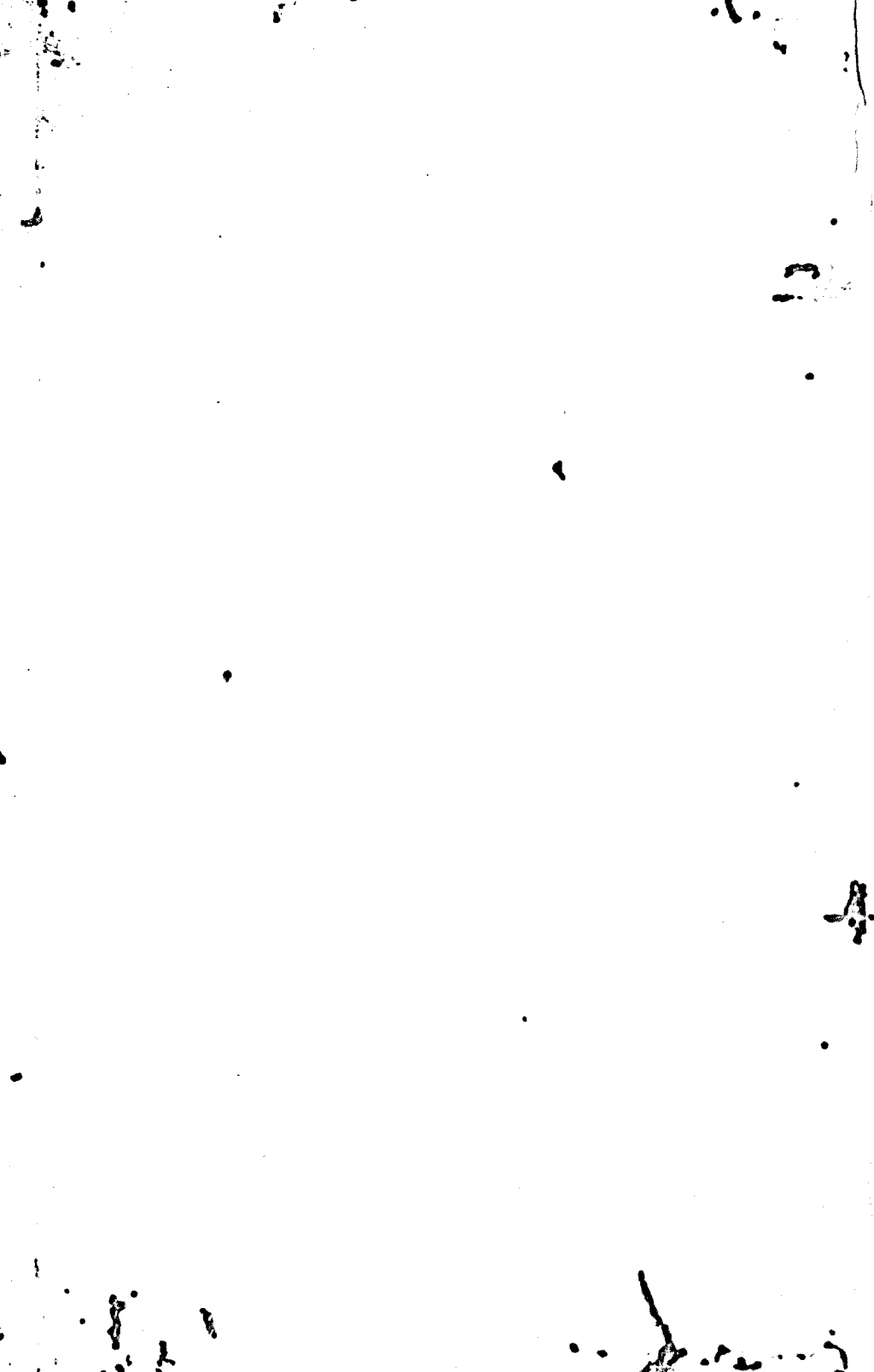


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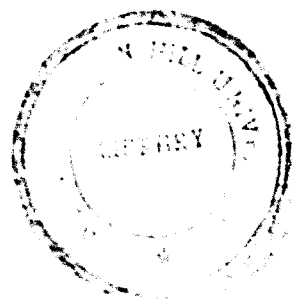
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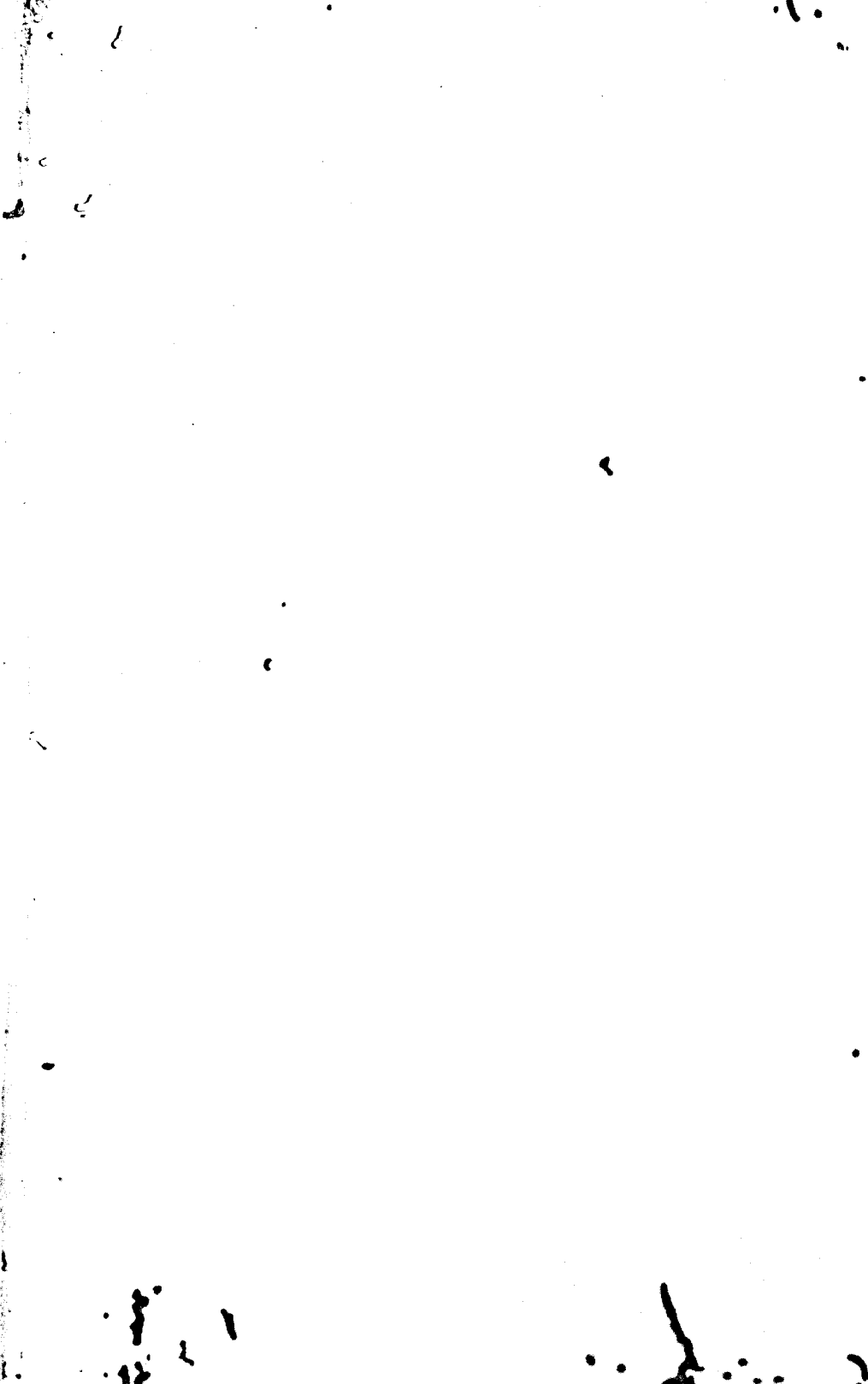
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To

Dr. Niharranjan Ray
with best compliments

Atulya Chandra Ray
14. 8. 69





INDIAN NATIONALISM
VERSUS
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM

Role of Ideology in International Politics

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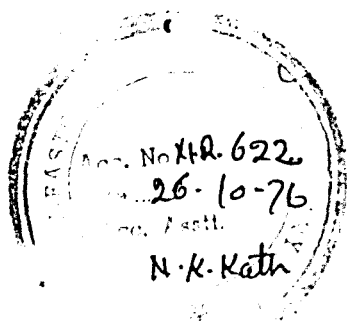
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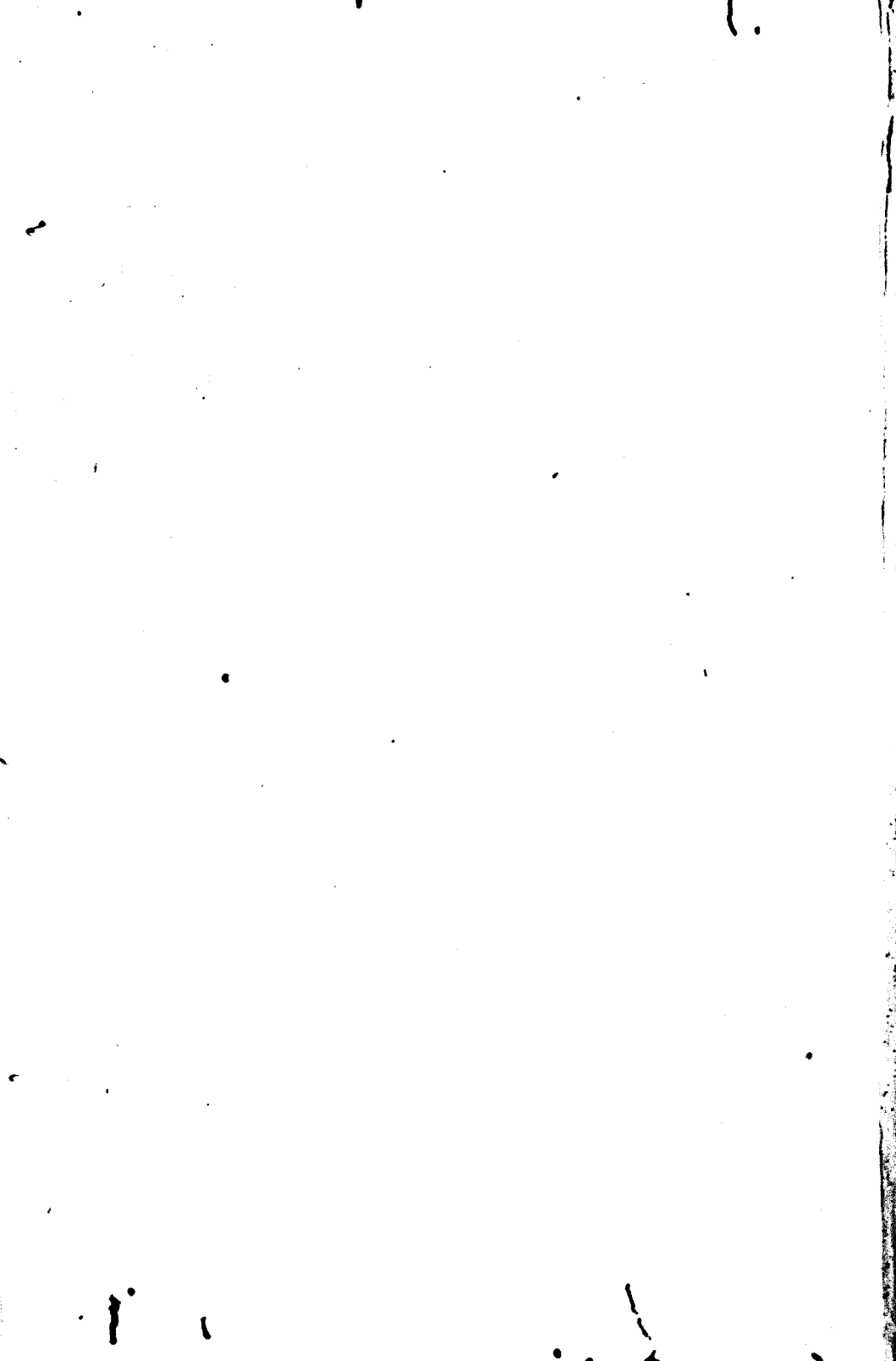
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TO THE SPIRIT OF MY HERITAGE



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CONTENTS

PART ONE: IDEOLOGICAL

	PAGES
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	3
CHAPTER TWO: Six Ideals Of Indian Nationalism ..	15
Anti-imperialism	16
Anti-racialism	23
Asianism	26
Internationalism	31
Non-violence	39
Democracy	52
CHAPTER THREE: Some Ideals And Objectives Of	
International Communism	56
Proletarian Internationalism	57
The Sovereignty of Violence	65
Liberation of Dependent Peoples	74
Consolidation of the "Socialist Camp"	80
Dictatorship	86
SUMMARY AND OBSERVATIONS	89

PART TWO: HISTORICAL

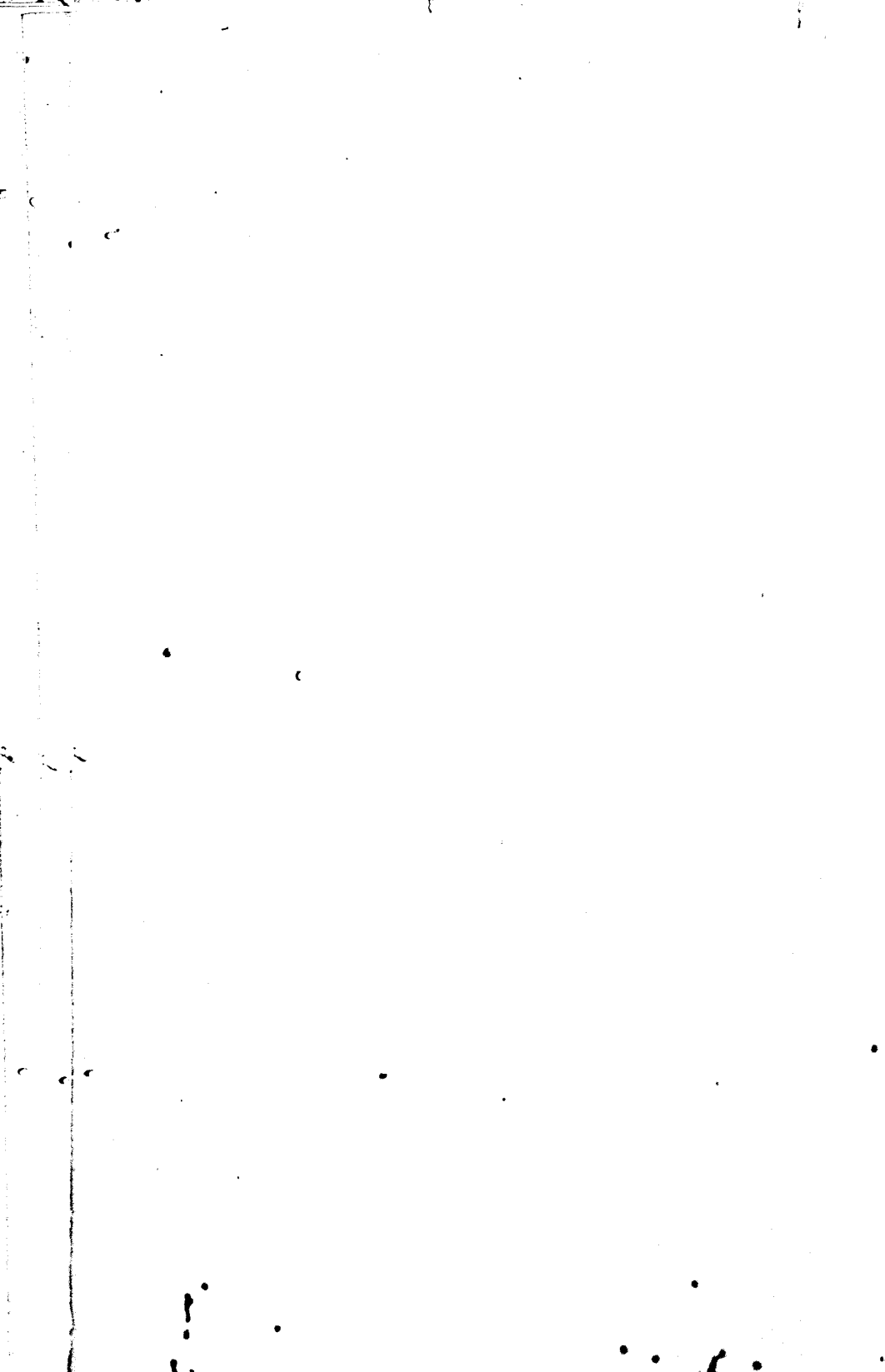
CHAPTER FOUR: Beginnings Of A Policy (1917-1921)	95
Marx and Lenin on India	95
Revolutionary Illusions	99
Change of Tactics	103
CHAPTER FIVE: Initial Impact On India (1917-1921)	112
General Political Situation	112
Impact of the Russian Revolution on the	
National Press	116
Impact on the People	128
Impact on the National Leaders	142

	PAGES
CHAPTER SIX: Method In Oscillations (1922-1930) ..	146
United Front Tactics	147
The Shock of Chauri Chaura	149
Further Change of Tactics	152
CHAPTER SEVEN: Indian Nationalism Asserts Itself (1922-1930)	157
General Political Situation	157
Congress and Communism in the Middle 20s ..	160
Jawaharlal Nehru on Russia and Communism	166
Extent of Communist Influence in 1927 ..	176
Gandhi-Nehru Differences	179
Debate in the Central Legislative Assembly ..	187
Reaction of the Nationalist Press to Communism and the Soviet Union ..	195
Appendix: Government View of Communism in India	203
CHAPTER EIGHT: International Communism, the War and India (1930-1947)	210
Persistent Attacks on the Congress and its Leaders	210
Shift in Soviet Foreign Policy	216
Shift in Comintern and Soviet Policy Towards India	218
Significance of the Soviet-German Pact ..	220
German Attack on Russia Reverses Soviet and Comintern Policy Towards India ..	221
Post-war Soviet Attitude	224
Appendix I. <i>The Crisis of British Rule in India and the New Phase of the Indian People's Struggle for Freedom</i> By A. M. Dyakov	229
Appendix II. <i>The October Revolution and the Peoples of the Colonial and Dependent Countries</i> By W. Leltner	242

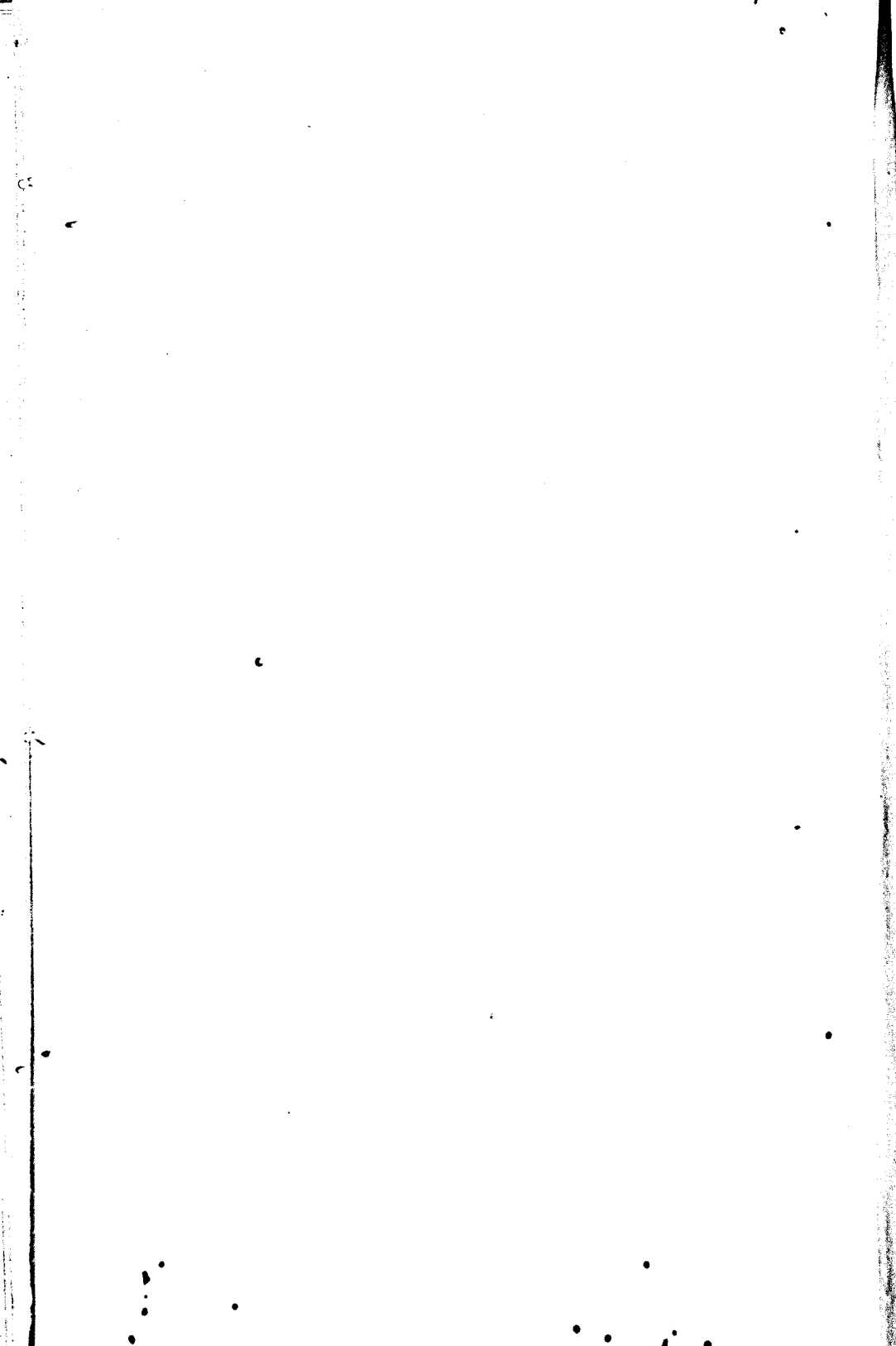
	PAGES
CHAPTER NINE: The High Tide Of Sympathy (1930-1947)	246
The Indian Political Scene	246
General Reaction of Indian Nationalism to Soviet Communism	253
Nationalist Leaders' Views on Communism and the Soviet Union	259
Reaction of the Nationalist Press	295

PART THREE: DEDUCTIVE

CHAPTER TEN: Retrospect And Prospect: Ideology And International Politics	311
BIBLIOGRAPHY	352
INDEX	362



PART ONE
IDEOLOGICAL



CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

In the theory of international politics ideology has so far been studied primarily as an ingredient of governmental foreign policy. Whether one accepts the possibility of there being an ethical or idealistic content in a country's foreign policy, relatively if not wholly independent of its power-drive, or the opposite view held by Morgenthau and others that all ideology is merely a cloak for the drive for national power which is supposed invariably to be the basic determinant of the foreign policy of every country, the accent is on the role of ideology in *foreign policy*. It is understood, of course, that there may be some controversy about the definition of the term 'ideology' itself, and the term is generally used in the broad sense of ethico-political ideals and values.

But this kind of study of the role of ideology in international politics does not go deep enough. For not only in democracies, but often in dictatorships, foreign policy merely reflects the ethico-political ideals of an evolved culture operating in the background, although the particular use to which these ideals are put in a given situation for purposes of foreign policy may depend on the exigencies of international relations as well as the type of government which formulates the policy. In other words, when two nations confront each other in international relations, the ideological element in their foreign policies is an index of the confrontation of their institutions and ideals. For a scientific study of the role of ideology in international politics, therefore, it is necessary also to investigate the sociological confrontation of nations.

There is another important and related reason why this should be done. Since *international politics* has, or at any rate ought to have, a broader connotation than what may be called *inter-governmental politics*, it is unreasonable to confine the former, as is generally done, to a study of foreign policies. Far-reaching changes are brought about in international politics by factors other than foreign policy, such as powerful

nationalist movements or internal revolutions with sociological moorings, although in the long run their impact is also felt in foreign policy. For instance, the Japanese national movement in the second half of the 19th century transformed the entire character of Far Eastern politics. Similarly, the Indian national movement ushered in the end of empire and a new period of resurgence in the politics of Asia and Africa. And it is impossible to understand the politico-ideological confrontation between India and China, or between China and Japan, without studying this socio-historical background, which fundamentally determined the character of this confrontation.

The issue will not be debated here. This book is a case study of the historical confrontation between the Indian national movement and the world Communist movement which establishes the fact, or so the author thinks, that the politico-ideological issues of international politics are often fundamentally decided by the socio-cultural confrontation of national institutions and values, and represent something more than the over-simplified concept of the power-drive of national governments.

Until recently hardly any study of the role of Communism in Indian politics had been made. The first mentionable work was written in Telugu in 1943 by Chalasani Vasudeva Rao, and was called *Bharatha Communist Party Nirmana Charithreya* [History of the Formation of the Communist Party of India].¹ Saumyendranath Tagore's *Historical Development of the Communist Movement in India*², though not of much scholarly value, was another such attempt made shortly afterwards. Jayaprakash Narayan's *Towards Struggle*³, though primarily concerned with the Indian freedom movement and the role of the Congress Socialist Party in it, contained some valuable material on the role of the Communist Party of India in Indian politics in the 20's. The booklet, *Communist Violence in India*⁴, issued by the Government of India in 1949, contained an account of contemporary Communist activities in the country. Madhu

1. Vijaywada, Praja Sakti Press, 1943.

2. Calcutta, Red Front Press, 1944.

3. Bombay, Padma Publications Ltd., 1946.

4. Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 1949.

Limaye's *Communist Party: Facts and Fiction*⁵, published in 1951, was also of some interest. Another book entitled *Indian Communism To-day* was published by the same author in 1954.⁶ M. R. Masani's *The Communist Party in India*⁷, though somewhat sketchy and inaccurate, was better than any of the earlier publications on the subject. A subsequent publication in the nature of personal memoirs, Philip Spratt's *Blowing Up India*⁸, also contained valuable material.

There is also some material published in India on the specific subject of the activities of Indian Communists abroad immediately after the October Revolution. Two books written by Shaukat Usmani, to whom reference will be made later in this study, entitled *Peshawar to Moscow*⁹ and *I met Stalin Twice*¹⁰, were published in 1927 and 1953 respectively, and were in the nature of the memoirs of a Communist. Dr. Bhupendra Kumar Datta's *Aprakashito Rajnaitik Itihas* [Unpublished Political History],¹¹ first published in 1953 in Bengali, also contains some information on the subject. M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*¹², published serially in 1953, contains by far the most authentic personal record of the activities of Indian Communists outside India during the first decade after the Russian Revolution. Muzaffar Ahmed's *Prabase Bharater Communist Party Gathan*¹³, first published in Bengali in 1961 and later published in English translation under the title, *The CPI and its Founding Abroad*, is the latest publication on this subject, written from the Communist point of view.

Western scholarly interest in Indian Communism was slow to develop, but when it did, the result was some really good studies. John Kautsky in his book, *Moscow and the Communist*

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5. Hyderabad, Chetana Prakashan Ltd., 1951.
 6. Bombay, Samant, 1954.
 7. London, Derek Verschoyle, 1954.
 8. Calcutta, Prachi Prakashan, 1955.
 9. Swarajya Publishing House, Banaras, 1927.
 10. K. Kurian, Bombay, 1953.
 11. Nababharat Publishers, Calcutta, 1953.
 12. *Radical Humanist*, Calcutta, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta.
 13. National Book Agency, Calcutta, 1961.

Party of India,¹⁴ has established the manner in which, and the extent to which, Moscow directed the activities of the CPI and the latter carried out these directives, in the first few years after Indian independence. Another brilliant and hitherto unsurpassed study of Indian Communism is *Communism in India*¹⁵ by Gene D. Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller. Using not only all the existing published material, but also such hitherto untapped sources as the classified intelligence reports of the British Government of India and the records of the Kanpur and Meerut Conspiracy Cases, Overstreet and Windmiller have produced by far the best account of the origin and development of the Communist Party of India and its foreign links. The second part of the book also contains an exhaustive study of the structure, organisation and methods of the CPI. Another book of great merit, though not quite of the same class as the work of Overstreet and Windmiller, is *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism*¹⁶ by David N. Druhe. This book covers practically the same ground as the first part of Overstreet and Windmiller's book, though for a shorter period.

There is also some stray material on Indian Communism published in the west. For instance, J. H. Brimmell's *Communism in South-East Asia*¹⁷, Malcolm D. Kennedy's *A Short History of Communism in Asia*,¹⁸ and Sir Percival Griffiths' *The Changing Face of Communism*,¹⁹ all contain some material on the Communist Party of India. But in these books the authors naturally do not attempt any comprehensive study of the specific subject of Indian Communism.

Taken together, the available published material on Indian Communism proves beyond any doubt that in its origin and development the Communist Party of India was not an indigenous growth; that it was launched, inspired, promoted, controlled and directed by foreign Communist agencies. And this, indeed,

14. Wiley, New York, 1956.

15. University of California Press, 1959.

16. Bookman, New York, 1959.

17. Oxford University Press, 1959.

18. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, New York, 1957.

19. The Bodley Head, London, 1961.

is generally what all the scholars referred to above have endeavoured to establish.

It is the contention of the present writer that while such studies have been quite fruitful in their particular field, they have dealt with only one aspect, and a relatively unimportant aspect, of the problem of Indian Communism. That the Communist Parties of the different countries of the world have been controlled and directed by the Soviet Government and the Comintern for several decades after the Russian Revolution is now an established fact. But the foreign connections of the Communist Party of any particular country can assume special significance only in the context of the role played by it in national politics. The greater the importance of a Communist Party in its national politics, the more significant are its foreign links. Now, during the period covered by the present study—from the October Revolution to Indian independence—the Communist Party of India was not a factor of any great importance in Indian politics. It did not even function as an organised group in India until a decade after the October Revolution. During the period under discussion the political situation in India was characterized by a broad national movement which, under the towering leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, included, within the general political platform called the Indian National Congress, practically all political groups and parties in India except the Communist Party. It was this broad national movement which not only fought for and attained the independence of India, but also established the fundamental values, principles and beliefs, on which the domestic and foreign policies of the independent Government of India have been based. The Communist Party of India, which, in any case, was a very small party until Indian independence, was not only outside the national movement, but actively opposed, under the direction of the Soviet Government and the Comintern, every major struggle launched against the British Government by the national forces under the leadership of Gandhi. For ascertaining the influence of Communism on Indian politics during the period under discussion, therefore, it is more important to study the reaction of the Indian national movement to the theory and practice of Communism, including the

strategy and tactics of the Soviet Government and the Comintern, than to study the foreign links of the CPI; in other words, it is necessary to study the attitude of the Soviet Government and the Comintern, in the context of the ideals and objectives of the International Communist movement, towards the Indian national movement, and the reaction of the Indian national movement, in the context of its ideals and objectives, national as well as international, to International Communism. This is the subject of investigation in this study. It seeks to investigate systematically, for the first time, it is believed, the mutual attitudes of Indian nationalism and International Communism during the period 1917-1947, and the political consequences of this ideological confrontation. The Communist Party of India has been generally relegated to the background.

Modern nationalism has been a vast welter of historical forces, economic and technological, political, intellectual, literary and artistic, psychological and religious. It has manifested itself historically in so many places and in such a wide variety of forms, that some authors have designated particular manifestations of it as economic nationalism, political nationalism, intellectual and cultural nationalism etc.²⁰ Thus it has been said that the English nationalism of the 18th century was political and cultural. On the same argument the English nationalism of the 19th century would be economic. It is further said that in the rest of Europe in the 18th century nationalism was intellectual and cultural, not political. Consequent on the French Revolution France experienced a political nationalism which, when utilized by Napoleon, gave rise to political nationalism in the rest of Europe. Similarly, it is held that many countries of Europe and America experienced in the 19th century 'liberal nationalism', also of a political character. The nationalist movements in Asia and Africa in this century have been generally characterized as anti-imperialistic, and, therefore, essentially political, movements.

20. See, for instance, Carlton J. H. Hayes: *Nationalism: Historical Development*, Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. XI, New York, 1954, pp. 24-48.

Since this study is not primarily concerned with the historical development or the characteristics of Indian nationalism, it is not possible to dwell at length on this subject. Some of the characteristics of Indian nationalism which are relevant to this study will, of course, gradually unfold themselves in the subsequent chapters, but only indirectly. It is, therefore, necessary at the outset to lay down some of the assumptions and postulates regarding the character of Indian nationalism on which this study is based.

The present writer accepts the view of sociologists like Max Weber,²¹ Ogburn,²² Veblen,²³ and Alfred Weber²⁴ that a distinction must be made between the materially manifested and the non-materially manifested aspects of a social situation, between its economic, technological and political aspects and its psychological, religious and moral aspects. Alfred Weber has reduced this distinction to one between civilization and culture, and stated that while civilization undergoes a cumulative growth which can be quantitatively measured, the configurations of culture are "incomparable" and, therefore, incapable of quantitative measurement.

If this view is accepted, it will be seen that all social changes, and, therefore, all social situations, have a deep-rooted cultural foundation. The economic, technological and political ramifications of a given social situation are no doubt of great importance; indeed, one of these factors may even play a dominant role in a given case. But the manner in which these various factors are coordinated and utilized by a society in a given period, as Alfred Weber has observed, depends on its cultural foundation. Thus a national movement may have its

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21. Max Weber: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, Allen & Unwin, London, 1930; also Max Weber: *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson & Talcott Parsons, Oxford University Press, New York, 1947.
 22. W. F. Ogburn: *Social Change*, Viking Press, New York, 1950.
 23. T. Veblen: *Essays in Our Changing Order*, Viking Press, New York, 1934.
 24. Alfred Weber: *Fundamentals of Culture-Sociology*, trans. Weltner and Hirshman, Columbia University, New York, 1939.

economic, technological and political ramifications, and in a particular case, one of these factors may be more important than the rest. But the over-all objectives and methods adopted by the movement, the relative priorities assigned to the different factors in the given situation, the manner in which they are coordinated within the movement as a whole—all these are dependent on the relatively stable cultural foundations of the society in question. In the words of Alfred Weber, the culture of a society “permeates down with its principles of structure into the social and civilizational substratum of historical development and there saturates it.”²⁵

On the basis of this general theory it is now possible to state that the Indian national movement has had a deep-rooted cultural foundation which determined its organic character. Indeed it can be shown, and will be shown in the next chapter, that the Indian Renaissance of the 19th century, which revived some of the salient features of traditional Indian culture, largely determined the organic character, and the ideals, national as well as international, of the Indian national movement. These ideals, in turn, as will be shown in the course of this study, determined, to a large extent, the reaction of Indian nationalism to International Communism.

Another postulate regarding a characteristic of Indian nationalism must also be laid down here. During the last hundred years or so, nationalism has undergone a fundamental transformation in the West. Nationalism has given up its earlier romanticism and replaced it by “realism”. This realism has been brought about, among other things, by the generally materialistic view of the world and human behaviour resulting from advances in the natural and social sciences including Sociology, the Industrial Revolution, and the major wars.²⁶ But Indian nationalism, like French nationalism after the Revolution, has been, or at least had been during the period under discussion in this study, romantic in outlook, that is, endowed with a sense of mission for India and the world. In December 1792, the French National Convention had decreed:

25. *Ibid*, p. 47.

26. For a more detailed analysis see Carlton Hayes: *op. cit.*

"The French nation... will treat as enemies every people who, refusing liberty and equality or renouncing them, may wish to maintain, recall, or treat with a prince and the privileged classes; on the other hand, it engages not to subscribe to any treaty and not to lay down its arms until after the establishment of the sovereignty and independence of the people whose territory the troops of the [French] Republic shall have entered and until the people shall have adopted the principles of equality and founded a free and democratic government." The Indian national movement also set itself the romantic task, as will be seen in the next chapter, of reforming the world through non-violence, national self-determination for all peoples, racial equality, international cooperation and human brotherhood. Therefore, it is postulated here that Indian nationalism was, especially in its international outlook, romantic.

As regards International Communism, the assumptions on which this study is based are as follows:—

1. That International Communism was, during the period under discussion, an organic whole with over-all global strategy and tactics;
2. That there was no fundamental distinction between the Soviet leadership and the Comintern;
3. That the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its leaders, the Soviet Government and the Comintern represented International Communism;
4. That the articles etc. appearing in the various Soviet and Comintern journals and newspapers generally represented the official views of the international Communist movement.²⁷

27. These assumptions are based on such studies as:—

Max Beloff: *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, Oxford University Press, 1952.

Jane Degras: *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*—3 Vols., Oxford University Press, 1951, 1952 and 1953.

Jane Degras: *The Communist International: Documents*—2 Vols., Oxford University Press, 1956.

Gunther Nollau: *International Communism and World Revolution*, Hollis & Carter, London, 1961.

It is possible to carry out the investigation undertaken here either on a regional basis, and then to generalize the findings for the whole of India, or to study the subject from an all-India point of view, and then to regard the findings as applicable to all the regions. Either approach would be perfectly legitimate from the viewpoint of scientific investigation. But on account of the very poor state of preservation of local historical material in India, and the fact that the subject of the investigation is rather broad, the all-India level of analysis has been chosen for purposes of this study. That is to say, the reaction to International Communism of only such nationalist individuals, groups, movements, periodicals and newspapers etc. has been investigated as are of an all-India character.

The same method has been adopted with regard to International Communism. The attitude to the Indian national movement of all or any of the Communist Parties and organizations of the world has not been investigated on a regional basis. Attention has been mainly focussed on the Soviet Union and the Comintern, on the assumption, as stated already, that they represented International Communism at the world level. The writings of such Indian Communists associated with the Comintern as M. N. Roy and Virendranath Chattopadhyaya have not been given any great weightage in assessing the attitude of International Communism towards the Indian national movement.

It is necessary to explain some important points regarding the scope of the investigation at this stage. In the first place, this study goes into the cultural foundations of the ideals of Indian nationalism; but it does not, generally speaking, do so in the case of the principles and objectives of International Communism, although reference may have been made sometimes to some relevant historical facts. International Communism during the period under investigation may have been just a glorified form of an aggressive and romantic Russian nationalism, or something more, or something quite different. This question is not discussed in this book; the principles and objectives of International Communism have been treated as given, and attention

has mainly been focussed on the reaction of Indian nationalism to the ideological offensive from without.

Secondly, this book does not deal with the attitude of the Soviet Government and the Comintern towards the British Indian Government or vice versa. It is concerned solely and exclusively with the mutual attitudes of the purely nationalist movement in India and the international Communist movement.

The work is divided broadly into three parts. Part I consists of three Chapters, of which the first is introductory. In the second Chapter the major ideals of Indian nationalism, their nature, basis and evolution have been discussed in some detail. The third Chapter deals with the principles and objectives of International Communism. Thus Part I contains a discussion of the ideological background of the mutual attitudes of Indian nationalism and International Communism.

Part II consists of six Chapters, from the fourth to the ninth. Chapter Four is concerned with the attitude of the Soviet Union and the Comintern towards the Indian national movement during the period 1917-1921. Chapter Five discusses the reaction of Indian nationalism to the Russian Revolution in particular and International Communism in general, during the same period. The next two Chapters follow the same pattern for the period 1922-1929. Chapter Eight contains a study of the attitude of International Communism towards Indian nationalism during the period 1930-1947, while Chapter Nine deals with the attitude of the former to the latter during the same period.

Thus the general pattern of Part II is that for each of three periods there are two Chapters, the first dealing with the attitude of International Communism and the second with that of Indian nationalism. The three periods into which the book has been divided in Part II broadly synchronize with important phases of the Indian national movement, coinciding, as far as possible, also with the broad oscillations of the attitude of International Communism.

Part III consists of only the tenth and last Chapter, which sums up the findings of the entire study and attempts to arrive at some general conclusions.

The author had to debate in his mind the advisability of writing the third chapter on the ideals and objectives of the world Communist movement in its present form. It would be difficult, he felt, to follow the historical unfolding of the confrontation discussed in this book, year by year, without constantly having in the mental background a systematized and vivid picture of the ideological motivations of both the sides. Even so, had the book been written only for the Western countries, where the ideological character of the world Communist movement during the period under discussion is relatively well known, this chapter would have been considerably abridged, if not omitted altogether. But in India there is so much naivete or ignorance regarding the traditional international objectives of the world Communist movement, that it was considered advisable, in order to promote an adequate understanding of the rest of the book, to present the third chapter in the present form.

A word ought to be said about the use of the term *International Communism* in the title of the book and various other places in it. Undoubtedly, the character of the world Communist movement has changed profoundly in recent years. The Yugoslav recalcitrance beginning in 1948, the ferment in Eastern Europe that developed soon afterwards, and the current Sino-Soviet conflict which began roughly in 1956, have all resulted in the break-up of the unitary and monolithic character of the movement and introduced an element of multipolarity within the Communist world. Indeed it is highly doubtful whether there exists any longer a unified international ideology or movement which can be called *International Communism*. But it is equally true to say that such a unified and monolithic movement did certainly exist until 1947, and to a considerable extent even afterwards, until the beginning of the Sino-Soviet conflict. And it is this monolithic international Communist movement, with the common international control centre located in Moscow, operating through a kind of diarchical division of functions between the Soviet Government and the Comintern, which posed the ideological challenge for the Indian national movement during the period covered by this book. The use of the term *International Communism* would, therefore, seem to be amply justified for purposes of this book.

CHAPTER TWO

SIX IDEALS OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

In this chapter some of the major ideals, national as well as international, adopted and developed by the Indian national movement since the Indian Renaissance of the 19th century, have been briefly analysed from a historical point of view. These are: anti-imperialism, anti-racialism, Asianism, internationalism, non-violence and democracy. Needless to say, some of these ideals, especially those of non-violence and cooperative internationalism, were far too lofty and romantic to be practised by a whole nation, or even its leaders. It would, therefore, be wrong to suppose that these ideals have been wholly lived up to by the Indian nation during the struggle for freedom, or afterwards. Indeed, very few ideals have ever been truly practised in history by large numbers of people, unless they have been rather inferior ones. Absolute ideals have always been the despair of the masses as well as of politicians. Yet social groups and nations do constantly set up high ideals, more as an index of their aspirations than of their achievement. When a particular group or nation endeavours to meet an external onslaught on its institutions and values, it raises the banner of its absolute ideals which alone can inspire a sufficiently high degree of courage and confidence. Such were the ideals of Indian nationalism, more of an aspiration than an achievement, useful nevertheless against whatever external forces might challenge the basic institutions and fundamental values of the Indian society. One of the major conclusions of this book is that it was primarily the strength of these indigenous ideals of Indian nationalism, irrespective of the actual achievement, that prevented the international Communist movement from making any significant headway in India between the Russian Revolution and the independence of India, the period covered by this book, in spite of the relentless efforts directed by it to this end.

CHAPTER THREE

SOME IDEALS AND OBJECTIVES OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM

In the previous chapter the major ideals of Indian nationalism and their evolution were briefly discussed. In this chapter some of the principal ideals and objectives of the world Communist movement, namely, proletarian internationalism, the sovereignty of violence, "liberation of the dependent peoples", consolidation of the "socialist camp", and dictatorship, will be similarly analysed. From this purposive juxtaposition of the two sets of ideals it will be seen that the Communist ideals, in spite of the confusing names of some of them, are fundamentally opposed to those of the Indian national movement. The principal thesis of this book is that it was the conflict of these two sets of ideals, both powerful in their own way, that determined the outcome of the unceasing efforts made by the international Communist movement to influence and capture the Indian national movement, an outcome that was favourable to Indian nationalism.

In recent years radical changes have taken place within the Communist world. The so-called "socialist camp" is no longer the monolithic unit it used to be until about 1956, when the Sino-Soviet conflict may be said to have started. The Soviet Union seems to have altered radically, if not the traditional ideals themselves, at least the methods of their international implementation during the last decade or so. It is evident from the nature of the sharp conflict between the Soviet Union and China that the latter country alone, with the support of such small countries as Albania and that wing of the Communist Parties of the Asian, African and Latin American countries which is sympathetic to its point of view, has been vigorously upholding the traditional ideals of the world Communist movement discussed here. This book is, however, a historical study, ending with 1947, and is, therefore, needless to say, unaffected by the recent changes.

CHAPTER FOUR

BEGINNINGS OF A POLICY (1917-1921)

I

MARX AND LENIN ON INDIA

Marx believed that in destroying the agro-industrial base of India Britain was carrying out a fundamental socio-economic revolution and laying the foundations for the growth of a Western type of civilization which, according to Marx, was far superior to the Indian type. "Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling", observes Marx, "to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved with their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns, with no other considerations bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the helpless prey of any aggressor who deigned to notice it at all. We must not forget that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction, and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindustan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances instead of elevating man to be the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature....

CHAPTER FIVE

INITIAL IMPACT ON INDIA (1917-1921)

I

GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION

While Lenin and the Comintern, owing to their 'scientific' faith in their own deductions from Marxist theory regarding the politico-economic situation in India and the stage of the Indian freedom movement, were dreaming of a proletarian revolution in India and endeavouring to promote this revolution by all means at their disposal, the actual political situation in the country was far from revolutionary. It is true that the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was a manifestation of the growing resentment of the Indian people against British rule. As already stated, the Ilbert Bill of 1883 as well as other concrete manifestations of the British policy of racial discrimination had added a measure of racial hatred to the anti-colonial sentiments of the people. At the beginning of the twentieth century certain militant elements had grown inside the Indian National Congress under the leadership of B. G. Tilak and Aurobindo Ghosh. The Swadeshi Movement against the partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon was a fairly organized mass movement, and had spread to many other provinces from Bengal. Although the movement was primarily non-violent, there was a considerable amount of violent activity on its periphery. The Morley-Minto Reform of 1919 failed dismally to assuage the strong nationalistic feelings which had been aroused in the preceding decade. As the First World War gradually developed, expectations arose about self-government at the end of the war, and the Home Rule movement gathered momentum under the leadership of Annie Besant. In 1917 Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation of the satyagraha movement by his work among the indigo cultivators of the Champaran district of Bihar. It was in this situation that the British Government announced in August, 1917, that their policy was one of "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realiza-

CHAPTER SIX

METHOD IN OSCILLATIONS (1922-1930)

Between 1922 and 1925 M. N. Roy, operating from Berlin in his capacity as a leading member and 'head of the Eastern Section' of the Comintern,¹ succeeded in launching some kind of a Communist movement in India. For this work the Comintern made available to Roy £120,000 in July, 1922; £120,000 in November, 1922; and £2,000 in February, 1923.² As a result of this Comintern activity through Roy, small Communist groups were organized in at least five major cities of India in 1922.³ In November 1925 a "Labour Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress" was formed in Calcutta,⁴ in December, 1925, a rudimentary Communist Party of India was formed at Kanpur;⁵ in February, 1926, a "Peasants' and Workers' Party".⁶ The Communists also succeeded in infiltrating to some extent into the Indian National Congress⁷ and in achieving considerable gains in the trade union movement. From 1926 onwards, according to the decision arrived at by the Comintern, the Communist Party of Great Britain started taking the initiative in organising the Communist movement in

1. From December, 1922, onwards, M. N. Roy was a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.
2. Overstreet and Windmiller: *Communism in India*, pp. 97-98.
3. David N. Druhe: *op. cit.*, p. 55; and Overstreet and Windmiller: *op. cit.*, p. 44. Zinoviev, the President of the Comintern, wrote in 1922 that "with the help of the Executive Committee [of the Comintern] organised Communist parties and groups have been formed in such countries as Japan, China, India, Turkey, Egypt and Persia, that is, in countries where even at the time of the Third Congress we only had weak circles of supporters. These parties are still weak in number but the kernel is at least there". See RIIA: *The Communist International, 1919-1943, Documents*, Vol. I, 1956, p. 326.
4. Overstreet and Windmiller: *op. cit.*, p. 79.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-79.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.
7. For the best available account of M. N. Roy's activities in Berlin and their effects in India, see Overstreet & Windmiller: *op. cit.*, pp. 40-81; see also David N. Druhe: *op. cit.*, pp. 46-73.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INDIAN NATIONALISM ASSERTS ITSELF (1922-1930)

I

GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION

The period between 1922 and 1928 was a lean one for the Indian national movement, being characterized by the suspension of the non-cooperation movement and Gandhi's partial withdrawal from active politics, serious dissension within the Congress, and communal disturbances on a wide scale.

The Non-cooperation Movement had been progressing satisfactorily and had achieved remarkable success by early 1922 when it assumed the character of a nation-wide movement. Then the British Government was scared. In his telegraphic report to the Secretary of State for India, dated the 9th February, 1922, the Viceroy said: "The lower classes in the towns have been seriously affected by the non-cooperation movement.... And although [its] influence....has been much smaller in the rural tracts generally, in certain areas the peasantry have been affected, particularly in parts of the Assam Valley, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa and Bengal Religious and racial feeling at the same time is so bitter that the Government of India are prepared for disorder of a more formidable nature than has in the past occurred, and do not seek to minimise in anyway the fact that great anxiety is caused by the situation".¹ The then Governor of Bombay also admitted: "He gave us a scare. Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world history, and it came within an inch of succeeding".²

It should be clearly understood, however, that the Non-cooperation Movement, although it had stirred up millions into spontaneous action, represented nothing like what the Russian Bolsheviks would understand by a revolution. It is true that

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1. Michael Brecher: *Nehru: A Political Biography*, Oxford University Press, London, 1959, pp. 78-79.
 2. *Ibid*, p. 79.

CHAPTER EIGHT
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM, THE WAR AND
INDIA (1930-1947)

I

PERSISTENT ATTACKS ON THE CONGRESS AND
ITS LEADERS

The policy of opposing the Indian National Congress in particular and the Indian nationalist movement in general, and of the rapid building up of a mass Communist Party in India totally opposed to the Congress, which was adopted at the Tenth Plenum of the Comintern, was continued by the Soviet Government and the Comintern until 1935. In an "Open letter from the Young Communist International to the All-India Youth Congress and to all Young Workers and Peasants of India" the Comintern came out with another instalment of its attack on the Congress. It declared that the Indian National Congress actually retarded the revolutionary movement, that it had long ago betrayed the Indian masses and could not lead their fight against British imperialism. It advised the workers and peasants of India to sever all contacts with the Indian National Congress as well as the Independence of India League, to "disclose their falseness and treachery" and to show them up to the people as assistants of British imperialism. They were also advised to "drive the traitors, the phrasemongers" out of their ranks.¹

In December, 1930, another important document entitled "Draft Platform of Action of the Communist Party of India" was published by *Inprecor*. It was made to appear as having been written by Indian Communists for publication in the Comintern press, but it is probable that it was a Comintern-inspired document, if not actually written by high Comintern officials. The "Draft Platform" observed that "the greatest threat to the victory of the Indian revolution" was the illusion which the Indian masses still harboured about the Indian

1. *International Press Correspondence*, January 9, 1930, p. 25.

APPENDIX I: SOVIET VIEW OF THE INDIAN FREEDOM
MOVEMENT
THE CRISIS OF BRITISH RULE IN INDIA AND THE NEW
PHASE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE

FOR FREEDOM⁴⁰

By A. M. DYAKOV

Doctor of Historical Science

Events which have taken place in India after World War II show clearly how imperialist colonialism is reaching a crisis. India, from the point of view of resources, is one of the most productive colonies, with a powerful national bourgeoisie and a large proletariat. The history of the national freedom movement in India is a long one. India is a burning example of how after World War II the powerful national bourgeoisie supported imperialism. Here we find that the proletariat has appeared as an independent force in the struggle for complete liberation from the clutches of imperialist domination, and that the powerful and well organized bourgeoisie has shaken hands with imperialism, so that an inevitable struggle has developed between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The objective conditions for the anti-imperialistic revolution in India have been in existence for a long time. Already before World War I the organized national movement against British domination was a force to be reckoned with. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution, which had a tremendous effect on India, the national movement attained a mass character. India marched ahead of the other colonial and dependent countries in respect of the struggle for freedom. While speaking at the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1920 about the awakening of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples Lenin had observed: "British India stands in the forefront of these countries and in it the revolution will progress propor-

40. Translated from A. M. Dyakov: *Krizis Angliiskogo Gospodstva V Indii i Novii Etap Osvoboditelnoi Borbi ee Narodov*, in *Krizis Kolonialnoi Sistemi*, Akademia Nauk S.S.S.R., Moscow, 1949.

APPENDIX II: COMINTERN VIEW OF THE RELATION BETWEEN THE
OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE PEOPLES OF THE
COLONIAL AND DEPENDENT COUNTRIES⁴¹

By W. LEITNER

Once again have the enthralled peoples of Asia, Africa and South America become the object of a bloody imperialist contest among the capitalist Great Powers. Once again are Negroes, Arabs and Hindus in Africa and Asia being incited against each other by their masters in a conflict, the only outcome of which can be, no matter which side wins, to bind the chains of colonial slavery on them all the tighter, if they do not themselves defeat the calculations of the imperialists. The situation to-day differs considerably from that which prevailed during the last world war. The interval between the last imperialist war and the present was marked by a powerful movement, in which the colonial peoples for the first time advanced their claim to liberty and a decent human existence. The present war cannot but have its effect upon this historical process, which is of immeasurably greater import to the history of humanity than all the "victories" of the imperialists....

The October Revolution has also had a great influence on the development of the struggle for liberation of the people of India. In 1853, Karl Marx, with the prophetic eye of genius, foretold the revolutionizing effect which the breaking down of India's peasant and artisan communities by the invasion of British capitalism would have. The capitalist development of India not only undermined an ancient form of society; it also paved the way for the invasion of modern ideas and for the gradual emancipation of India's intellectual life from the mysticism and obscurantism of the old society. The October Revolution, by putting the ideas of socialism into effect, helped greatly to accelerate this process.

⁴¹ *Communist International*, November, 1940, pp. 764-77.

CHAPTER NINE

THE HIGH TIDE OF SYMPATHY (1930-1947)

I

THE INDIAN POLITICAL SCENE

The annual session of the Indian National Congress, held in Calcutta in December, 1928, had approved a Constitution for India based on the All Parties Report submitted by Motilal Nehru and intimated that if the British Government failed to accept it within a year, the Congress would start a movement for complete independence.

In October 1929 the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, had proposed a conference between the British Government and representatives of Indian opinion to discuss the question of Dominion Status for India. All the political parties including the Congress had accepted the basic proposal and indicated their willingness to sit with the British Government at a Round Table Conference, but on four conditions: that the Conference be empowered to draw up a Constitution for India on the principle of Dominion Status; that the majority of representatives at the Conference be Congressmen; that all political prisoners be released at once; and that in the interim period India have a Dominion Government, as far as practicable.

As no definite assurances were forthcoming, at the Lahore Congress of December, 1929, the Independence Resolution was passed and preparations launched for the struggle for independence, although there was as yet no clear idea as to the concrete shape this struggle was to take. January 26, 1930, was fixed as Independence Day, when a pledge of independence was to be taken by the masses throughout the country, as a prelude to a Civil Disobedience Movement. This day was solemnly and peacefully celebrated by vast masses of people all over the country and it revealed "the earnest and enthusiastic mood of the country".¹ Before Civil Disobedience actually started, Gandhi gave the Congress leaders "the

1. Jawaharlal Nehru: *An Autobiography*, p. 209.

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT: IDEOLOGY AND
INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

I

Indian nationalism, as manifested in the Indian freedom movement, was largely the outcome of the Indian Renaissance of the 19th century which revived India's past traditions and gave Indians a sense of intrinsic greatness, suppressed, it seemed to them, only by foreign domination. At the end of the 18th century India was a thoroughly demoralized nation; but at the end of the 19th a powerful nationalism was already forging ahead in the country. This rebirth was brought about by a variety of factors, the most important of which were the rediscovery of ancient Indian history, literature, science, philosophy and art by Western scholars, the unification of India under British rule, the laying of the material foundation of social stability and growth by the British Government through a system of communications, administration and law, and the impact of Western education.

But whatever had been the factors responsible for the Indian Renaissance, the net result was that India was resurrected, as it were, out of her own grave; the ideals and values regenerated by it belonged fundamentally to the Indian tradition. Acceptance of some aspects of Western thought, especially French and British political thought, was indeed both a cause and a consequence of the Indian Renaissance; but whatever was imported from the West was wholly absorbed in and synthesized with the regenerated Indian culture. Moreover, it is characteristic of a renaissance that the regenerated values are essentially romantic and aggressive, and the Indian Renaissance was not an exception.

The first offensive of the resurgent and aggressively romantic Indian nationalism was directed naturally against the British rule. In their new mood the Indian people found the shackles of foreign domination far too stultifying and oppressive, and decided that no progress could be achieved unless these shackles

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INDEX

- Acharya, M.P.T., 138, 139
 Afghanistan, 102, 108, 109, 110, 129, 194
 Ahmed, Muzaffar, 5, 129n., 135n.
 Ahmed, Rafiq, 129n., 130
 Ali, Ahmed, 131, 132
 Aj, on the Russian Revolution, 122f., 128; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 195ff., 303ff., 338
 All-India Congress Committee. See Indian National Congress
 All-India Trade Union Congress, 141, 150, 176, 184, 185, 186, 255
 All-Parties Conference, of 1920, 114, of 1924, 164, of 1928, 182
Amrita Bazar Patrika, on the Russian Revolution, 116ff, 128; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 201f., 295ff., 338
 Ansari, Dr. M. A., 28, 189, 250
 Anti-imperialism, ideal of, 16ff., 89f., 312; Congress on, 18f.; Nehru on, 16, 20, 23
 Anti-racialism, ideal of, 23ff., 89f., 312, 351; Congress on, 25; Nehru on, 23, 170
 Anushilan Samity, 160
 Ashoka, 41ff., 313
 Asianism, ideal of, 26ff., 90, 312f.; Congress on, 28f.; Keshab Chandra Sen on, 26f.; Nehru on, 26, 29ff.
 August Movement, 252
 Aurobindo, Sri, 112, 313, 314, 333, 342; on internationalism, 35f.; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 259ff., 313f., 333, 342
 Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, 251
 Babeuf, 315
 Baku Congress, 107, 137f., 319
 Balabushevich, V. V., 226
 Banerjee, Sibnath, 131ff.
 Barakatullah, 108, 140, 319
 Bengal Labour Party, 258
 Beasant, Mrs. Annie, 21, 33f., 36, 165
 Blanc, Louis, 315
 Bose, Subhas Chandra, 175, 182, 322, 330, 332f.; founds Independence for India League with Nehru, 183; leads youth movement, 188; Comintern attacks on, 211ff.; Soviet theoreticians on, 232; elected Congress President, 251; clash with Gandhi and ousted from power, 251; controls AITUC, 255; views on Communism, 259, 282ff., 335f.
 Bradley, Ben, 218, 220
 Brimmel, J. H., 6
 Bukharin, 175, 190
 Burke, 17
Capital, 243
 Cawnpore Conspiracy Case, 164, 176, 197, 200, 201, 329
 Central Asiatic Bureau of the Comintern. See Turk-Bureau
 Central Legislative Assembly, debate in, 187ff., 226
 Chattopadhyaya, Virendranath, 137, 138, 140
 Chauri Chaura, 149f., 158f., 160, 321, 328
 China, 4, 22, 27, 71ff., 84ff., 103, 153, 230, 344, 346ff., 349
 Civil Disobedience Movement, 54, 246ff., 250, 332
 Comintern, 7, 11, 12ff., 106, 112, 147, 153, 163ff., 176, 218, 258, 317ff.; founded by Lenin, 61f., 81; Statutes of, 63f., 316; Manifesto of, 64, 102; on emancipation of Eastern peoples, 77f.; Second Congress on

- colonial question, 103ff.; Eastern Section of, 110; Third Congress on revolution in India, 110f.; Executive Committee on Eastern Question, 147f.; report on India, 148; reaction to Non-cooperation Movement, 149ff.; on Gandhi, 149f.; attitude to Indian National Congress, 150ff., 155ff., 210ff., 221; Fifth Congress on revolution in East, 151; policy on India, 154ff., 218ff., 222ff.; Nehru on, 186; Indian leaders on, 160ff., 187ff.; Government on its activities in India, 203ff.; Attacks Gandhi, Nehru and Subhas Bose, 211ff.; attacks Congress Socialist Party, 215; its view of relation between October Revolution and Indian freedom movement, 242ff.; condemns Royists, 255; dissolved, 224
- Communal Award, 248
- Communism, 6ff.; ideals of, 56ff.; conversion of Indian Muslims to, 128ff.; Indian leaders on, 142ff., 166ff., 179ff., 186ff., 259ff.; Indian press on, 116ff., 195ff., 295ff.; in India, 160ff., 176ff., 203ff., 253ff., 329, 332ff., 343, 346ff.; in other Asian countries, 344f.
- Communist International. See Comintern
- Communist Manifesto, 56f., 66f., 69, 243, 350
- Communist Party of India, 6f., 110, 142, 164f., 216, 218, 222, 223, 228, 232ff., 258, 319, 322; founded at Tashkent, 109; remains aloof from Civil Disobedience Movement and August Movement, 252; outlawed, 252f.; and People's War, 253; expelled from Congress, 253; alliance with CSP, 256
- Communist Party of Great Britain, 146, 219, 222f.; directs Communist activities in India, 153, 177, 188
- Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 11; on Gandhi, 154f.
- Communist University of the Toilers of the East, 110, 130, 133, 152, 319
- Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, 19f., 153, 167f., 179, 330
- Congress of the Peoples of the East. See Baku Congress
- Congress Socialist Party, 218, 292, 323; founding of, 250; strength of, 250; Comintern attacks on, 215f.; alliance with Communists, 256; declares solidarity with Soviet Union, 258
- Council of People's Commissars. See Soviet Government
- Dange, S. A., 142
- Das, C. R., 115, 158ff., 328f.
- Datta, Bhupendra Kumar, 5, 140
- Democracy, ideal of, 52ff., 90, 314f.; Congress on, 52f.; Gandhi on, 53f.; Nehru on, 54f.
- Desai, Bhulabhai, 250
- Deva, Acharya Narendra, 250, 292
- Dictatorship, ideal of, 86ff., 92; Marx on, 86ff.; Lenin on, 88f.; Stalin on, 88f.
- Dimitrov, Georgi, 218
- Druhe, David N., 6
- Dundee Salt March, 247
- Dutt, R. P., 139, 218, 222
- Dyakov, A. M., 225f., 228f.
- Executive Committee of the Communist International. See Comintern
- Engels, F., 57f., 74
- First International, 59f.
- Fourier, Charles, 315

- Gandhi, M. K., 19, 25, 105, 112, 157, 160, 165, 189, 312ff., 321f., 326ff., 332, 334ff., 342, 347; on internationalism, 36f.; on non-violence, 46ff., 50ff.; on democracy, 53f.; leads Non-cooperation Movement, 113ff.; supports *Khilafat* movement, 113ff.; leads Civil Disobedience Movement, 247ff.; differences with Nehru, 179ff.; differences with Bose and other Congress leaders, 251f.; on Russian Revolution, 143ff.; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 165f., 178, 186f., 252, 267ff., 331; Comintern on, 149f., 156, 211ff.; Stalin on, 154f.; Soviet theoreticians on, 228, 231f., 234, 236, 239, 241
- Gandhi And Lenin*, by S. A. Dange, 142
- Ghadar Party, 160
- Griffiths, Percival, 6
- Gupta, Nalini, 141
- Harshavardhana, 313
- Hindu*, on Communism and the Soviet Union, 299ff., 338
- Hindu Mahasabha, 159
- Hitler, 216, 218, 221ff., 253, 257, 314, 323
- Iberty Bill, 24f., 112
- Independence for India League, 183f., 330
- "India House", at Tashkent, 109
- Indian Review*, 127f.
- India in Transition*, by M. N. Roy, 133, 149
- Indian foreign policy, 343f.
- Indian nationalism, 8ff., 113, 311, 315; ideals of, 15ff., 89ff.; reaction to International Communism, 112ff., 157ff., 246ff.; essential nature of its conflict with International Communism, 340; factors other than ideology in this conflict, 341ff.; future strength of, 346ff.
- Indian National Congress, 21, 29f., 105, 112f., 149, 154, 218ff., 312, 314, 326ff., 351; on anti-imperialism, 18f.; on anti-racialism, 25; on Asianism, 28f.; on internationalism, 38; on non-violence, 48ff.; on democracy, 52f.; Nagpur session of 1920, 114; Ahmedabad session of 1921, 141; Gaya session of 1922, 138; Madras session of 1927, 179ff.; Calcutta session of 1928, 183, 246; Faizpur session of 1936, 220, 256, 258; Haripura session of 1938, 22, 49, 256; Tripuri session of 1939, 22, 251, 256; Ramgarh session of 1940, 251; Comintern attitude to, 149ff., 152, 210ff., 221; Comintern view of its relation to October Revolution, 242ff.; Soviet Government attitude to, 224ff.; Communist influence in, 160ff.; 176ff.; character in the thirties, 249, and CSP, 250; division within, 159f., 251f.; Communists expelled from, 253; general reaction to Communism and the Soviet Union, 252ff.; resolution on Soviet Union, 256; appreciates Soviet policy, 257f.; leaders' views on Communism and the Soviet Union, 142ff., 166ff., 179ff., 187ff., 259ff.
- Indian Renaissance, 10, 17f., 26, 31f., 36, 44f., 52, 115, 311, 313, 326, 342
- Indonesia, 344, 349
- Internationalism, ideal of, 31ff., 90, 313; Congress on, 38; Nehru on, 37ff.; Gandhi on, 36f.; Ram Mohan Roy on, 31, Sri Aurobindo on, 35f.; Rabindranath Tagore on, 34f.; Vivekananda on, 32f., 36

- International Communism, 8, 10ff., 86, 89, 103, 166, 221, 338ff.; ideals of, 56ff., 91f.; policy on India, 95ff., 146ff., 210ff.; ideals of, 56ff., 91f.; policy on Indian nationalist leaders on, 142ff., 166ff., 179ff., 187ff., 259ff., Indian nationalist press on, 116ff., 195ff., 295ff.; general reaction of Indians to, 252ff.; oscillations of attitude towards Indian nationalism, 324f.; basic strategy and guidelines of, 325f., 338ff.; essential nature of conflict with Indian nationalism, 840; factors other than ideology determining result of conflict with Indian nationalism, 341ff.; not mere drive for Russian national power, 350
- International Working Men's Association. See First International
- International politics, theory of, 3f., 348ff.
- Irwin, Lord, 246f.
- Iyengar, S. Srinivasa, 175f., 193
- Iyer, C. S. Ranga, on Communism, 194, 840
- Jalianwallabagh, 19, 113, 188
- Japan, 4, 27, 138, 217, 252, 344, 349
- Jayakar, M. R., 247f.
- Kautilya, 43ff.
- Kautsky, John, 5
- Kennedy, Malcolm D., 6
- Khilafat Movement, 21, 113, 129, 318f., 326
- Kripalani, J. B., views on Communism and the Soviet Union, 285ff., 334, 336
- Kuusinen, Otto, 154, 211, 212
- Labour movement in India, 164, 188, 216, 255, 327. See also All-India Trade Union Congress.
- Labour Swaraj Party, 146, 320
- League Against Imperialism, 29, 153, 167f., 174, 179f., 330
- League For The Liberation Of The East, 99, 317
- League of Communists, 57ff.
- League of Nations, 83, 217
- Lenin, V. I., 77f., 107, 112, 144, 160, 243, 317f., 320; on Second International, 61; founds Comintern, 61f.; on insurrection, 69f.; on liberation of dependent peoples, 75f., 102f.; Draft Thesis On Colonial Question, 103ff.; on Socialist Camp, 80; on dictatorship, 88f.; on India, 98f., 148f.
- Liberation of dependent peoples, ideal of, 74ff., 91; Lenin on, 75f.; Stalin on, 79f.; Soviet Government on, 77; Comintern on, 77f.
- Limaye, Madhu, 5
- Lohia, Rammanohar, 292
- Mahabharata, 40f.
- Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan, 159; on Communism, 193f., 331
- Malaysia, 349
- Mao Tse-tung, on violence, 71ff.; on two-camp view of world, 83f.
- Marx, Karl, 17, 128, 162, 242f., 317; on proletarian internationalism, 57f.; on violence, 65ff.; on dictatorship, 86ff.; on imperialism, 74f.; on India, 95ff.
- Masani, M. R., 5, 218, 292
- Meerut Conspiracy Case, 184, 187, 201, 243, 329
- Meherally, Yusuf, 250
- Mehta, Asoka, 250, 292
- Melman, M., 226
- Menon, V. K. Krishna, 226; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 293ff., 334, 337

- Mesopotamia, 22, 115, 222
- Mill, John Stuart, 17
- Modern Review*, 127f.
- Mohani, Maulana Hasrat, 141
- Molotov, 224, 226, 324
- Montagu-Chelmsford Reform, 113
- Morgenthau, Hans, 3, 348f.
- Morley-Minto Reform, 112
- Mujahirs*, 175; trained at Tashkent, 109; gather in Moscow, 110, 130f.; form Communist Party of India, 139
- Mukherjee, Abani, 138, 141, 149
- Munshi, K. M., 250
- Muslim League, 159, 233, 241
- Muslims of India, 113, 320, 326, 327; influenced by Russian Revolution, 128f.
- Mussolini, 25
- Nambiar, K. C., 175
- Narayan, Jayaprakash, 4, 250; views on Communism, 259, 290f., 314, 336f.
- Nationalism, modern, 8, 10f.
- Nationalism, Indian. See Indian nationalism
- Nationalist leaders of India, on International Communism, 142f., 166f., 179f., 187f., 259f.
- Nationalist press of India, on International Communism, 116f., 195f., 295f.
- Nehru, Jawaharlal, 115, 158, 189, 190, 226, 250, 252, 312f., 322, 324, 332, 334f., 342; on Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, 19f.; presidential address at Lahore Congress, 20; visit to Soviet Union, 20, 168f.; message to World Peace Congress, 20; on imperialism, 16, 23; on racialism, 24; on Asianism, 26, 29f.; on internationalism, 37f.; on non-violence, 40f.; on democracy, 54f.; on Russian Revolution, 142f.; re-
- presents Congress at League Against Imperialism, 153; early socialistic ideas of, 166f.; attends Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, 167; on danger from American imperialism, 168; writes book entitled *Soviet Russia*, 169f.; on India and the Soviet Union, 172f.; on Marxism and socialism in India, 177; differences with Gandhi, 179f.; criticizes Nehru Report, 182; founds Independence For India League, 183; propagates socialism, 183f.; trade union activist, 183f.; on Second and Third International, 186; in youth movement, 188; on character of the Congress, 249; Comintern attacks on, 211f.; Soviet theoreticians on, 232, 235f., 236, 241; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 166f., 259, 275f., 330f.
- Nehru, Motilal, 115, 158f., 182, 328; on Communism, 189f.
- Nehru Report, 182
- Non-cooperation Movement, 114f., 157f., 160, 321, 328, 332; suspension of, 149; Comintern reaction to, 189f.
- Non-violence, ideal of, 39f., 90, 351; Congress on, 48f.; Nehru on, 49f.; Gandhi on, 46f.; Mahabharata on, 40f.; Ashoka on, 41f.
- Obeidullah, Maulana, 131, 133
- October Revolution, 7, 28, 62f., 65, 76f., 84, 89, 116, 141f., 144f., 229f., 242f., 315f., 327, 339, 342, 350; Stalin on world significance of, 65; background of, 67f.; its immediate aftermath, 99f.; its initial impact on Indian nationalism, 112f.; Indian nationalist press

- on, 116ff.; Indian people on, 128ff.; Indian leaders on, 142ff.; Comintern view of its relation to Indian freedom movement, 222ff.
- Ogburn, W. F., 9
- Overstreet, Gene D., 6, 195
- Owen, Robert, 315
- Pakistan, 349
- Pal, Bipin Chandra, 165
- Pant, Govind Ballabh, 188
- Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai, 188; views on Communism, 274f., 334
- Patawardhan, Achyut, 250
- Peasant movement in India, 113, 157, 188, 255, 327
- Peasants' and Workers' Party, 146, 188, 320
- Persia, 22, 30, 100, 103, 109, 137
- Plamenatz, John, 87
- Politt, Harry, 218
- Poona Pact, 248
- Prasad, Dr. Rajendra, views on Communism, 142, 259, 273f., 334
- Pratap, Raja Mahendra, 107f., 110, 139f., 319
- Proletarian internationalism, ideal of, 57ff., 91f., 316; Marx on, 57f.; Lenin on, 61ff.; Stalin on, 65; Mao Tse-tung on, 57f.; Comintern on, 63f.; Soviet Government on, 62f.
- "Provisional Government of India", Berlin, 107
- "Provisional Government of the People of India", Kabul, 108
- Public Safety Bill, 188, 189, 198, 201, 243
- Punjab Kirti Kisan Party, 258
- Punjab Socialist Party, 258
- Quit India Movement. See August Movement
- Rab, Abdur, 138
- Radek, Karl, 107, 213
- Rai, Lala Lajpat, 159, 188
- Rajagopalachari, C., 251, 334; views on Communism, 259, 288f., 336
- Rao, Chalasani Vasudeva, 4
- Red Trade Union Congress, 255
- Revolutionaries, Indian, at Berlin, 107; go to Moscow, 107; trained at Tashkent, 108f.
- Rowlatt Bills, 113
- Roy, Dr. B. C., 250
- Roy, M. N., 5, 107, 130, 137f., 141, 149, 161, 163, 165, 180, 196f., 215, 254, 318ff., 327, 347; intervenes at Second Congress of Comintern; plans Soviet invasion of India, 108f.; launches Communist movement in India, 146f.
- Roy, Prafulla Chandra, 257
- Roy, Raja Ram Mohan, 31f., 36, 312f.
- Round Table Conference, 246ff.
- Ruskin, 314
- Russell, Bertrand, 87
- Russia, political background of, 67f.; foreign capital in, 76f.; evils of, 257
- Russian Revolution. See October Revolution
- Safarov, 107
- Saint Simon, 315
- Saklatwalla, Shapurji, 139, 178f.
- Sapru, Sir Tej Bahadur, 247f.
- Saraswati, Dayananda, 115
- Schubin, P., 154
- Second International, 60f., 176, 186
- Sen, Keshab Chandra, 26f., 312
- Shah, Prof. K. T., 177f.
- Simon Commission, 187
- Sino-Soviet conflict, 14, 56, 346
- Sitaramayya, Pattabhi, 115, 251, 253, 255f., 332
- Socialist Camp, ideal of, 80ff., 91; Lenin on, 80; Stalin on, 82f.; Mao Tse-tung on, 83f.; Soviet Government on, 85f.

- Sokolnikov, 107
- Soviet-German Pact, 217, 220, 323
- Soviet Government, sanctions funds for world revolution, 62f.; appeals to peoples of the East, 77, 100; early difficulties of, 81f.; on Socialist Camp, 85f.; publishes "Blue Book" on India, 101f.; activities among Muslims of the East, 102; closes military school at Tashkent, 110; policy on India, 95ff., 146ff., 210ff.; attitude towards Indian National Congress, 224ff.; Indian leaders on, 142ff., 166ff., 179ff., 187ff., 259ff.; Indian press on, 116ff., 195ff., 295ff.; general reaction of Indians to, 252ff.; appeal to it by Government of India for food, 225f.; its retrospective view of Indian freedom movement, 229ff.; post-war foreign policy of, 257f.; recent change in foreign policy of, 346
- Soviet Russia*, by J. Nehru, 169, 171ff.
- Stalin, J., 175, 321; on world significance of October Revolution, 65; on violence, 70f.; on liberation of the East, 79f.; on socialism in one country, 82f.; on dictatorship, 88f.; on policy for colonial countries, 152f.; on Gandhi, 154f.; on post-war Soviet foreign policy, 257
- Strachey, John, 23
- Swadeshi Movement, 18, 112
- Swaraj Party, 159, 163, 250, 328, 332
- Sukarno, 344
- Sun Yat-sen, 344
- Tashkent, 138, 175; military school at, 108f., 132
- Tagore, Rabindranath, 313, 333f., 342; on internationalism, 34ff.; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 259, 262ff.
- Tagore, Saumyendranath, 4, 142, 175, 177n., 179, 190
- Third International. See Comintern
- Thoreau, 314
- Tilak, B. G., 53, 98, 112, 160, 314
- Tolstoy, 314
- Tribune*, on Russian Revolution, 124ff.; on Communism and the Soviet Union, 200, 301ff., 338
- Trotsky, 85, 102, 107
- Troyanovsky, 101f.
- Turk-Bureau of the Comintern, 107, 110, 215, 319
- Turkey, 21, 100, 103, 129, 137, 139
- United Nations, 224f.
- Usmani, Shaukat, 5, 129f., 175
- Varga, Eugene, 153f.
- Veblen, T., 9
- Violence, ideal of, 65ff., 91, 315f.; Marx on, 65ff.; Lenin on, 69f.; Stalin on, 70f.; Mao Tse-tung on, 71ff.
- Vietnam, 344, 349
- Vivekananda, Swami, 32f., 36, 313
- Wang Ming, 218
- Weber, Alfred, 9f.
- Weber, Max, 9
- Windmiller, Marshall, 6, 195
- Young Communist International, 154
- Youth movement in India, 188, 254f., 327
- Zhukov, E. M., 226
- Zinoviev, 107, 320

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