

On The Latest Stand Of CPI(M) Central Committee

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting at Calcutta from 15th to 20th July last issued an appeal to the left and democratic parties, which, was published in People's Democracy, English organ of the party, in its issue dated July 29, 1973. The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) after its meeting from 3rd to 7th September last came out with a statement on the "political united front of Left and democratic parties". This statement appeared in the same organ of the party in its issue dated September 16, 1973.

In the appeal and the statement, the CPI(M) leadership have (1) discussed the alleged stands of their party, the CPI and "some other Left parties and groups" towards the Congress split and the Indira wing of the Congress, (2) explained the stand of their party as to why in the prevailing situation in our country it would be unrealistic to try to form a united front of the left and democratic parties and forces on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme through greatest common measure of agreement among them and advocated the forging of unity of the left and democratic forces through united mass struggles on "specific issues", i.e. from the bottom "unity in action" and (3) expressed the view that the CPI "is making some moves away from the policy which made it break away from the Left and join the Congress Camp" in their attempt to come closer to the CPI. The issues discussed in these two documents of the CPI(M) are, no doubt, important. We are, therefore, of the considered view that in the interest of crystallization of correct political ideas on the issues and the development of a political united front of the left and democratic parties and forces, which alone, in the existing situation in our country, can provide a viable alternative to the Congress and advance the united mass struggles against the ruling bourgeoisie and other reactionary forces, these documents of the CPI(M) should be examined on the anvil of reality and Leninist teachings on united front. We propose to do it in this article.

Suppression of Truth

The Central Committee in the appeal has observed thus: "The developments of the last four years have proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the stand adopted by the Right Communist Party and some other Left parties and groups towards the Congress split was incorrect. The ruling Congress headed by Indira Gandhi, it has been shown for all those who have eyes to see, is the rightful inheritor of all the policies that strengthened monopoly and landlords, pursued by the undivided Congress." What has been stated here is, no doubt, very good. But the pity is that this assessment of the Congress is not to be found in any document of the CPI(M) published immediately after the Congress split. Be that as it may, we do not mind it. But we certainly mind the slant in this observation by the Central Committee of the CPI(M). The slant is definitely objectionable.

The slant in this observation by the CPI(M) leadership is unmistakably clear. By implication they mean to say that while the CPI and some other left parties and groups made wrong readings about the Congress split and adopted incorrect stands towards the Indira wing of the Congress, it is the CPI(M) which had adopted a correct stand in this regard. The reality, however, is just the reverse of it. So far as we know, other than the PSP, if the PSP is taken at all as a left party, the CPI and the CPI(M) are the two left parties that wrongly evaluated the Congress split and adopted

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Massive Food March in Calcutta and Other Places Defying Torrential Rain

Calcutta, September 24—Defying torrential rain, thousands and thousands of food-marchers from the adjoining districts of Calcutta under the leadership of the SUCI, the RSP, and the Forward Bloc marched to the Saheed Minar Maidan and then squatted on the street in front of the Raj Bhavan here today. Most of the food-marchers carrying banners of the SUCI, the Krishak-O-Khetmajur Federation and various demands of theirs came from the Sundarban areas where practically a near-famine condition is prevailing.

On behalf of the food-marchers a 15-point charter of demands was handed over to the Governor's Secretary by Com. Nihar Mukherjee, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the SUCI, Mahan Pal and Ashok Ghosh, Secretaries of the West Bengal State Committees of the RSP and the Forward Bloc respectively. The food-marchers were addressed by the leaders of the three parties and the different mass organisations of workers, peasants, students, youths, women and cultural worker led by the three parties.

Not only Calcutta but also almost all the district and subdivisional Head Quarters in West Bengal, marked more or less similar demonstrations. Special mention may be made of such demonstrations by food-marchers in Suri, Bankura, Burdwan, Durgapur, Baharampur, Raghunathganj, Midnapore, Tamluk, Contai, Jalpaiguri, Haldibari, Purulia, where people participated in large numbers demanding,

among others, supply of food grains and other essential articles at fair prices within the reach of common men, introduction of all-out state-trading in essential commodities, the lowering of prices of daily necessities of life, work to the unemployed, G.R. and T.R. on a large scale, etc.

GOALPARA DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE DSO

Goalpara, September 24—The Goalpara district conference of the DSO was held here yesterday at Assam Hall under the presidentship of Professor Kiran Chowdhury. Com. Provash Ghosh, General Secretary of the All India DSO was the main speaker. A powerful Committee of the Goalpara district DSO was formed with Com. Shyama Prasad Das as Secretary and Coms. Sahadulla Mian and Sura Juman as Joint Assistant Secretaries. The open session of the conference was addressed, among others, by Prof. Jainal Abedin and the student leader, Com. Shyama Prasad Das.

CPI(M) WRONGLY EVALUED THE CONGRESS SPLIT

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incorrect stands towards the Indira wing of the Congress. Scores of instances from published documents of the CPI(M) can be cited in support of this contention of ours.

But we desist from doing it on the simple reason that we had cited them in details on earlier occasions in course of our polemic with the CPI(M). We cite here only a few examples. It is the CPI(M) leadership that "welcomed" bank nationalization by the Indira Government as "a big event", "a step in the right direction", "a forward measure to meet the situation" which has set in motion "the process of mass radicalization and the new mass polarization" and as a measure "in tune with anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people". It is again the CPI(M) leadership that not only discovered within the Indira wing of the Congress "a healthy trend which hates big landlords and monopolists" but also gave a certificate to the ruling Congress to the effect that "it has raised certain slogans and taken certain measures which are in tune with anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people" and advocated for "the development of a far broader front of the democratic forces, including a section of the Indira Gandhi Congress" and visualised a "country-wide front" with the Indira Gandhi Congress against extreme right reaction. The portions within quotation marks above are verbatim reproduction from the CPI(M) documents, only the italics being ours. (Vide People's Democracy, issues dated 3rd, 17th and 31st August and 9th November, 1969 and 15th February, 1970). We now request the ranks and supporters of the CPI(M) to judge for themselves if this evaluation of the Congress split made and the stand adopted towards the Indira wing of the Congress by the CPI(M) leadership substantiate or

not their present claim that it is the CPI(M) which had made a correct assessment of the Congress split, adopted a correct stand towards the Indira wing of the Congress and declared the Congress(R) as the rightful inheritor of all the policies that strengthened monopoly and landlords, pursued by the undivided Congress.

Had not the CPI(M) leadership tried to conceal their own mistake and lay blame for their mistake squarely on "some other Left parties and groups", we would not have taken the trouble to point out that when the CPI and the CPI(M) were vying with each other in discovering progressiveness in the Indira wing of the Congress *vis-a-vis* the Congress(O) and the undivided Congress, it was the SUCI which publicly declared that there was no basic difference between the Indira wing of the Congress and the Congress(O) and that the ruling Congress headed by Sm. Indira Gandhi was following the same principle, policy, plan and programme as the undivided Congress. Of the many documents to prove it, we refer here to only two. *First*, in the resolution on bank nationalization adopted as far back as 30th August, 1969, the Central Committee of the SUCI headed by its General Secretary, Com. Shibdas Ghosh, categorically declared that "the present conflict inside the Congress, centring the Syndicate-group and the Indira-group, is not a struggle between the monopolists collaborating with imperialism and the so-called "progressive national bourgeoisie, a close ally of people's democratic revolution", or, in general terms, between reaction and progress. It is nothing but a reflection of the contradiction between the conservative section of the bourgeoisie representing individual interests of the monopolists and the so-called radical section of the bourgeoisie

representing aggregate interests of capitalism." *Second*, the SUCI in its Election Manifesto for the general election in 1971 further observed as follows: "Indira Gandhi's Congress, like the Syndicate Congress, is a party of the Indian bourgeoisie wedded to the task of safeguarding monopoly interests. The only difference is that while the Congress(O) represents the individual interests of the Indian monopolists, the Congress(R) represents the aggregate interests of Indian monopoly capitalism. There is, thus, no basic difference between the two wings of the Congress. The united Congress led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, under the slogan of "socialist pattern of society", objectively helped the Indian monopolists to fleece the people and fatten their money bags. The Indira wing of the Congress has been following the same ideology, principle, policy and programme as the united Congress under Pandit Nehru had followed. Taking advantage of the split, in her bid to befool the people, create an illusion of progressiveness about her Congress and her Government in mass-mind and rejuvenate the dying Congress, Sm. Indira Gandhi has raised the slogan of "democratic socialism" with a view to serving the same interests of the Indian monopolists. Her new Congress is not new in any respect compared to the old undivided Congress. Furthermore, it should also be borne in mind that both the Congress(R) and the Congress(O) profess the same ideology, follow the same policies and programmes, carry on the same activities with regard to the masses and democratic mass movements and do not hesitate in the least to take recourse to nepotism, corruption and other vices that are eating into the very vitals of national life. Both the wings of the Congress have in their respective folds old guards

notorious for the chain of anti-people measures, acts of misdeeds and misrule and corrupt practices committed during the long twenty-three years of the Congress rule since independence. Besides, the split was not due to any difference between the two groups on any question of ideology, principle, policy or programme. It was the outcome of clashes of personalities, sequel to groupism and quarrels between major groups centring round ministerial position, power and pelf. Had there been real and genuine differences on any question of ideology, principle, policy or programme between the two factions, there would have been no attempt for patching up the dispute and for *rapprochement*, as our people had noticed during the last one year and a half. The Congress(R) is the same old wine of the united Congress with a more attractive but more deceptive label. In the face of continued erosion of its strength in the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabhas in different states, resulting from increasing disillusionment of the people about the Congress and their mounting hatred and indignation against it and its anti-people dictatorial rule for more than two decades, the Congress (R) has put on a radical cloak in order to conceal its real colour and bamboozle the people on to its side."

Public memory is proverbially short—so goes the saying. But certainly it is not so short as to forget by this time the reality that at a time when the Congress as a whole was virtually sinking and the Indira wing of the Congress was trying its best to anyhow survive by creating confusion among the people under the smoke-screen of so-called radicalism, it is the CPI(M) leadership, like the CPI leadership, that helped the Indira wing of the Congress no less to create that

CPI(M)'s Stand On United Front Reflects Trotskyite Trend of Thinking

illusion of progressiveness about it among the people and rehabilitate itself. It is the SUCI that then scientifically analysed the Congress split and exposed the real character of the Indira wing of the Congress.

Concealment of own Mistake

It is not our point that a party cannot commit any mistake or that if a mistake is once committed, it cannot correct it. If the CPI(M) now corrects its earlier mistake with regard to its reading about the Congress split and the stand it adopted towards the Indira wing of the Congress then it is alright. But that is not our point here. What we want to emphasize is that a serious political party must not conceal its mistake from its ranks and supporters, its class and the masses of the people. Concealment of mistake is bad. But to shift one's own mistake on to the shoulders of others, which the Central Committee of the CPI(M) has done in this case, is thousand times worse. Lenin in his *Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder* has said: "The attitude of a political party toward its own mistake is one of the most important and surest criteria of the seriousness of the party and how it fulfils *in practice* its obligations toward its *class* and toward the toiling *masses*. To admit a mistake openly, to disclose its reasons, to analyse the conditions which gave rise to it, to study attentively the means of correcting it—these are the signs of a serious party; this means the performance of its duties, this means educating and training the *class* and the *masses*." We are constrained to say that the CPI(M) leadership have violated in toto this Leninist approach to its own mistake. By observing that the Right Communist Party and "some other Left

parties and groups" have made wrong readings about the Congress split and adopted incorrect stands towards the Indira wing of the Congress thereby implying that the CPI(M) has not made any mistake in this regard, the CPI(M) leadership have tried not only to conceal their own mistake but also to shift their own mistake by deceitful means on to the shoulders of and lay blame for it squarely on "some other Left parties and groups", let alone analysing the conditions that gave rise to the mistake and seriously studying the means of correcting it. Is it political honesty? Does this attitude of the CPI(M) leadership show that they are serious about rectifying their own mistakes and fulfilling their obligations towards the class and the masses? Is it the sign of a serious political party that claims itself to be a communist party according to the criteria laid down by Lenin? We request the ranks and supporters of the CPI(M) to judge for themselves what this attitude of the leadership of their party towards their own mistake signifies.

Reflection of Trotskyite Trend of Thinking

The next issue, which the Central Committee of the CPI(M) has discussed in its appeal, is about the development of a political united front of the left and democratic parties and forces in our country. The Central Committee has expressed the view that in the prevailing situation of our country, it would be unrealistic to try to develop a political united front of the left and democratic parties and forces on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme through greatest common measure of agreement among them and advocated that it is necessary to forge unity of the left and

democratic parties and forces from the bottom through "unity in action" from time to time on "specific issues." Following the presentation of this queer theory of united front, perhaps faced with questions from the ranks and supporters of the party, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) had to come out with the assurance that "The P. B. wants to assure the comrades and friends of all other Left and democratic parties that it would be the endeavour of our Party to see that the unity in action that has started developing is transformed into a political united front of the Left and democratic parties consistently fighting the landlord-bourgeois regime and the various parties and organisations representing the big landlords and monopoly capitalists." This idea of forging unity of the left and democratic parties from the bottom through mass struggles on the basis of "specific issues" has nothing in common with the Leninist theory of united front, as propounded by Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung. On the contrary, this is slipping into the theory of spontaneity. Those, who know that in the communist movement now Trotskyism is still existing as a trend, will understand that this idea of the CPI(M) about the emergence of the political united front of the left and democratic parties from the bottom through united struggles on "specific issues" reflects the Trotskyite trend of thinking on the question of unity and united front.

In support of its thesis(?) that at present it is unrealistic to try to form political united front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed-minimum common programme the Central Committee of the CPI(M) has argued thus: "every party, group or organisation has its own specific approach to the problems facing the country—an approach different from that

of the other parties, groups and organisations. It would, therefore, be unrealistic to attempt the formulation of a common programme covering all aspects of the economic and political life of the people." It passes one's comprehension how the leadership of a party, particularly a party that claims itself to be a communist party, can advance such a silly argument and exhibit such an utter lack of understanding of the Leninist theory of united front. Who denies that every party, group or organisation has its own specific approach to different problems facing the life of the people? It is precisely because every party has its own specific approach to the problems, which is different from that of others, that there arises the necessity of a united front. For, had all the parties the same approach to problems, then there would have been hardly any real necessity of separate existence of the parties and there would have been no necessity, in that circumstances, of a united front. Besides, united front never presupposes "the formulation of a common programme covering *all* aspects of the economic and political life of the people". When different parties have not only different angularities and approaches to different problems of the people but also different programmes on the economic, political, social and cultural life of the people, there cannot be any common programme of all the parties covering *all* aspects of the economic and political life of the people, as stated by the CPI(M) Central Committee. There can be only an agreed *minimum* common programme on the basis of greatest common measure of agreement among the parties. Political united front of the left and democratic parties is formed on the basis of this agreed minimum common programme, which exists in a historically given phase of development of struggle, and not on the basis of a common programme

FOR SECTARIAN AND OPPORTUNIST INTEREST CPI(M) IS AGAINST FORMATION OF UNITED FRONT OF LEFT AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES

“covering all aspects of the economic and political life of the people”, as stated by the CPI(M) leadership.

Motive Behind the Line

Are we to believe that the CPI(M) leadership do not understand these elementary things? Do they not know that despite different approaches to problems and different economic and political programmes, the left and democratic parties in our country had in the past formed united fronts on the basis of agreed minimum common programmes through greatest common measure of agreement among them? Why then are the CPI(M) leadership now saying that in the prevailing situation in our country, it would be unrealistic to try to form a political united front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme? The reason is not far to seek. *First*, notwithstanding their lip service to united front of the left and democratic parties and united mass movements, the CPI(M) leadership have never understood the significance of the united front of the left and democratic parties in the prevailing situation in our country. In the present stage of the development of democratic movement in our country, more so when no left party can singly provide a viable alternative to the Congress, unite the masses and effectively lead them in their struggles against the ruling bourgeoisie, the ruling Congress, its governments and their anti-people policies for the realisation of their democratic demands, the necessity and importance of the united front of the left and democratic parties can hardly be over-emphasized. In fact, it is the only instrument of struggle in the hands of the people to conduct united

struggles against the ruling bourgeoisie and other reactionary forces and vested interests and their political representatives, skip over the present democratic phase step by step and create conditions for revolutionary overthrow of the present exploitative capitalist order and establishment of a socialist society. It is for this reason that a revolutionary party of the working class must now strive not only for the formation of a united front of the left and democratic parties but also to preserve and further cement its unity and make it function as the instrument of united struggles by the masses against their common enemy. In the circumstances, to say that it would be unrealistic to try to form a united front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme and to advocate for forging unity of the left and democratic parties from the bottom through “unity in action” on “specific issues” is not merely to disturb the objective process of formation of a political united front of the left and democratic parties but also to deprive the masses of their only instrument of struggle against their enemy. But the CPI(M) not being a revolutionary party of the working class, its understanding of and approach to the united front of the left and democratic parties are guided by pragmatic consideration for petty sectarian interests. That had been the case in the past; that is the case now. The so-called theorization by the Central Committee of the CPI(M) that in the present situation it would be unrealistic to try to form a political united front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme through greatest

common measure of agreement among them is guided by the same consideration for petty sectarian interests. So, the CPI(M) leadership, in spite of tall talks of unity of the left and democratic forces and united struggles, at the moment, are not agreeable to provide the people with the instrument for united struggles against their common enemy. *Second*, the theory of forging unity of the left and democratic parties from the bottom through “unity in action” on the basis of specific issues—this catch-as-catch-can policy—as formulated by the CPI(M) leadership, would best suit petty sectarian interests of the CPI(M), inasmuch as it would keep the door completely open for the CPI(M) to unite with any party it likes, to serve its petty sectarian and opportunist interests. Look at the so-called “unity in action” of the CPI(M) that is taking place and you will be convinced of the correctness of it. On the occasion of the Malda bandh in West Bengal, the CPI(M) combined not only with the CPI but also with the Congress (O) and the Jan Sangh. In Bankura in the same state, the CPI(M) moved unitedly with the Congress(O), the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha. In Orissa it has made a clandestine arrangement with the Pragati Party, a combination of the Utkal Congress, the Swatantra Party of the state, some most corrupt politicians and the former Rajas and Maharajas, with an eye to the coming mid-term election to the Legislative Assembly of Orissa. We need not multiply instances. The Central Committee and the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) have assured the people and the left and democratic parties that it would be the endeavour of their party that “the unity in action that has started developing is trans-

formed into a political united front of the left and democratic parties.” Can “unity in action” with the Congress(O), the Jan Sangh, the Hindu Mahasabha, etc., that has been developing with the CPI(M), ever give birth to a political united front of the left and democratic parties? We request the ranks and supporters of the CPI(M) to find reply to this question from the leadership of their party.

In passing, it should be mentioned that it is not our point that under no circumstances there can be a joint movement with parties like the Congress (O), the Jan Sangh, etc., on any specific issue. What we are emphasizing here is that united movement with the Congress (O), the Jan Sangh, the Hindu Mahasabha, etc. on any specific issue can never develop a political united front of the left and democratic parties and that a political front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme through greatest common measure of agreement among them must first be formed and then that front may conduct united movement with any party or parties outside the front on any specific issue against the common enemy of the masses of the people. In this way alone the Congress can be isolated to the maximum and a fillip given to united democratic mass movements. But what the CPI(M) is doing is just the reverse of it; formation of a political united front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme through greatest common measure of agreement among the parties is being opposed by the CPI(M) leadership on the baseless ground that it would be unrealistic to try to form it because different left and democratic parties have different approaches to the

Since Its Birth CPI(M) Has Been Disrupting The United Front

problems facing the country ; so called "unity in action" with even reactionary and communal parties is being developed by them whenever and wherever it suits their purpose and it is being claimed that through such "unity in action" a political united front of the left and democratic parties would develop. Can there be anything more opportunist than this ? Is it not giving bluff to the ranks and supporters of the CPI(M), the working class and the masses of the people ? Moreover, do the CPI(M) leadership know that by advocating the emergence of the united front of the left and democratic parties in such a way, they are surrendering to the theory of spontaneity ? And when the CPI(M) is thus moving unitedly with communal parties like the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha in West Bengal and the Akali Dal in Punjab, when till the other day it was united with the communal Muslim League in a front and in the Ministry in Kerala, when it unitedly contested the election with the DMK, another communal and parochial party in Tamil Nadu, when it has now found an ally in the Anna DMK, when it is unitedly moving with reactionary parties like the Congress(O), when it has recently concluded an agreement with the Socialist Party which is still an exponent of rallying a l l anti-Congress forces, including communal and other reactionay parties, in a g r a n d alliance, the Central Committee of the C P I (M) has delivered the sermon t h a t "anti-people policies of the ruling Congress headed by the Prime Minister cannot be countered by that t y p e of 'anti-Congress' politics which was evolved by the Socialist Party and some other l e f t and democratic parties and groups who sought to rally the forces of Right r e a c t i o n , socio-cultural obscurantism and communal separatism in the same camp as the Left and democratic

forces." No doubt, t h e sermon is unimpeachable but what a gulf between profession and practice on the part of the sermonizer !

Consistent Anti-Unity Move

The latest approach of the CPI(M) to the political united front of the left and democratic parties is another instance of its activities disrupting the united front of the left and democratic parties which it has been carrying on since its birth. M a y we state a few well-known facts to p r o v e the consistently d i s r u p t i v e role of the party ? It may be recalled that in the flaming forge of militant mass movements, particularly the food movement of 1966, united front of the left and democratic parties in West Bengal e m e r g e d as a historical necessity. It received the first blow when the CPI(M), l i k e the CPI, against the opposition of the SUCI, moved to bring the Bangla Congress into the left front thereby helping the latter to acquire a l e f t image and creating an illusion among the masses a b o u t Bangla Congress. This was in the long run instrumental in disrupting the left front. Then emerged t h e United Front which disintegrated in 1970. T h e breaking up of the United Front was not on account of any difference on any question of principle, policy, plan or programme between the CPI(M) on the one side and the CPI and Bangla Congress on the other. The fact, on the contrary, is that on every question of principle, policy, plan or programme when our Party had to fight, we had to face the combined opposition by the CPI(M), the CPI and the Bangla Congress. To illustrate, when we were pressing for the lowering of the ceiling on land, reduction of police budget to allocate more money for education, introduction of all-out state-trad-

ing in food grains, the scrapping off of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules, etc., the CPI(M) was always on the side of the Bangla Congress and the CPI against us. The United Front broke up when the CPI(M) in its eagerness to expand the influence of the party began to carry on violent attacks on other constituent parties of the Front with the backing of the police and the administration, calling all the time such attacks as class struggles and to justify these dastardly violent attacks on the fraternal parties, came out with its fanciful theory of "a new class-based front" and the view that the present type of left democratic front had lost its utility in the context of "new class-based front" for the people's democratic revolution becoming "a reality to-day." Even after the actual breaking up of the Front when the SUCI in a public appeal made the offer that if the CPI(M) gave up its wrong theory of "class-based front", stopped violent attacks on the workers and supporters of other parties and moved unitedly with other left and democratic parties against the ruling bourgeoisie and other reactionary forces and vested interests, there could be a united front with the CPI(M) even excluding the Bangla Congress, the appeal was turned down by the CPI(M). T h e CPI(M) leadership became so arrogant and sectarian at that time that any move for restoration of the unity of the left and democratic parties was branded by them as an agency for the Congress. When as the single largest left party in West Bengal (more so as it claims itself to be a communist party) it was the duty of the CPI(M) to unite other left and democratic parties in a front, it not only did not do it but, on the contrary, moved in such a way as to push other parties into the arms of the ruling

Congress. It was the SUCI that at that time checked this catastrophe for the left and democratic movement from becoming a reality, by forming the ULDF and thereby frustrating the move of the Congress to rope in as many left and democratic parties as possible within its fold. But again the CPI(M) branded this perfectly correct move of us as a g e n e r a l agency for the Congress. After the mid-term election in West Bengal in 1971 when the combined strength of the ULF and the ULDF was more than necessary to form an anti-Congress left democratic Ministry, the SUCI urged upon the CPI(M) to revise its sectarian stand, seriously move for an understanding between the ULF and the ULDF, from a coalition government of the ULF and the ULDF and check the Congress from coming to governmental power. But the CPI(M), in p l a c e of m o v i n g in that direction, tried to come to some clandestine a r r a n g e m e n t with p a r t i e s , like the Muslim League, the Jharkhand Party, and set up a CPI(M)-controlled Ministry. It wrote to the Governor to allow it to form such a Ministry. This sectarian and opportunist move ultimately led to the formation of a C o n g r e s s -controlled government in the state. Even this setback to the left and democratic movement did not bring the CPI(M) leadership to senses. They still persisted in disrupting the unity of the left and democratic parties wherever it still continued to exist. In this way the unity among the left and democratic parties that still existed then in the s p h e r e of work of the Calcutta Corporation was deliberately disrupted by the CPI(M), pushing some left and democratic parties to unitedly work with the Congress in the Calcutta Corporation.

Taking advantage of the disunity among the left and democratic parties and forces,

Motive of CPI Behind its Present Posture of Movements

the Congress and other reactionary forces gained the upper hand and started carrying on fascistic attacks on the masses of the people and the left and democratic parties and forces with the backing of the administration and the police. Coming to governmental power through a completely rigged election in 1972, the Congress has mounted these attacks still further from every direction, resulting in untold sufferings of the common man in the state. To effectively resist these attacks and give some measure of relief to the distressed people, a process was set in motion to again unite eight left and democratic parties in a front and a programme was adopted by the eight parties for the development of a sustained united mass movement against the ruling bourgeoisie, the Congress, the Congress governments and their anti-people policies that are mainly responsible for the acute sufferings of the people. Again the CPI(M) dealt a severe blow to the process already initiated to forge unity of the left and democratic parties and forces and develop a sustained united mass movement. The opportunity for this blow came when the CPI with the sole purpose of disrupting the possibility of developing a sustained movement against the Congress, the Congress governments and their anti-people policies already initiated by the eight parties gave a call for Bangla bandh on 27th July last. The CPI(M) for sheer opportunism sided with the CPI without caring a whit for the process of development of a left front that was developing in West Bengal in the form of the eight-party-combination, in utter betrayal of the unanimous programme adopted by the eight parties, including the CPI(M), for developing a sustained united mass movement including that of strike and bandh and, if necessary, continuous strike and bandh

and even going back on its own word of honour given two days back that in case of any difference on the question of the CPI's bandh call on July 27 the CPI(M) would certainly not join with the CPI at the cost of the unity of the eight parties.

It should be noted that our Party is not opposed to developing mass movements unitedly with the CPI. On the contrary, it is our Party that had been consistently stressing on the need for developing mass movements unitedly with the CPI on the basis of specific issues thereby correctly handling its contradictions with the ruling Congress as far as practicable in the prevailing situation. In support of our say we cited instances of such united movements in which the CPI(M) had participated in some states. But every time our party in the meetings of the eight parties had said all this the CPI(M) leaders opposed us with the argument that whatever might have happened in other states, no united movement with the CPI even on specific issues was possible in West Bengal unless the CPI cut off all its connections with the ruling Congress. The CPI(M) leadership, which till the other day thus opposed our proposal suggesting the need for developing movements by the eight parties unitedly with the CPI on specific issues, overnight made a somersault and joined hands with the CPI. And they did it at the cost of the unity which was developing among the left and democratic parties in West Bengal through the eight-party-combination. And they did it at a time and on such a move by the CPI as was solely designed to frustrate the possibilities of developing a sustained united mass movement.

CPI(M) Trying to be Close to CPI

To justify this *volte-face* and join hands with the CPI,

the Central Committee of the CPI(M) all on a sudden discovered that "forced by the developing crisis, the leadership of the Right CP is making some moves away from the policy which made it break away from the Left and join the Congress camp." This discovery, no doubt, matches in excellence with its earlier discovery of progressiveness within the Indira wing of the Congress *vis-a-vis* the Congress(O) three years back. It is true that the CPI has, of late, taken a new posture of movements. But does this posture indicate any shift in its policy away from its political alignment with the ruling Congress towards the lefts, as contended by the Central Committee of the CPI(M), or, is it meant to set up pressure on the ruling Congress and its governments for some definite purpose? Has this definite purpose something to do with the Soviet foreign policy?

To get correct replies to these questions and properly understand the implications of the present posture of movement of the CPI, we are to move a few steps backward over the pages of history. It may be recalled that for sometime past the ruling bourgeoisie in our country has been moving, though haltingly, to normalise India's relation with China on state level. The Soviet Union was keenly observing with anguish and dislike these moves and overtures of the Indian bourgeoisie and the Government of India. But it was difficult for the Soviet Union to openly oppose the move by India to normalise its relation with China. For, such an opposition might reasonably be taken as an interference in the domestic affair of India. The freedom struggle in Bangladesh provided an opportunity to the Soviet Union to tilt the balance in its favour. Banking on India's sole dependence on the Soviet Union for the supply of arms

at the time of the serious crisis India was faced with in connection with the Bangladesh issue, the Soviet Union saw to it that the draft Indo-Soviet Treaty, which was gathering dust in the South Block for several years, became a live Treaty and under pressure of circumstances India had to reluctantly swallow it. That the Treaty was not to the entire satisfaction of the Government of India became apparent when the Prime Minister in her speech at Canada had a dig at the attempts of the superpowers (a veiled reference to the Soviet Union also) to establish their hegemony over other countries (hinting India). The reaction of the Soviet Union to this criticism became palpable at the time of the Congress President's visit to Russia. After the freedom struggle in Bangladesh was over, the Indian bourgeoisie and the Government of India took up the end of the thread again to normalise Sino-Indian relation. The Soviet Union could not remain a silent spectator. It thought that pressure should be brought to bear upon the Congress and the Government of India to indicate its displeasure at the moves to normalise relation with China. The CPI is the instrument ready at hand to exert that pressure. The CPI through its new posture of movement is exerting that pressure on the Congress and the Congress governments without, of course, breaking its political alignment with the ruling Congress. This is the reason of the CPI's new posture of movement. This would be amply clear from statements of the CPI that the movements are directed neither against the ruling Congress nor against its governments. They are, on the contrary, directed to keep the Congress governments on the right track. They, do not, therefore, by any means indicate any

Closeness of CPI(M) With CPI and Congress Developing

move on the part of the CPI away from its policy of alignment with the Indira Congress, as the Central Committee of the CPI(M) wants the people to believe. Are we to take that the CPI(M) leadership are so naive as not to understand this Soviet-inspired (if not dictated) politics of the CPI, or, is it because they themselves are actually advancing to have some sort of recognition from or understanding with the "revisionist" CPSU and for that reason to become close to the CPI that they do not think it prudent to speak out at one stroke the truth to their ranks and supporters.

It is no figment of our imagination that the CPI(M) are now advancing to have some sort of recognition from or closer understanding with the CPSU and for that reason to become close to the CPI. It is, of course, true that so long as the CPSU continues to recognise the CPI as the Communist Party in our country, it can not formally recognise the CPI(M). For, recognition of the CPI(M) as also the CPI would mean recognising two different parties as Communist Party at the same time in our country. From both theoretical and practical position that would be absurd. Though the CPSU cannot formally recognise the CPI(M), but when it has found the CPI(M) eager, it does not want the CPI(M) to go out of its hands either. So it, is trying to handle both the CPI and the CPI(M) and bring them closer to each other. The reflection of this closeness with the CPI is to be found in the attempt of the CPI(M) leadership to discover moves by the CPI away from its policy of alignment with the Congress. There are facts to indicate that some sort of an understanding has already been arrived at between the Soviet leaders and the CPI(M) leadership. First, of late, one after

another the CPI(M) leaders are visiting the Soviet Union. Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad and of all persons Mr. B. T. Ranadive had recently visited the USSR and it is reported that they had discussions with the Soviet leaders. It is also reported in newspapers (we are not sure of the correctness of these reports) that Mr. Harekrishna Konar also made a visit to that country. These visits are not for nothing. Second, it would be more clear from the fact that since their visits, one no longer finds outbursts against Soviet revisionism in the pages of the organs and other publications of the CPI(M) which one used to come across before. Rather, in place of outbursts against Soviet revisionism, one is increasingly noticing praise of the Soviet Union on issues which are looked upon with suspicion even by the resurgent nationalist countries of Asia and Africa on the one hand and uncalled for, out of place and most unjustified criticism of China on the other. The Report on Economic and Political Situation adopted by the Central Committee of the CPI(M) in its meeting held from 15th to 20th July last bears testimony to it. Third, the journal published on behalf of the GDR at Calcutta is being printed in the Ganasakti Press; this would not have been possible, had not some understanding with the Soviet bloc been arrived at. In the wake of understanding with the CPSU, the CPI(M) is trying to be close to the CPI and better the mutual relationship between the two parties. The CPI is now no longer called the "renegade Dangeite revisionist Right CP" as it used to be called by the CPI(M) till the other day. The epithet "renegade Dangeite revisionist" so frequently attached to the CPI then is no more to be seen or heard. Leaders of the two parties have been

meeting off and on secretly (if newspaper reports are to be believed). The two parties are unitedly moving, the CPI(M) backing the CPI even at the cost of unity with other left and democratic parties with which the CPI(M) was unitedly moving. The stand of the CPI(M) with regard to the CPI's call for Bangla bandh on 27th July last is a proof of it. The CPI(M) now appreciatingly notes that the CPI "is making some moves away from the policy which made it break away from the Left and join the Congress camp." The CPI reciprocates this appreciation by giving compliment to the CPI(M) saying "the CPI(M) has taken the first step, though hesitant, to move away from its earlier stand of rabid anti-Congressism." (vide the statement by Gopal Banerjee, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the CPI on the CPI(M)'s stand on CPI's call for Bangla bandh on 27th July, 1973). These are straw in the wind.

Another factor no less important to bring the CPI and the CPI(M) closer is the role of Sm. Indira Gandhi and her Congress. Sm. Gandhi is noticing the Soviet-inspired pressure tactics of the CPI under the cloak of movements. She is not liking it; but at this moment she can ill afford to damage the Indo-Soviet relation, which is still working to her favour in spite of some pinch, and totally dispense with the alignment with the CPI. The only alternative left to her is to counter-balance the pressure-tactics of the CPI by becoming relatively closer to the CPI(M). Over and above this consideration, she has another reason to develop closeness with the CPI(M). Sm. Gandhi cannot but note the intensification of the factional squabbles within the Congress, resulting in complete instability of Congress Ministries and even fall of some of them in several states. Though her position in Parliament is for

the present safe and secure, it may anytime be endangered by groupism and future split in the party. That eventually can be met only if she succeeds in enlisting the support of both the CPI and the CPI(M), as she did in keeping herself in power since the Congress split till the general election in 1971. But unless favourable conditions for such support by the CPI(M) are in the mean time created, the support would not be forthcoming for the mere asking of it at the time of the crisis. So, the Central leadership of the ruling Congress are at work to create those conditions. Notwithstanding mutual bickerings for parliamentary politics and organisational interests, the anti-CPI(M) tirades on the part of the Central leadership of the Congress have been considerably toned down. Moreover, one cannot lose sight of the fact that though attacks by local Congress leaders are still there, there is, no doubt, that their intensity is waning. Secret meetings and meetings in public of the leaders of the two parties have gone up. The recent gesture of the Prime Minister to the CPI(M) leader, Shri Samar Mukherjee, the appeal by Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi, President of the All India Youth Congress to the Congressmen to shun anti-CPI(M) stand and to the CPI(M) to unitedly fight with the Congress against the hoarders, black-marketeers and anti-social elements, similar appeal by the West Bengal Chief Minister to the CPI(M), etc., are indications of the direction to which the wind is blowing. It is true that for exigency of parliamentary politics, election and petty party interests, anti-CPI and anti-Congress stance of the CPI(M) will still continue, particularly in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura but under the facade of this opposition would develop closeness among the CPI(M), the CPI and the

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CPI(M) Politics Damaging Cause of Revolution

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ruling Congress. We request the ranks and supporters of the CPI(M) to realize that whatever theoretical pretext the leadership of their party might have dished out to them for "unity in action" between the CPI(M) and the CPI is not true. The fact is that it has been influenced by the party's coming to some sort of understanding with the CPSU and the moves of Sm. Gandhi to bring the CPI(M) and the CPI closer to each other.

Those who are really interested in the revolution in our country should realise that the CPI(M) is not a revolutionary party of the working class. To harbour the illusion that it is a revo-

tionary party of the working class is to give more opportunity to this party to exhaust the revolutionary forces in our country to the detriment of preparation for revolution in India. Though being a petty bourgeois party, it cannot lead our people to power through revolution, it has still an important role to play in the present phase of democratic movement. And for that, unity with it in a political united front of the left and democratic parties on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme through greatest common measure of agreement among the parties and struggles unitedly with it against the common enemy of the people have to be developed. That is necessary.

Hunger March To Cuttack Ten Thousand People Participate

Cuttack, September 14—Organised jointly by the Sukinda Tashil Committees of the SUCI and the Krushak Khet Majuria Sangh, over tenthousand people from different areas of Sukinda Tashil affected by flood and drought staged an impressive hunger march to Cuttack today.

The people carrying banners of their various demands under the leadership of Comrades Mayadhar Nayak, Balaram Sahoo, Dwarika Nath Ratha and Binapani Das marched through the streets to the collectorate and presented a 14-point charter of demands to the ADM. The demands, among others, included permanent measures for protection against flood and drought to be adopted in a time-bound programme, remission of realisation of land revenue and loans from the poor people, adequate and timely payment of loans to the affected people, work for the unemployed and payment of unemployment relief till work is provided,

lowering of prices of essential commodities, etc. After the demonstration a meeting was held

Singhbhum District Conference of the DSO

Jamshedpur, September 17—The Singhbhum district conference of the DSO was held here today at the Milani Hall. From different schools and colleges in the district 311 students participated in the conference. The conference was conducted by a presidium consisting of Ashok Dutta, Pradip Ganguly, Naresh Talwar, Surendar Kaur, Sanghamitra DasGupta, T.C. Basak, S.D. Doga, S.D.

ROURKELA WORKERS DEMAND 20% BONUS

Rourkela, September 24—Under the leadership of the Co-ordination Committee of the different trade unions, the workers of the Rourkela steel plant have been conducting a movement demanding bonus at the rate of 20 per cent of their annual wages, in view of the plant making a profit of about Rs. 1.85 crores.

An attempt was made by the Rourkela Workers' Union affiliated to the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) to form the Co-ordination Committee with all the registered trade unions of the workers of the Rourkela steel plant to facilitate the conduction of a united movement of the steel workers on the issue of payment of bonus, an agreed issue. But strangely enough, in spite of their lip service to the necessity of united movements on the agreed demands of the workers, the

unions affiliated to the INTUC, AITUC, HMS, and the CITU did not favour the united movement and join Co-ordination Committee. Threats and intimidation of the authorities of the steel plant failed to make the workers accept bonus at the rate of 8.33 percent. The workers boycotted payment of bonus at this rate when the management attempted to force payment on and from September 18 last. The movement is still continuing.

SUC MEETING AT DHALBHUMGARH

Dhalbhumgarh, September 10—Under the auspices of the local Committee of the SUCI, a big meeting presided over by Com. Hiren Sarkar, a member of the Central Committee of the Party, was held here on August 31 last. Comrades Durga Das and Gopal Misra, members of the Singhbhum District Committee of the SUCI, in their speeches analysed the present Indian situation, point-out the increasing tendency of fascism in different spheres of life encouraged and introduced by the ruling Congress and its Governments, explained the necessity of developing a political united front of the left and democratic parties and forces on the basis of an agreed minimum common programme and of

united struggles against the common enemy of the people in the prevailing situation and urged upon the people and other parties to come forward to fulfil that task. Others who spoke in the meeting, included Coms. Chandramohan Singh, Nilu Mundy and Hembram.

DSO Demands Flood Relief Measures

Goalpara :—In the flood-stricken Goalpara subdivision of Assam, the DSO organised students' strike on 1st September last on the demand of remission of fees for the current year, supply of free food in the flood-affected areas and other economic demands. More than five thousand students went in procession to the subdivisional office of Lakshmipur and submitted a memorandum. Later on, a big meeting under the presidentship of Surat Jaman was held in front of the Lakshmipur School and Com. Majibar Rahaman and others addressed the gathering.

The successful strike at the call of the DSO created great enthusiasm among the students of the entire district.

Pandey and Gautam Biswas. Com Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, All India DSO, was the main speaker. Dulal Sanyal has been elected Secretary of the Singhbhum District Committee of the DSO for the current year.