

A SHORT OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF BURMA

I

Burma was an independent kingdom before annexation by the British imperialist in 1824. In 1885 British imperialist annexed whole of Burma. Since that time, Burmese people have never given up their fight for regaining their independence. Various armed uprisings and other legal forms of struggle were used by the Burmese people in their fight to regain independence.

In 1938 the biggest and the broadest anti-British general strike over-ran the whole country. The workers were on strike, the peasants marched up to Rangoon and all the students deserted their class-room to join the workers and peasants. It was an unprecedented anti-British movement in Burma popularly called in Burmese as "1300th movement".

Out of this national and class struggle of the Burmese people and working class emerges the Communist Party of Burma.

II

The Communist Party of Burma was officially founded on 15th August, 1939 by uniting all Marxist groups in Burma.

III

From the day of inception, CPB launched an active anti-British struggles up till 1941. It was the core of CPB leadership that led anti-British struggles up till the second world war.

IV

In 1941, after the Hitlerites treacherously attacked the Soviet Union, CPB changed its tactics and directed its blows against the fascists.

V

In 1942, Burma was invaded by the Japanese fascists. From that time onwards up till 1945, CPB worked untiringly to oppose the Japanese fascists

and actively prepared for armed struggle against the Japanese fascists. In 1944, under the leadership of CPB, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League was formed comprising of the Burma Army under General Aung San and other patriotic forces. Its aim was to carry out armed struggle against the Japanese fascists.

Many party members were killed and maimed in the torture chambers of Japanese military police. But the spirit of struggle against the Japanese fascists never receded. In fact the lives and blood shed by the Burmese Communists and their revolutionary conduct shown by them before the enemy in torture chambers of the Japanese military police served as great impetus for smashing Japanese fascism in Burma.

On 27th March, 1945, the Burmese people under the leadership of CPB started their glorious armed struggle against the Japanese fascists in Burma. From that day to the end of war in Burma theatre, our armed forces accounted for more than 60% of the total casualties suffered by the Japanese in Burma. This was admitted by the British authorities of South East Asia Command.

VI

In May, 1945, CPB for the first time could work as an open, legal party.

The CPB directed its main blow against the British imperialist who had once again become the rulers of Burma. For this purpose Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League was openly organised under the leadership of CPB. AFPFL launched many political and economic struggles with the aim of gaining complete independence from the British.

In August, 1946, the CPB led the greatest general strike in the post-war period in which workers, peasants, service-men and police-men took part. As a result, in September, 1946, the British imperialist manoeuvred to split up the AFPFL. They asked AFPFL to form a cabinet and they did so. The first cabinet of AFPFL included a Communist who held the post of Minister of Agriculture and Forest. For the first time in the history of the British Empire, a Communist has held a ministerial post. Incidentally, that first communist minister under the British crown happened to be a member of CPB.

In October, 1946, the AFPFL expelled the communists. After the expulsion of the communists from AFPFL, the AFPFL compromised with the British imperialist and signed Aung San-Attlee agreement and Nu-Attlee

agreement which guarantee formal independence to Burma while perpetuating its economic stranglehold in Burma.

In April, 1947, the Burmese government held its elections to parliament and the Communist Party of Burma emerged as the biggest opposition party. In the parliament the leader of parliamentary group of CPB became the leader of opposition. From 1947 to March, 1948, CPB combined parliamentary struggles with extra-parliamentary struggles and led the mass movement in their day-to-day struggles without losing sight of the political objective.

CPB during those years exposed Nu-Attlee agreement as falling far short of national aspirations and infringing upon the national integrity of Burma. From May, 1945 up till March, 1948, CPB led various strikes of the workers and peasants' movement in the countryside. During this period almost all the trade union organisations in Burma were organised by CPB. CPB also organised peasants' unions whose paid-up membership reached a total of nearly one million.

VII

Beginning with 1948 the mass upsurge once again rose up in a new tide. The workers of BOC were on strike. The peasants in the countryside were carrying out wide-spread mass struggles against the landlords and usurers, against eviction from the land and for no-rent, no-tax movement and were also organising hunger marches. The office workers and employees also were preparing for a general strike.

Under this situation, in order to suppress the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, the ruling class of Burma, instigated by the British imperialist, cracked down on the CPB, national minorities and other democratic forces and launched armed attacks against CPB. Thus on 28th March, 1948, the civil war was started by the ruling class of Burma.

To-day the ruling class of Burma has been waging an unjust war whereas CPB and other democratic forces have been fighting a just war to safeguard complete national and economic independence, to restore democratic rights to the people, for peace and for satisfying demands of the peasants for land, etc. In short, the civil war in Burma is a peasant war waged under the leadership of the proletariat.

At present the civil war in Burma has been going on for the last 16 years resulting in enormous loss of lives and property. Suffice it to say that, though Burma has gained independence for over 16 years, the Burmese national economy has not yet been able to catch up with the pre-war level.

The main reason is the civil war which consumes over 50% of the state budget yearly.

The CPB for the last many years, taking into consideration the political, economic and social conditions of Burma which are deteriorating day by day due to the civil war has come out with the slogan of stopping the civil war through negotiation on a democratic basis. The Burmese Communists have left no stone unearthed to bring the civil war to an end in Burma. The Burmese Communists sincerely want peace and work for it. They know that without the ending of the civil war in Burma, no political, economic and social problems can be solved in the interests of the people.

Unfortunately, governments have come and gone in Burma, but the civil war continues through no fault of ours and contrary to the desire of the people.

VIII

Up till June, 1963, all the previous Burmese governments had refused to negotiate with CPB.

In June, 1963, Ne Win's government, through mass pressure, was compelled to negotiate with CPB. CPB negotiated with Ne Win's government from June, 1963 to 15th November, 1963 when the negotiation was finally broken up by the Burmese government by making unreasonable demands.

On 10th November, 1963, a big demonstration for internal peace was held at Rangoon, where hundred thousand people attended. On 11th November the Burmese government gave an ultimatum to CPB delegation to agree to their demands or that otherwise negotiation will be broken up.

The followings are the demands on CPB put forward by the Burmese government:—

(1) CPB should before cease-fire inform them whereabouts of their troops and party members and other mass organisations.

(2) CPB should concentrate all their armed troops and party members inside an area to be stipulated by the Burmese government.

(3) All these troops and party members are to be concentrated inside those areas stipulated by the government within a specified date-line.

(4) All these troops so concentrated cannot go outside the areas fixed by the Burmese government.

(5) CPB must get permission of the government, if they want to move from one stipulated place to another and etc.

(6) CPB must stop all organisational activities of the party and other mass organisations.

(7) CPB must stop fund-drives.

Regarding these unreasonable demands CPB's preliminary delegation proposed that such political affairs be discussed when the full delegation of CPB comes out for final negotiation with the government.

Burmese government refused to consider our proposals and broke up the negotiation.

Thus internal peace negotiation, which is the cherished desire of the Burmese people was broken up through combined manipulation of the imperialist, reactionaries and revisionists by setting forth unreasonable demands on CPB.

After the break-up of the negotiation, the Burmese government launched wide-spread military offensive against CPB and allied forces.

Under these circumstances, CPB was compelled to defend itself against the military onslaught and thus the civil war continues in Burma.

The CPB once again reiterates its consistent and persistent stand that it will strive its utmost to stop the civil war through negotiation on a democratic basis while defending itself against military attacks by the government.

CPB, while opposing the civil war policy of the Burmese government at home, has consistently supported and will continue to support the foreign policy of peaceful co-existence and neutrality followed by the Burmese government. CPB will continue to oppose reactionary actions of the Burmese government while it will continue to support its progressive actions.

The Burmese government is, at present, coming out with the slogan to build socialism in Burma. We consider it a humbug. This is not scientific socialism, but only pseudo-socialism. It is not socialism, but only state capitalism.

IX

CPB, being a participant at 1957 and 1960 Moscow Conferences of Communist and Workers' Parties, fully supports the revolutionary stand expressed in these two documents. These two documents have been collectively drawn up by Communist and Workers' Parties of the world and we therefore consider that these two documents alone should form the programmatical line for the entire international communist movement.

In accordance with these two documents and in conformity with the facts of life and needs of the struggle in Burma, CPB is struggling against revisionism or right-wing opportunism as the main danger in the international communist movement and inside our party. But at the same time we are

also struggling against left opportunism or dogmatism and sectarianism whenever and wherever it raises its head.

Regarding relationship among fraternal parties in the international communist movement, CPB conducts its policy on the principle of independence and equality.

In the sphere of ideological differences in the international communist movement, CPB adopts an independent stand based on Marxism-Leninism and concrete situation in Burma. To adopt an independent stand does not mean to remain neutral in the great ideological debate. Far from it; CPB will and is taking side — the side of Marxism-Leninism as against revisionism.

In accordance with these two Moscow documents, CPB stands for unity and solidarity of the international communist movement — unity based on Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism and revolutionary principles of Moscow documents.

As before, CPB will continue to make its modest contribution for the unity of international communist movement and for struggle against imperialism, national liberation, peace, democracy and socialism.

X

During twenty-five years of its existence, CPB has tried its best to fulfil the duties of the historical mission placed on the Burmese proletariat in the struggle for complete national and economic independence, democracy, peace and socialism.

CPB, after its inception, has led all anti-imperialist struggles. CPB is also resolutely fighting against US imperialist, the main enemy of the whole world and who are undermining peace and democracy and conducting a policy of war and aggression in all parts of the world. It has resolutely fought and stood for all genuine struggles of the working class. It has also resolutely fought for the realisation of land to the tiller. CPB has led both national and class struggles in Burma and will continue to do so. Holding high three banners of national independence, peace and democracy, CPB will mobilise the people to march forward until final victory is won.

In future also CPB, in co-operation with other fraternal parties, will resolutely take part as a detachment of the international working class in the final onslaught against the international capital and all forms of reaction internal as well as external and for liberation of whole mankind.

JUNE, 1964.