social justice for the treachery which they have committed.

However, if in the interests of national development it becomes necessary for the State to acquire the property of any sections who support the nation against Imperialism and the U.N.P. we Communists believe that they should be treated on an entirely different basis and suitable compensation made.

The development of the economy on such a basis requires the united efforts of not only the workers and peasants but also of the intelligentsia and such sections of the capitalist class as are prepared to take part in the development of the country.

It is our belief that, as in China, all such sections should also be represented in the government on the basis of their record of anti-U.N.P. struggle.

We Communists are sincere in our desire to co-operate with non-Left sections who are prepared to take part in the task of reconstruction of the country, free from imperialist control. We firmly believe that, in the course of working together, we will be able to convince the majority of those non-Left forces of the necessity to take the next step of social advance - namely, the establishment of socialism.

The Communist Party believes that the necessary conditions for a broad-based democratic alliance already exist in Ceylon. Towards this end, we seek agreement, not only with other sections of the Left movement, but also with the Freedom Party, the Republican Party and similar anti-U.N.P. organisations of the capitalist and middle class.

We trust that those organisations will not allow themselves to be intimidated by the U.N.P. or by reactionary forces within their own ranks into keeping away from a united front with the Left movement.

Our party, together with our allies of the LSSP, led by Philip Gunawardeno, are already conducting negotiations with those forces regarding the forthcoming general elections and the period thereafter. We hope that these negotiations will be crowned with success and, for our part, we are extremely anxious to do all we can to reach an honourable and valuable agreement. But it is, at the same time, our opinion that attempts at unity must not be confined to top level negotiating between leaders. It is by joint participation in practical action for the defeat of Imperialism and the U.N.P. that the Democratic Front become a living reality, We therefore seek to extend the field of all such practical action.

THE FIGHT FOR LEFT UNITY

The fight for unity of the working class movement is an essential and pivotal factor in the creation of a broad-based Democratic Front.

The working class has been the most resolute, unwavering and far-seeing opponent of Imperialism and its U.N.P. - panthamkarayas. Leadership of the working class is essential in any broad-based alliance. It is the only guarantee that such an alliance will not compromise or falter but will advance continuously in a progressive direction.

But the working class cannot exercise its leadership effectively or assist in winning over other classes to a broad Democratic Front unless it is united in purpose and action.

In terms of the political development of Ceylon, unity of the working class means unity of the Left Movement. The fight for Left unity, therefore, becomes an essential part of the fight to build a Democratic Front.

In the 18 months since our last Congress, our Party has campaigned incessantly to unite the Left movement for such a purpose.

We were extremely glad to have concluded on 15th April, 1951, an agreement with the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, of which Comrade Philip Gunawardena is the General Secretary, ^

The CP-LSSP agreement represents a historic turning point in the

Left movement and the struggle for Freedom, At one blow, it shattered the myth, so sedulously fostered by the U.N.P., that the Left movement could never unite. It provided a framework for the unity of the entire Left movement.

Our CP-LSSP agreement is a comprehensive one. It is not confined to a specific situation, but covers an entire period - the period of the struggle for real independence and the transition thereafter from independence to socialism. It is not concerned with a specific section of this struggle only, but extends over a wide range of fronts - the trade union and mass movement, the Parliamentary struggle and the formation of a government.

This agreement is clearly a durable one. The experience of one year of working the agreement fully confirms this. On behalf of the Communist Party, I would like to express our pleasure and satisfaction at the growing unity and comradeship that has developed between our Party and the LSSP, led by Comrade Philip Gunewardono. We are confident that this unity will develop still further in the course of the struggles ahead.

In the CP-LSSP agreement the question of Left Unity is placed squarely in its international and national context.

INTERNATIONALLY, this agreement rejects all "third force" and "middle path" theories, such as those put forward by certain theorists of the L.S.S.P., led by Dr. N.M. Perera, It unequivocally declares the identity of interests between the Left movement in Ceylon and the world struggles of socialist, democratic and peace-loving states and peoples, led by the Soviet Union and New China, against the Anglo-American plans of war and world domination.

NATIONALLY, a united Left movement is posed, not as an end in itself, but as the leading and driving force of "a wider unity of all progressive and anti-imperialist forces".

Firstly, we were giving expression to the overwhelming demand for Left Unity among progressive circles, who realised that the U.N.P. could not be defeated by a divided Left movement.

Secondly, we were aware that, both within the L.S.S.P. led by Dr. N.M. Perera and among its sympathisers and supporters, there were considerable genuine sections who should rightly be included in a united Left movement and were anxious for agreement.

Thirdly we were aware that the growing danger of war and the dramatic intensity at which the popular struggles in other lands were developing under the leadership of our brother Communist Parties were in practice rendering obsolete the differences which had hitherto divided the Left movement.

While our effort at unity was widely welcomed by all progressive people, it apparently spread panic among certain leading personalities of the L.S.S.P., led by Dr. Perera.

These gentlemen immediately interpreted this offer of unity as an attempt by us either to "isolate" or "swallow up" their Party.

It is difficult to appreciate the logic of these gentlemen. If we were anxious to "isolate" their Party, inviting them to enter into an agreement with us in certainly a most peculiar way of doing so.

The suggestion that we were anxious to "swallow up" the L.S.S.P. led by Dr. N.M. Perera, is equally absurd. From the very inception of the

negotiations, we invited that party to state any points of disagreement it may have with the CP-LSSP agreement and to suggest amendments and alterations. Despite our repeated requests, it did not avail of these opportunities, but flatly turned down our suggestions as "definitely unacceptable".

We are aware that our appeal for unity has found an echo of response among large and influential sections of the L.S.S.P. led by Dr. N.M. Perera. But unfortunately a certain section of the leadership of that Party - and especially Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Mr. Doric de Souza - are bitterly opposed to a comprehensive united front, and, indeed, to any united front of the Left at all.

From the beginning, this section of the leadership obstructed and sabotaged every effort at unity, to the applause of the U.N.P. and its Pandam Press. Their services to the U.N.P. were publicly acknowledged by no less a person than the Political Correspondent of the "Daily News" who on 20th October 1951 wrote:

"The New L.S.S.P. would by now have themselves started joint campaigning with the C.P. but for the consistency of their High Command members led by Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Mr. Doric de Souza "

I hope that the rank and file members of the L.S.S.P., led by D., N.M. Perera, will reflect on the significance of this tribute from one of the leading apologists for the policy of subservience to American imperialism.

There is no doubt that the fundamental factor underlying the campaign of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and others of his ilk against a comprehensive agreement is their virulent hatred of the Soviet Union - a hatred no less intense than that of the Trumans, MacArthurs, Churchills, Senanayakes and Kotelawalas.

These gentlemen obviously consider that the first duty of the working class and people of Ceylon is not that of rescuing their country from the stranglehold of Anglo-American Imperialism and the U.N.P., but that of joining with the war-mongering imperialists in slandering and attacking the Soviet Union. Their efforts in this direction bear a marked similarity to those of the American Embassy.

All the efforts of these reactionary leaders will be of no avail. The overwhelming sections of Left and progressive opinion in Ceylon realise that a policy of friendship with and support for the Soviet Union and the progressive camp which it leads is an indispensable part of our own struggle for peace and independence.

It is the Soviet Union that leads the struggle for maintaining peace and preventing Anglo-American imperialism from plunging mankind into another war. Its fight for peace is clearly in the interests of the people of Ceylon for whom the preparations for and danger of war mean increasing political and economic subjection, rising prices, food shortage, artificial restrictions on trade and the constant danger of devastation and death.

It is the Soviet Union that has staunchly championed the right of colonial and dependent peoples, especially in Asia and the Middle East, to independence and self-determination._ It goes without saying that the interests of the Ceylonese people lie more in friendship with

such a country than with the Anglo-American murderers of Korea and aggressors in Egypt.

It is the Soviet Union that has rendered practical aid to the peoples of Asia and all peoples struggling to be free. Unlike the Americans, whose offers of 'aid' have political strings attached to them, as Ceylon found to her cost over the issue of selling rubber to China, Soviet aid is on an equal basis and aims at assisting these countries to achieve economic development and independence.

The recent ECAFE conference at Singapore saw the Soviet Union offering countries like ours honest and favourable trade by which we can not only dispose of our products at advantageous prices but also obtain the machinery, food and consumer goods we require and cannot obtain from the Western world owing to the rearmament programme to which it is committed.

Within her own boundaries, the Soviet Union is undertaking gigantic construction works of Communism, raising the living standards of her people, reducing prices and creating a mighty bulwark of peace and progress throughout the world.

Only those who have fallen victim to the inhuman propaganda of the American warmongers can imagine that such a policy is contrary to the interests of Ceylon.

Following in the footsteps of the accredited agents of American imperialism like the Titoites and the Right-Wing Social Democratic leaders, people like Dr. Colvin R. de Silva have tried to persuade the Left movement that there is a "third force", a third camp in the world apart from the camp of imperialism, led by the U.S.A., and the camp of peace and progress, led by the Soviet Union.

All these efforts have ended in a miserable fiasco. The betrayal of Yugoslavia, the boot-licking of the Right Wing Social Democrats of Europe and the recent election debacle of the Indian Socialist Party have made it abundantly clear that the so-called "middle path" starts and finishes in Washington.

It is now universally recognised that no party can truly be called socialist or Leftist unless it unequivocally takes its stand with the camp of peace and progress, led by the Soviet Union, against the Anglo-American camp of imperialism and war.

We hope that those members of the LSSP, led by Dr. N.M. Perera, who do not share the anti-Soviet views of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Co. will not allow these gentlemen to make their party an auxiliary of the Anglo-American war camp.

Through the CP-LSSP United Front, we are, even now, ready to discuss with the L.S.S.P., led by Dr. N.M. Perera, the question of a comprehensive agreement which will ensure the durable unity of the Left movement. It is our considered opinion that only such a comprehensive agreement will enable the Left movement to play its leading role in mobilising other sections of the people for defeating Imperialism and the U.N.P.

The L.S.S.P., led by Dr. Perera, has by majority decision, refused to discuss a comprehensive agreement. In the interests of defeating the U.N.P. the CP-LSSP United Front has therefore been compelled to pursue the much more limited question of an electoral agreement. These negotiations are now in progress and the correspondence exchanged

between our respective organisations has been published. It is apparent that the Colvin R. de Silva section of the L.S.S.P. are still up to their obstructive tactics. They are still pursuing a small-minded and sectarian policy of refusing to recognise the United Front and conduct negotiations with it.

I think it is high time these gentlemen recognised facts as facts, however much they may dislike them. The CP-LSSP United Front exists and continues to exist. It cannot be by-passed. Let them not take upon themselves the responsibility of refusing unity by refusing to recognise a fact which the whole country accepts.

The L.S.S.P., led by Dr. N.M. Perera, is demanding that any agreement with regard to the elections which is reached between the United Front and their party should be confined to these organisations. We cannot accept such a proposition. It is our opinion that the Left movement should strive for a broad agreement between all anti-U.N.P. parties to defeat the U.N.P. and install a united government that will implement an agreed programme of Peace, Real Independence, Democracy and Social Progress.

We believe that any agreement which is reached between our United Front and the L.S.S.P. should be of such a nature as to permit this. We can see no reason whatsoever for refusing participation in the front to any party or organisation which is (1) Prepared to support a programme agreed to by the United Front and the L.S.S.P., or a similar programme and (2) to take part in the struggle to defeat the U.N.P.

We hope that the L.S.S.P. will not make unity impossible by insisting upon their sectarian position.

We also take strong exception to the intensification of anti-Soviet slander and vilification of the L.S.S.P., led by Philip Gunawardena, in the official press of the L.S.S.P. These ravings, the majority of which are signed by Messrs. Colvin R. do Silva and Doric do Souza, are clearly aimed at disrupting efforts at unity - a fact which should be noted by those in that party who genuinely desire a progressive unity.

As far as we are concerned, we shall not yield to provocation. But let the L.S.S.P., led by Dr. N.M. Perera, realise, clearly and unmistakably, that the Communist Party will have no truck with anti-Sovietism, the weapon of American imperialism and its war plans.

We hope that those forces in the L.S.S.P., who disagree with the disruptive tactics of the Colvin R. de Silva clique, will be able to assert themselves sufficiently to take that party away from the suicidal path which it is treading today.

Let them ponder on the fate of the Socialist Party in India. Like their own party, the Socialist Party joined the Americans in slandering the Soviet Union and its allies. Like their own party, the Socialist Party proclaimed a "third force" and refused a United Front with other progressive organisations.

The people of India have given their verdict. That verdict upholds the United Front and has led to the debacle of the Socialist Party, whose policies have been responsible for allowing the Congress to return to power.

Let us hope that responsible people in the L.S.S.P., led by Dr. N.M. Perera, will not permit the same fate to overcome their party and lead

to its being found guilty of assisting the U.N.P. to wriggle back to power.

FOR A GOVERNMENT OF PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

In the coming general elections, the people of Ceylon have an unparalleled opportunity to clear away one of the main obstacles to freedom and progress - the U.N.P. government.

There is not the slightest doubt that the vast majority of the people of our country are solidly anti-U.N.P. and desire its defeat.

The main task at the moment, therefore, is how to bring together all the diverse progressive forces that are opposed to the U.N.P. and unite them behind a common programme to establish a progressive government.

Both the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the L.S.S.P., led by Dr. N.M. Perera appear to imagine that this can best be done by mere "no contest" agreements.

The Communist Party does not accept this view. It considers "no contest" agreements inadequate to meet the needs of the present situation.

The main task before all of us today is to establish a progressive government. And governments, we would like to remind our friends of the Freedom Party and the L.S.S.P., cannot be run on a "no contest" basis. They require a common programme and policy.

We Communists believe that only an agreement between the anti-U.N.P. parties to establish a government on a commonly accepted programme can inspire the people to heroic, united efforts and guarantee the end of the U.N.P.

The Communist Party is ready to play its part in such an agreement. We hope that, even at this late hour, the other parties opposed to the U.N.P. will see the wisdom and necessity of this step.

We call for the establishment of a Government which will help to maintain peace in the world, establish real independence and democracy, end imperialist domination and guarantee the people social progress and a rising standard of living.

In our opinion, such a Government should pursue a policy on the lines suggested below.

It should end all unequal relations with Britain and other countries and establish, in place of the present constitution, an Independent Democratic Republic.

It should secure the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Ceylon and repudiate the so-called "Defence Agreement" which permits foreign powers to maintain military bases in Ceylon.

In the realm of external affairs, such a government should pursue a policy of promoting peace and international co-operation and associate its efforts with all other states interested in the settlement of international disputes by negotiation. It should develop and strengthen diplomatic, trade and other friendly relations with all states which are prepared to respect Ceylon's independence, and in particular with countries like the Soviet Union, New China and the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe which have demonstrated in practice their support for peoples oppressed by Imperialism and their readiness to assist their development without injuring their sovereignty.

In order to break the economic stranglehold of imperialism, such a government should nationalise without compensation, all estates, banks, insurance companies, business establishments, factories, mines, harbour and transport companies and other property belonging to the imperialists and their local collaborators.

It should abolish big feudal land holdings in the countryside and seek to satisfy the land hunger of the rural population.

It should carry out a planned development of industry and agriculture, based on the state ownership and operation of all key industries and undertakings. It should permit private and co-operative ownership of all other sections of the economy, subject to the control and direction of the state in the matter of fulfilment of plans and guaranteeing the public interest and the welfare of the employees.

In external trade, after abolishing the imperialist monopoly, it should establish a system of state control and secure the assistance of Ceylonese enterprises in developing this trade. Internal trade should be shared between co-operatives and private traders with every effort to persuade the latter of the advantages of co-operative trading.

On the basis of the development of the economy, such a government should guarantee better working conditions and social services for the people.

It should guarantee jobs or state assistance for all; establish a guaranteed minimum wage; make the 8-hour working day universal; guarantee equal pay for equal work, irrespective of sex or age; and introduce a comprehensive state system of social insurance.

It should extend, and rapidly, the present health services into an effective and comprehensive State Medical Service, manned by an increasing number of doctors and specialists, so as to give free and efficient service to the people. It should make rapid strides in creating positive health, by slum clearance, proper housing schemes, extensive sanitation and water services and other means, so as to reduce the incidence of T.B., intestinal infections, filaria and other preventable diseases.

Such a government should introduce a comprehensive scheme of free State education which will eliminate by successive reforms the present structure of class privileges and give all children the best facilities and the fullest opportunities for development.

We Communists consider that such a government should establish substantial and thorough-going democracy in place of the imperialist and capitalist dictatorship which the U.N.P. parades as "democracy".

In our opinion, democracy cannot become a reality unless and until political power is taken from the hands of the imperialists and the handful of capitalists who support them and firmly grasped by the majority of the people, led by the working class.

We Communists repudiate as malicious slander the statement of the U.N.P. that we wish to abolish Parliamentary and representative government based on the choice of the people through adult franchise or that we wish to establish a dictatorship of our Party over the rest of the people.

The experience of the past four years has proved that it is the U.N.P. that has attacked adult franchise by disenfranchising estate

workers and young people; that has made Parliament unrepresentative by its crooked election methods and by maintaining the Senate and the Appointed Members; that has established a dictatorship of its own Party over the Ceylonese people in the interests of foreign imperialism.

We Communists believe that real democracy can only begin to be established if the economic and political power of the big exploiters is broken, the whole legislative and executive machinery of the country made continuously responsive to the democratic will of the people, and the entire people drawn into active participation in the control and administration of every sphere of national life.

In order to achieve this, we Communists believe that a really free and democratic government should, among other things,

(1) Repeal all anti-democratic, discriminatory and repressive legislation and administrative orders

(2) Make the House of Representatives the sole national authority by abolishing the Governor-General, the Senate and the Appointed Members

(3) Democratically reform the electoral system by proportional representation and granting the right to vote to all at 18 years of age

(4) Eliminate corruption and bureaucracy and create a new democratic state apparatus by seeing that all positions of authority in the Civil Service, the Armed Forces, the Judiciary and the Diplomatic Service are manned by those who will loyally carry out the wishes of the people and the government and not seek to sabotage their efforts

(5) Take over those newspapers which have transformed themselves into stooges of imperialism and the U.N.P., and place these at the disposal of working class and democratic organisations

(6) Cancel the lease of Radio Ceylon to the "Voice of America" and make the radio an instrument expressing the interests of the people in every aspect of its work

(7) Make Sinhalese and Tamil the State languages of Ceylon, so that the mass of the people can be drawn into the administration; Protect and develop the cultures of all the peoples of the country

(8) Respect the rights of the minorities and ensure to them the ability to exercise their right of self-determination

(9) End the conditions of virtual slavery in which immigrant estate workers now live by

(a) Controlling immigration on the basis of an agreement between the Governments of Ceylon, India and Pakistan

(b) Granting full rights of citizenship to all settlers with 5 years residence in the country and who wish to become citizens of Ceylon;

(c) Extending the right of franchise to all residents in Ceylon.

(10) Grant full trade union and democratic rights to all workers and employees, including public servants.

(11) Guarantee freedom of religious worship and respect to all religious creeds and beliefs.

It is because we stand for a thorough-going democracy that we Communists consider it our duty to warn the people that any decisive measure to exercise their democratic will are likely to be resisted

by the U.N.P. with all means in their power, including force. The U.N.P. will not hesitate to invite their foreign imperialist backers to intervene militarily in Ceylon as they are now doing in Korea.

The people of Ceylon and a progressive government should therefore be ready decisively to rebuff such attempts. The most effective preparation for this will be the development and unification of the mass organisations.

Together with our allies of the L.S.S.P., led by Philip Gunawardene, we shall be putting forward about 34 candidates at the next elections. We have already announced the seats which the CP-LSSP United Front candidates intend to contest, but we say again that this list is subject to revision in the light of any electoral agreements we may reach with any other party.

The victory of the candidates of the United Front will be a major blow in favour of a government of Peace, Independence and Social Progress. On behalf of our Party, I call on all members, friends and sympathisers to make their maximum effort to see those candidates returned.

In constituencies where we have no candidate, we shall work for the defeat of the U.N.P. and the return of candidates who will be prepared to assist in the formation of a progressive government.

A vital part in our election campaign will be our efforts to collect the one lakh of rupees we require for our "Defeat the U.N.P." Election Fund. I ask every member and sympathiser to take part in this campaign and ensure that this sum is realised before the elections begin.

CONCLUSION

Comrades! You will see from this report that the Communist Party has no interests apart from the interests of the working class and people of Ceylon. That is why we work for unity of all progressive sections of the people to defeat the U.N.P. and develop a new democracy under conditions of peace and real Independence.

Strengthening the Communist Party is, therefore, a vital and decisive contribution to the defeat of the U.N.P.

We invite our sympathisers and friends, who have associated with us and know us well, to take the next step of becoming members of our Party.

We call on our existing members to build a strong, united mass Communist Party which can honourably discharge the duties which history and the needs of our people have assigned to us.

Already in the by-election at Akuressa, the dress rehearsal for the General Elections is being performed. We are glad that it is the Communist Party that has been called upon to undertake this task for the progressive movement. We must make sure that we discharge this duty with honour by ensuring a resounding defeat for the U.N.P. and victory for our candidate, the nation's candidate, Dr. S.A. Wickromasinghe.

1952 will be a year of great decisions. It is the year that can see the defeat of the U.N.P. and the opening of a new chapter in the age-old history of our country.

We Communists are confident that the policy which we place before

the country can ensure the defeat of the U.N.P. In our great neighbour, India, our brother Party has demonstrated how a similar policy brings lasting results - a fact which has inspired us all.

The situation which existed in India - and especially in South India which is nearest to Ceylon - was parallel to our own situation.

Like the U.N.P. the Congress had become corrupt, anti-national and hated by the people. Like the L.S.S.P. under the influence of the Colvin R. do Silva, the Socialist Party of India refused unity with other forces opposed to the Congress and claimed that it alone represented the alternative.

History has vindicated the correctness of the policy of unity pursued by our brother party in India. Wherever unity was established, Congress was routed. Where disunity prevailed, Congress was able to wriggle back to power.

The Indian people have given their verdict. It is the United Front that has emerged triumphant as the alternative to Congress. The sectarian and reactionary policy of the Indian Socialist Party has only led to its own eclipse.

We are confident that the people of Ceylon will learn this lesson from the Indian elections in time.

Throughout the world, in every front in the struggle for peace and freedom, it is the Communist Parties that are in the vanguard. Communism has become the standard bearer of humanity's march to lasting peace, liberation and happiness.

We Communists of Ceylon are proud to belong to this great vanguard of toiling humanity. We shall discharge with honour the tasks which history and the needs of our people have placed before us.