

communist party immediately. We are a revolutionary, democratic party. We are going to build a socialist society, but we are a long way from socialism yet. We have to go through some stages first. We cannot jump at once to socialism. We need the material base.»

Until now, the work of the PDPA has proceeded under extremely adverse circumstances, due to the war instigated by imperialist and reactionary forces. Still, it gives cause for optimism that the Afghani revolutionary forces can rise to the challenge of leading the masses in a national democratic revolution, oriented towards socialism. The party itself has grown from under 20,000 to 200,000 in the ten years since the revolution. The mass organizations that have been established (trade unions, women's and students' unions) broaden the ranks of the progressive movement struggling to develop the country. The building of numerous factories, roads, schools and hospitals has laid the cornerstone of the material base to be further expanded. Since the revolution of 1978, 1,700,000 Afghans have learned to read. This is a fact of political as well as social significance, for the counterrevolution was in the past able to capitalize on widespread ignorance among the masses, in fomenting opposition to the progressive government.

THE THREAT TO PEACE

A review of the internal Afghani situation leads one to conclude that the sole threat to implementation of the Geneva accords stems from the same forces that instigated the war on Afghanistan - chiefly the US, the Pakistani dictatorship and the seven-faction rebel alliance they support. Indeed, this alliance has declared that it is not bound by the Geneva accords, and will continue the war until an Islamic government is established in Kabul. They punctuated their declaration by shooting down an Afghani civil plane, killing 29 passengers, as the accords were being signed, utilizing US-supplied Stinger missiles. Yet ultimately, this alliance cannot sustain armed struggle or even its own internal structures without the massive aid which the US and others have channeled via Pakistan.

More unsettling is that the US and Pakistan had no sooner signed the accords than they put questions to the legitimacy of the Afghani government,

and asserted their intention to violate the accords under certain circumstances. The US tried to introduce a false concept of symmetry whereby it would only discontinue arms to the rebels if the Soviet Union desists from military aid to Afghanistan. This was flatly rejected by the Soviet leadership which pointed out that their aid is given in line with long-standing, legitimate treaties between the two states. Comrade Najibullah put the question of symmetry in its proper perspective when he told an American delegation from the International Center for Development Policy that his government would accept a cut-off of Soviet military aid if the US ends such assistance to Pakistan.

In early April it was reported that the US had recently given an additional \$300 million in military aid, matched by Saudi Arabia, to the Pakistan-based contras. By May 15th, when the Geneva accords went into effect, the Afghani contras were sitting with a newly delivered year's supply of arms, including new improved weaponry (anti-tank, mortars and mine-clearing equipment), according to *Time* magazine, April 18th. In early May, a US State Department official reported that Michael H. Armacost, undersecretary of political affairs, had sent an aide to Pakistan the week before to tell the rebels «that we continue to support their cause, and that we regard the Geneva agreements as a means of fostering their cause by securing a firm commitment by the Russians to get out promptly,» as a condition for the rebels taking control of the country (*International Herald Tribune*, May 7-8).

All these are indications that the US will try to circumvent the Geneva accords by upgrading its military aid to Pakistan, and letting the Pakistani military channel part of this to the contras. In so doing, however, the US will put itself at odds with the UN whose forces are charged with monitoring the Afghani-Pakistan border to see that the accords are observed. While the US is not known for respect for international legitimacy, it could prove embarrassing to be caught in violation. This would also put the US at a distinct disadvantage in future negotiations with the Soviet Union on disarmament and other issues related to international peace.

US relations with India could also be affected. President Gandhi is known to

have urged the US to sign the accords in the interests of stabilizing the region. US failure to abide by its signature will diminish its credibility with a number of non-aligned countries, while conversely raising the prestige of the Soviet Union.

The US administration is in a dilemma. If it, on the other hand, opts to discontinue aid to the Afghani contras, its prestige with its allies will be diminished, and they will be less willing to join in other imperialist-sponsored projects. This could apply to the reactionary regime in Saudi Arabia, which has quietly matched US aid to the Afghani contras over the years, and has recently been exposed for involvement in the ill-fated Iran-contratate scandal. China has also been involved in supporting the Afghani rebels alongside the US. At a time when Chinese-Soviet relations are due for improvement, the failure of the Afghanistan adventure should make the Chinese leadership think twice about its collaboration with US imperialism.

The US dilemma is in fact self-created. Having channeled the bulk of the CIA's aid to the most extreme fundamentalists among the seven-faction rebel alliance, the US has no local allies that could participate in a compromise solution that might undermine Afghanistan's move towards socialism through a more sophisticated political strategy. The CIA's Afghanistan adventure is a new affirmation of the real meaning of Reagan's support to «democratic forces fighting communism.» In frenzied efforts to turn back the tide of history, the Reagan Administration has supported forces who are not only reactionary - opposing for example that women learn to read, but are also far from the mainstream of the traditional religious forces in Afghani society, who are much more moderate in their beliefs.

In view of all these facts, the Geneva accords are a cause for celebration and should be supported by all progressive forces. Though problems may remain, implementation of these accords is to the interest of the Afghani people, and their hope for progress and peace. The UN has achieved a great victory in working out these accords. It is hoped that the UN will put all its force behind seeing that they are enforced, so that they can serve as an example of the possibility of resolving conflicts in the interest of peace and justice.

