



Afghani Communists Expose Soviet Ploys

From *Neday-e-Enghelab* (Call of Revolution), organ of the Revolutionary Cell of Afghan Communists

After savaging Afghanistan for over seven years, the Soviet Union and its Afghan flunkies are trying to find "peaceful" means to suppress the revolutionary struggle of the Afghan masses. Some changes in the present alignment of forces may come about as a result of the Soviet Union's new policies regarding Afghanistan, which include attempts to call the ex-monarch Zahir Shah back from exile and to forge an alliance with the feudals who the Soviets always used to claim were the main basis of the anti-Soviet resistance. In June 1987 the Afghan puppets announced the prolongation of the unilateral cease fire that was declared on 15th January. But in the long run no such manoeuvring can settle the question.

As we wrote in *AWTW* 1986/6, "The battlefield of Afghanistan is complex indeed, for on it one finds the expression of some of the different yet interrelated contradictions that shape today's world: the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism and social-imperialism on the one hand and the contradiction between the various imperialist powers themselves. It is not possible to understand Afghanistan unless both of these contradictions are understood."

In many areas, years of fighting under the leadership of religious authorities, tribal leaders and U.S.-backed organisations who are aiming to lead astray the just struggle

of the masses of Afghanistan and turn it into a weapon in the service of the Western bloc against the Soviet Union have had real, damaging effects on the movement, including opening the door to capitulation to Soviet social imperialism. The negative role of these reactionary forces whose bankruptcy is increasingly evident, can be overcome if the new democratic alternative is clearly placed before the people of Afghanistan. Only the genuine Marxist-Leninists, who must regroup themselves into a party based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, can lead such a revolution.

The following are excerpts from a recent issue of *Neday-e-Enghelab* (Call of Revolution), organ of the Revolutionary Cell of Afghan Communists, one of the Afghan groups who have declared their intention to work towards building a party guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

The whole political scene of Afghanistan today, as well as the world situation, accentuates the urgency of building a party capable of leading the national war against the Soviet social imperialists and developing it as part of the new democratic stage of the Afghan revolution. Such a party can be built only in close connection to the struggle of the masses and answering the pressing questions of revolution in Afghanistan in-

cluding: the problem of forging a broad united front while assuring the leadership of the proletariat on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and carrying out the agrarian revolution; breaking with the military line prevailing within the resistance which has strategically based itself on heavy arms received from the West and instead developing strategy and tactics which rely on the boundless force and initiative of the masses; rupturing with backward ideas and semi-feudal relations that are now serving reaction, including the oppression of women whose lack of active participation in the resistance struggle of Afghanistan is very telling; and correctly handling other questions involved in waging a genuine people's war in contrast to the present situation in which the armed struggle is both spontaneous and largely led by non-revolutionary class forces. In this way a genuine vanguard party can lead the masses of people to overthrow social-imperialism, imperialism and feudalism in Afghanistan, and open the way for socialism and communism.

Difficult responsibilities face the communists of Afghanistan, but the contradictions that gave rise to the armed struggle of the Afghan masses are not going to be solved by minor changes in Soviet policy, and the coming forward of communists to shoulder these responsibilities indicates a new and higher stage in the struggle — *AWTW*.

Gorbachev has called Afghanistan a bloody wound.

This characterisation reveals the Kremlin leaders' dissatisfaction and disappointment with the present situation in Afghanistan and their eagerness to find a way out of the impasse they are caught in. Several times in the course of the last year Gorbachev has proposed to deal with this problem through the formation of a coalition government. During the Reykjavik negotiations, in addition to strategic nuclear weapons limitations Gorbachev also brought up Afghanistan and said that the Soviets wanted to pull out. When he visited Vladivostok Gorbachev not only expressed an inclination to make concessions regarding border disputes with China and announced the withdrawal of 60,000 Soviet troops from Mongolia, he also announced that 8,000 Soviet soldiers would be withdrawn from Afghanistan. During his visit to India Gorbachev once again expressed Soviet readiness to reach a conciliatory settlement in Afghanistan and assured Indian government leaders of Soviet willingness to withdraw. Before that, Abdul Sattar, a high-ranking official in Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, was invited to the Soviet Union for talks to reach a negotiated settlement to the Afghanistan question.

In the wake of all this activity the Soviet social-imperialists have found the situation favourable to openly putting forward their plan for national reconciliation and called the heads of their Afghan mercenary regime to Moscow. In a meeting between high-ranking Soviet party and government officials and their high-ranking Kabul puppets, these mercenaries received their orders from the social-imperialists.

The plans dictated by the social-imperialist bosses were approved in a plenum meeting held by these revisionist mercenaries' infamous party [the ruling People's Democratic Party — *AWTW*] and then broadcast in the form of a summation of Nagib's speech in that meeting. Having received its orders, the puppet government's "Revolutionary Council" immediately issued a proclamation announcing the forma-

tion of a "National Reconciliation Commission" and a cease-fire by the armed forces of the government and by Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan.

Is this plan the logical continuation of Saur's coup d'état [the April 1978 coup which brought the People's Democratic Party to power and established the present regime — *AWTW*], the Soviet social-imperialists' Afghan invasion and all their previous plans? Or has the pressure of the war in Afghanistan forced the Soviet social-imperialists and their Afghan flunkies to accept big setbacks? Is this plan as doomed to failure as the Soviet invasion itself or will it bring victory for Soviet social-imperialism and its Afghan mercenaries? In the face of this plan, what is the situation with the resistance, what are its responsibilities and tasks and how should they be accomplished?

National Reconciliation — A Refurbished Version of Parcham's "National Democracy"

There has been a long-standing dispute among Afghanistan's Khrushchevite revisionists revolving around the Parcham faction's "national democracy" line versus the Khalq faction's "people's democracy." From the beginning the Parcham labeled the Khalq's "people's democracy" adventurist and ultra-leftist. These two programmes were debated in a series of mutually abusive letters the two factions published during the last period of the Daoud government [overthrown by 1978 coup — *AWTW*]. These splits within the revisionist party weakened it greatly in the face of the Daoud government's attacks, until pressure from their social-imperialist boss forced the two factions to unite. But these questions, like similar debates between them, remained unresolved.

After the Saur coup and the formation of a government involving both factions, disputes over these questions reached a higher level. The Parcham's "national democracy" line called for the government's "reforms" to be carried out at a slower pace and for the inclusion of what they called national and democratic forces in the

government. Of course, by national and democratic the Parchamis meant vacillating and inconsistent forces. But with the coup the Khalq faction seized the initiative, and intoxicated with success it was determined to carry out its so-called people's democracy programme, meaning that the People's Democratic Party was to have a monopoly on the government and the Khalq faction was to run the party. When the Parcham faction continued its contacts with these vacillating elements, the open disagreements inevitably led to open factional clashes. Parchami leaders Babrak, Nagib and others were exiled, while Qadir, Rafi, Keshtmand, etc., were arrested. The state media published their confessions indicating that they had been plotting a coup against the Khalq faction; according to the ruling faction's propaganda the coup against it involved "narrow nationalists" and "ultra-left" elements. With the Khalq faction's suppression of its Parchami rivals, government pressure heightened not only against more radical political forces but also against the centrists whose opposition to the government was such that even some of them took up armed struggle.

For a short period of time after the coup, the regime seemed to face little serious opposition, and so the Soviets approved of the Khalq faction's policies and backed them against the Parchamis' programme. In fact, the Khalq factions' policies meant moving as fast as possible to make our society completely dependent economically and politically on Soviet social-imperialism. This was the programme that dominated the regime, and the Parchamis' programme was cast aside. But as these policies were carried out, they soon gave rise to spontaneous outbursts of discontent and then armed struggle against the regime. The more this dependent regime found itself cornered by this spontaneous armed struggle, the more its social-imperialist masters found the Khalq faction's policies unsatisfactory. It took the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan for the Soviets to be able to modify the Khalq faction's policies. Khalq



When villages are bombed by Soviet planes, the people are forced to leave with their few possessions.

September 1979. Taraki, Amin and other notables of the governing People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

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leader Nur Mohammed Taraki paid for this with his life. In his first radio speech broadcast from Tashkent, Babrak Karmel announced the "good news" that the people of Afghanistan would now be free of the Amin gang and suggested the formation of a united front of all "national, democratic and progressive forces."

After social-imperialist troops invaded Afghanistan, the disagreements that had led to clashes between the Khalq and Parcham factions in the first days after the coup were now resolved chiefly in Parcham's favour. Though these disputes continued now it was Parchami policies that predominated, under the aegis of the Soviets. The offended centrists were now labelled friends and drawn back into the party to some degree, and especially rallied around the National Fatherland Front's programme.

To win over the feudals and Khans (feudal tyrants) the land reform was amended so that those feudals and Khans who cooperated with the government could keep their lands untouched. In the same way the sixteenth plenum of the puppet party adopted a document called "ten theses" which called for protecting the privileges of private investors, merchants and tribal leaders, reconfirmed the privileges enjoyed by the clergy, turned the League of State Clergy into a government ministry and declared that the government would take over and accelerate the building of more mosques and the restoration of holy places.

Through these policies the tribal leaders and Khans whom the regime had alienated were increasingly attracted to the National Fatherland Front.

At the same time, the regime began contacting capitulationist leaders of the resistance fronts and drawing them into negotiations, as well as infiltrating the resistance. The regime made special efforts to provoke infighting within the resistance fronts and intensify already existing contradictions, and thus develop more favourable conditions to lure in these capitulationist elements. Once the regime

has succeeded in establishing such contacts with a particular guerrilla front, the first step would be to declare a cease-fire and the next one would be to try and develop these contacts, and win them over to the government completely if possible.

In terms of the economy, after the social-imperialist invasion the regime abandoned its former policy of cutting off trade between the liberated areas and the areas and cities under the regime's control, and instead initiated a policy of encouraging economic relations and free trade. The purpose in restoring these economic relations was to undermine a self-sufficient village economy and increase the villages' dependence on the cities.

The present line of a cease-fire and national reconciliation, in conjunction with Soviet efforts to seize the political initiative in the international arena as exemplified by the decisions of the recent 27th Congress of the Soviet party, is a crystallisation of the old "national democracy" line long advocated by the Parcham faction. Now it has been forcibly accepted as the regime's official policy by the Khalq faction as well, after several years of conflicts between the two of them. So this plan can hardly be said to be unexpected or surprising.

Principles and Goals of Proposed Reconciliation

"The principles for this coalition are simple and easy to apply," a special plenum meeting of the mercenary revisionist party's Central Committee recently declared. "They involve a cease-fire, the solution of Afghanistan's present and future problems without armed struggle or bloodshed, fair representation in our political institutions and economic life, an amnesty for past political activity and for those presently imprisoned, the preserving and strengthening of our cultural, historical and national heritage and of the respect and practice of our sacred Islamic religion.

"What are the goals of this reconciliation? The main goals are peace and security so that the achievements of the Saur revolution can be expanded, the accomplishment of the programme of the Peo-

ple's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the independent and progressive development of our country, and the strengthening of our regime and its loyal friendship with the Soviet Union."

The Military Aspect

The first and principal condition for this proposed coalition is a cease-fire and an end to the armed struggle, but no change is proposed for the main factors which gave rise to the present armed struggle — the rule of the puppet regime and especially the presence of Soviet social-imperialism's invading forces which prop it up. Therefore accepting the proposed cease-fire and end to the armed struggle against the social-imperialist troops still in Afghanistan and the puppet regime would mean accepting defeat for the resistance. Any kind of cease-fire with the Soviets or the regime has always been considered an act of capitulation to the enemy.

Those few guerrilla fronts that have surrendered to the enemy started by accepting a cease-fire, and now the enemy is trying to generalise this process on a national level. Basically, the enemy is relying on people's weariness with already long years of war and their desire for peace.

But more than anything else this is a confession of the regime's frustration and the fatigue of its armed forces. Despite 150,000 social-imperialist invasion troops in our country, the puppet regime has never been able to develop an efficient and sufficiently strong military force. Many units in the puppet army at present are far below strength; in some of them officers outnumber soldiers because of massive and unceasing desertions. Only in those areas where the guerrilla fronts have become passive and there is no fighting has the puppet army been able to maintain any stability. It is true that the regime has achieved some limited success in some cities with the formation of local garrisons but these are mainly made up of men who do not support the regime's military goals and who join only because there is little chance of their being sent into action. Despite the puppet regime's ef-

forts such as awarding prizes to puppet armed forces and state security officers or of declaring them "heroes of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan," the morale of these officers is as low as can be. A considerable majority of Khalqi officers and a fair number of Parchami officers are tired of the war. This weariness manifests itself mainly in drug addiction and drunkenness. Another sign of the puppet regime's military bankruptcy is that corruption and bribery has become rampant among officers. It has become so widespread that even Russian officers are involved and constantly seek different kinds of bribes.

In sum the puppet regime is militarily dependent on the presence of Soviet troops and could not last without them. So it is impossible, under present circumstances, for these troops to leave Afghanistan. The programme for the proposed national reconciliation says that these troops would leave after security is guaranteed, a government of national coalition is formed and national unity is secured. This means that a new condition for the withdrawal of Soviet troops has been officially added — it is no longer simply the cessation of foreign intervention, i.e. military and other aid to the resistance, that is being demanded, but rather the end of the war itself and the guaranteeing of the regime's security.

The regime's call for a cease-fire should be considered from several different angles. It has been highly touted and has frightened the heads of some of the more reactionary forces among the resistance but to some extent such a cease-fire has already been going on in practice. For a long time now the puppet army and Soviet invasion troops have refrained from attacking certain guerrilla fronts, either because they have come to some understanding or even signed agreements, or because these guerrilla fronts have been inactive due to internal problems in what amounts to a de facto cease-fire. For example, there is the case of Nuristan, vast areas of Hazarajat and some parts of Ghur and Arzegan. In Nuristan, the

Islamic Republic which has supposedly been established is actually a creation of the puppet regime police spy Sarvar Tank. For a long time there the so-called Islamic Republic carried out no military actions against the Soviet and puppet regime forces and lately the latter have also ceased military actions except for the odd bombardment. In some parts of Ghur and Arzegan as well, there is little activity against the regime and the Russian invaders and these latter have responded in kind.

When the regime calls for the Russian and Afghan puppet troops to be returned to their bases, that too is nothing new. Almost all of them are already trapped in their bases, besieged by the resistance, and only a few cities under the regime's control are considered safe for them. Even before this call for a cease-fire they have not been able to move freely but rather have been pinned down by the widespread resistance.

In its cease-fire proposal, the puppet government claims the right to rule over the borders and main roads — which is totally at odds with reality. Out of Afghanistan's 3500 kms of border with Iran and Pakistan, the government controls no more than 200 kms. The proposal to halt transport of arms and materiel by the guerrillas in these regions and allow the government to secure them would mean that the resistance would have to concede 3300 kms of border to the government. The government also claims that the main roads are under its control, whereas in reality most of them are controlled by the resistance day and night unless the government dispatches major forces. Even the main roads passing through cities under the control of Russian and puppet regime troops can be used by the enemy only by engaging in constant fighting.

The puppet regime considers this question of allowing it control of the borders and main roads to be one of the main points of the cease-fire, and in fact a precondition. So it can be seen from this aspect too that the proposed cease-fire really would mean the resistance's surrender. The bulk of the clashes be-

tween resistance forces and enemy troops are presently taking place in the border regions and along the main roads. Under the regime's plan those areas where neither the guerrillas nor the enemy has complete control would also be given up to the government.

One of the goals of this plan is to create, under the protection of social-imperialist invasion forces, a non-war atmosphere among the puppet armed forces presently in constant turmoil due to dispatches to the front and constant desertions. With relative calm and stability in the puppet armed forces they hope not only to put an end to these desertions but also to re-attract some of those youth who've already deserted and escaped chiefly to other countries. Unfortunately, because of the lack of unity among the resistance guerrilla fronts, their local nature and most importantly because of the predominance of reactionary policies, these urban youth can find no place for themselves in the villages controlled by the resistance and are forced to seek refuge abroad.

[Another] goal of social-imperialism and the mercenary regime in declaring this cease-fire is to try and isolate the active resistance fronts and to prevent other fronts from giving them aid, so that they can be suppressed.

Soviet social-imperialism and the puppet regime have always claimed that the Afghanistan resistance is mainly reliant upon foreign aid and would not be able to survive without it. When the puppet regime, in its indirect negotiations with Pakistan, gives the cutting off of foreign aid as a precondition for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, it claims that such aid is the basis for the resistance in Afghanistan. Now that these negotiations may have reached a crucial stage, the social-imperialists and the puppet regime hope that by declaring a cease-fire they can encourage the Pakistani regime and its protectors to cut off military aid to the resistance and thus eliminate what they think is the resistance's basis for existence.

Political Aspects

The policy of persecuting mullahs followed by Taraki and Amin

alienated a strata which could very well serve the interests of the regime and of the social-imperialists. Now this policy has been cast aside and the regime is assiduously trying to win them over. Now one can say that the number of mullahs who are linked to the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and financially supported by the puppet regime is no less than the number of mullahs linked to the anti-government Islamic forces. The regime is counting on the mullahs to play an important role in its planned national coalition and will try and use the clergy in its coalition committees, in order to compete with reactionary forces among the resistance in making use of the religious sentiments of the masses. It should be kept in mind that the puppet regime conciliated with feudalism from the beginning. This was shown in the land reform policy of leaving 14.3 acres of the best land to each landlord, and the "ten theses" are an important step towards deepening this conciliation. Now, according to the mandate of the fake revolutionary council of the puppet regime, land and irrigation reform throughout the country will be carried out by the national reconciliation committees, with the aim of further concessions to the feudals and Khans. Thus Soviet social-imperialism avoids seriously attacking feudalism and recognises its class privileges to a considerable degree. The comprador and bureaucrat bourgeoisie dependent on Soviet social-imperialism are eager to unite with feudalism and are ready to form a government with them on the basis of a "national reconciliation" and a "fair" distribution of power between them to end the war, as long as the dominance of the comprador bureaucrat bourgeoisie is maintained.

In sum, Soviet social-imperialism and the puppet regime are trying to draw the remnants of feudalism into alliance with the bureaucrat comprador bourgeoisie and to sever Afghan feudalism's traditional links with Western imperialism.

Economic Aspects

Unfortunately the regime has had some success in carrying out its

economic policies (in making the villages more dependent on the cities), because the resistance has lacked an economic programme for the areas it controls due to reactionary leadership in many guerrilla fronts and the fact that most commanders take up only one sort of economic task: gathering religious funds, cash or other material for the resistance, and collecting fines.

The development of these markets has to some degree ensured the regime's economic control of some rural areas. The small merchants and shopkeepers who have arisen in these markets constitute a dependent stratum economically, and socially are a centre for the line of national capitulation in the villages. Even the initial outlay of capital for this stratum comes mainly from the government. Not only does this stratum augment the puppet regime's economic control of the villages, it also has served as the regime's intelligence network in these areas.

Deviations within the Resistance

Although many factors hinder the formation of the authentic Afghan communist party, the political and ideological deviations within the movement should be considered the main factor that has weakened the communists of Afghanistan in their efforts to build the party, despite the thousands of martyrs they have given in their struggle. In the past few years the heroic struggles waged by the masses of people against social-imperialism and the puppet regime have provided the basis for the communists of Afghanistan to build such a party; these favourable possibilities have been lost because of the deviations within our movement that have confused the communists of Afghanistan and kept them dispersed, and made them

vulnerable to attacks. In the last few years liquidationists influenced by the revisionist Three Worlds theory have chosen to assemble around the grey banners of the Islamic Republic, under the pretext of fighting the main enemy, thus serving the main enemy in theory and practice by liquidating communist ideology from the right and squandering the fighting energy of the country's communists in the interests of feudalism. Others who have tended towards Hoxhaite revisionism and borrowed the revisionists' programmes as well as centrist flunkies of Soviet social-imperialism have liquidated communist ideology from the "left," propagating attacks on Mao Tsetung that have damaged the country's communist movement and spread confusion that in the final analysis has served and will serve social-imperialism and their revisionist mercenaries.

The urgent, immediate and principal need at the present stage of the struggle is the formation of the communist party of Afghanistan. This requires that in the context of struggle against Soviet social-imperialism and its flunky Khrushchevite revisionists, in the context of struggle against imperialism and reaction, there must be vigorous ideological and political struggle against Three Worldist and Hoxhaite revisionism and those who propagate these two deviations, thus enabling the Afghanistan communists to form the communist party of Afghanistan by solving the problems at hand and to accomplish their historic task of continuing and developing the armed struggle of our people and leading it to victory through protracted people's war. □

[Abridged by AWTW]

