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Under the banner of the Great November Revolution

[We publish in this November Revolution Special Issue of the Proletarian Era, the English rendering of a very important speech of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, delivered on the 57th anniversary of the Great November Revolution observed by the West Bengal State Committee of our Party at a mass meeting in Calcutta on 8th November, 1974. This speech in Bengali already came in circulation in a booklet form in August, this year. Despite all precautions some errors and inaccuracies of expressions might have taken place in translation for which the Editorial Board, Proletarian Era will remain responsible.]

Comrades,

You all know that the West Bengal State Committee of our party, the SUCI, has organised this mass meeting on the occasion of the 57th Anniversary of the Great November Revolution in Russia. You have also heard and perhaps all of you know that on this day, 57 years back, in the year 1917, only in that country in the world the first Socialist Revolution was successful. The workers, the peasants, the proletariat were able to capture state power by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and its party under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and its leader Comrade Lenin. This revolution which took place in Russia in 1917, to overthrow the bourgeoisie from state power, is significant in many respects.

In fact, before the Russian revolution, the common people throughout the world could not even imagine that the ignorant workers, peasants and the illiterate toilers could ever overthrow the ruling bourgeoisie or the most autocratic monarchical rule like that of

Tsardom from power. The February Revolution of 1917 which overthrew the Tsar or Tsardom from power marked, in reality, the success of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution of Russia. But although Tsardom was overthrown through the February Revolution, the state power went into the hands of the bourgeoisie, the Russian bourgeoisie—which was a partner in the united struggle against Tsardom. Thus, through the February Revolution the Bourgeois-Kerensky Government was no doubt established in Russia but the Soviets of workers and peasants, also existed side by side almost in the form of dual power. The February Revolution of Russia not only failed to do away with Feudalism-imperialism completely, but what is more, the ruling bourgeoisie was very much keen on maintaining a close understanding with and carrying the legacy of old feudalism and imperialism in the administrative set up. As a result, although the bourgeoisie captured state power overthrowing Tsardom through

revolution—if we analyse the phase of social revolution from economic aspect, we find that the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks of Bourgeois Democratic Revolution still remained unaccomplished.

This helped create a misconception, among many, who were known as Marxists in the revolutionary movement of Russia—the Socialist Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and even some within the Bolshevik party who virtually reduced Marxism to economic determinism. From an old understanding of Marxian theory—that is, the understanding that grew and developed following Marxism somewhat as a 'dogma' and which far from reflected the correct dialectical materialistic understanding of Marxian science—they started saying that since in the course of progress and development of the society the phases of social revolution cannot be skipped over, it is impossible to reach the stage of Socialist Revolution unless all the tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution were completed. They maintained that under such a situation the Soviets of workers and peasants should co-operate with the Kerensky Government with the object of fulfilling the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist tasks of Bourgeois Democratic Revolution on the one hand and organise people's movements on the other to mount pressure on the Kerensky Government to implement those programmes. So, it was through the path of parliamentary politics that the workers, peasants, the proletariat would have to move and through this process the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution would have to be completed first. Till these tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution were completed, it was futile to strive for Socialist Revolution. Such a notion strongly prevailed in Russia after the February Revolution.

Marxism is not Economic Determinism

But at that time the leadership of the Bolshevik Party was at the hands of the genuine Marxists. And a leader of Comrade

Lenin's stature was at the helm. He was not a Marxist of the brand who took recourse to quotation mongering and picked up at random and out of context a few lines from here and a few from there whether to suit his own contention or to dupe his adversaries. He perfectly realised that Marxism was not simply what were written in the Marxist classics. To him realisation of Marxism meant to acquire the scientific methodology and grasp the philosophical outlook with the help of which Marx, Engels and other Marxists came to those conclusions in the then conditions and to apply that in practice in the objective condition of the day on the basis of this essential understanding. Quotation mongering, citing analogies, and drawing of historical parallels—none of these has anything to do with the Marxist methodological approach, that is, none of these conforms to the dialectical method of analysis of Marxism. In the name of Marxism all these are vulgarisation of Marxism. Lenin did realise it perfectly. That is why he could courageously stand against and strike at the root of the mistaken ideas of Marxism so long prevalent among a section of Marxists through his famous treatise, *The April Theses*. He said and showed clearly to the communists all over the world that Marxism is not economic determinism; on it stands the valuable teaching of Lenin that politics always supersedes economy. Due to the uneven development of capitalism, the twists and turns, the zigzags and the ups and downs of the revolutionary movements—sometimes going ahead and sometimes retreating—in the midst of such tussles politics and political events are influencing economic situations so much that these have become actually the determinant. Not to understand the mutual relation between politics and economy in this way, rather to think that as the economic situation changes so changes the political situation, that is, political situation changes only as the reflection of the economic change—means to refuse to understand Marxism, to accept something else in the name of Marxism

The determination of the class character of the state is the fundamental question in ascertaining the strategy of revolution

On the basis of this analysis Lenin showed that with the overthrow of Nicholas Tsar from state power, the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution in Russia was attained. Politically, after the February Revolution there, in place of Nicholas Tsar, that is, in place of an old class, a new class, the Russian bourgeoisie, had assumed the state power. Lenin, of course, knew that from economic aspect many of the tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution remained unfulfilled till then in Russia. In the rural economy, despite infiltration of capitalism, feudalism still continued to exist as a powerful force. Economically, subjugation or subservience to imperialism and financial oligarchy of the rich European capitalist countries was very much marked till that time. But still then Lenin said that since politically the main question of revolution was connected with the question of seizure of state power—hence the moment the Russian bourgeoisie had captured the state power by overthrowing Nicholas Tsar, that is, a new class had assumed the state power in place of the old one—to *that extent and in that sense* the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution was completed and Russia had entered the stage of Socialist Revolution. So, under the circumstances the old concept of the strategy and tactics of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution was no longer valid. To stick to the old ideas would mean subjugation to the bourgeoisie, throwing the entire fruits of sacrifice of the workers and peasants at the feet of the bourgeois class and hence a gross betrayal of revolution. So, in place of the old slogan of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution he raised the slogan of Socialist Revolution and advanced a new concept on class-alliance and class alignment of forces. This important analysis as propounded in the April Theses was as yet unknown in the

Marxist movement. Hence, at that time, this question was widely debated among the Marxists.

Be that as it may, the essence or the fundamental point which comes out of it should be clearly understood. Those in our country who even at the slightest trace of feudalism in economy characterise our revolution as Bourgeois Democratic or National Democratic and say, how can we reach the stage of Socialist Revolution by a leap without completing the tasks of Bourgeois Democratic Revolution—November Revolution has left a valuable teaching for them. Those in our country, who are still thinking or pleading in a way, failing to understand the teaching of November Revolution in tune with the leaders of the Second International, the Mensheviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries and even the confused section of the Bolsheviks at the time of November Revolution are, in reality, practising economic determinism which is alien to Marxism-Leninism and dialectical materialism and which refuses to accept the dialectical relationship of politics and economy.

But I have already said that November Revolution in Russia was accomplished in a situation when feudalism had a strong sway over rural economy, imperialism was still quite strong and the capitalist economy could not free itself from the bondage of imperialism. But despite all this Lenin showed that after the assumption of state power by the Bourgeois-Kerensky Government, since the working class in alliance with the poor peasantry had to capture power by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and since the object of revolution was the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, *to that extent and in that sense* the revolution of Russia was Socialist Revolution politically. But as in the economic and social fields many of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks of Bourgeois Democratic Revolution still remained unaccomplished, those tasks had to be incorporated as the derivatives in the main programme of Socialist Revolution.

And these unaccomplished tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution will have to be accomplished under the leadership of the proletariat after seizure of power. Otherwise peasants would get no land, there would be no end of kulaks' domination, no complete abolition of feudalism, the basis for independent development of the economy would not be established, no peace restored to the country and there would be no solution to the food problem. For, in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution or in other words in the era when capitalism has turned out and out reactionary—it is not possible for the bourgeoisie unlike the bourgeoisie of the previous era, to accomplish all the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Therefore, even if the peasantry has to be completely freed economically from feudal exploitation—that too makes the seizure of power by the proletariat indispensable, the Socialist Revolution a must. So, although the principal strategic slogan and the concept of alignment of forces of the November Revolution i.e. the Socialist Revolution was the revolutionary alliance with the poor peasantry, but from the time of seizure of power in 1917 till 1919, the revolutionary proletariat strove to move in alliance, not to speak of the middle peasantry but with the *whole of the peasantry* in order to accomplish all those tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Then again, as the principal strategic slogan of the Socialist Revolution was alliance with the poor peasantry but as because the unaccomplished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution still remained as its derivative tasks, which after the seizure of power, the proletariat was to accomplish e.g. complete abolition of feudalism, redistribution of land, saving the poor and middle peasants from utter destitution, poverty and oppression and thus to proceed towards socialist reconstruction step by step, they had to continue with the slogan of alliance with the *whole of the peasantry*, for quite some time even after the November Revolution.

Without the working class leadership even the bourgeois democratic revolutions in this era, cannot reach their logical culmination

So, this concrete lesson that the November Revolution has brought to light is of immense significance. Since then the question of establishing the hegemony of the working class over the national liberation struggles throughout the world, which was so long the accepted position of the international communist movement, assumed further importance. While combating Plekhanov, Lenin gave this idea a theoretical foundation. Plekhanov contended that as because the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution was essentially a bourgeois revolution its leadership must be with the bourgeoisie. Again, when centring round the world proletarian revolution, the proletariat had already appeared in the arena, the working class should also share the leadership. That is to say, he raised the slogan of joint leadership. Lenin refuted this idea of Plekhanov and said: No. Either the hegemony of the proletariat or the hegemony of the bourgeoisie must be established over the revolution. If the hegemony of the bourgeoisie is established then it will mean a treachery to revolution and it cannot but end half way. On the contrary, if the hegemony of the working class is established, then and then only, these revolutions can be led to their successful culmination.

Lenin showed through this theory that first of all, in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the Bourgeois Democratic Revolutions in different countries had become in fact part of the world socialist or proletarian revolution.

Secondly, in the present era of moribund capitalism when world capitalism had entered the stage of imperialism and turned out and out reactionary then the bourgeoisie as a class, in all the countries, including those colonial countries which were in the phase of national freedom movement ceased to be revolutionary which it was as a class during the eighteenth

or nineteenth century. For, the bourgeoisie of these countries are nothing other than part and parcel of international reactionary bourgeoisie.

So, although the national bourgeoisie will remain, in many cases, in the anti-imperialist independent struggles, they will, at the same time, make compromises with imperialism-feudalism out of fear complex of revolution. And as a result, if the leadership of these freedom struggles remains in their hands, these freedom struggles or the national democratic movements cannot reach their logical culmination. As a result, this instability of the bourgeoisie in the national freedom movement i.e.—sometimes making compromises with imperialism and sometimes fighting it, sometimes raising slogans against feudalism and sometimes making compromises, now coming to the battle fields and again making dialogue through the backdoor, making compromises, sometimes remaining with the masses, supporting their radical slogans and sometimes coming in direct opposition to those—unless the working class succeeds to paralyse this instability of the bourgeoisie, a part of the international reactionary bourgeoisie, and establish its leadership, can give defeat to its double-faced policy—these national freedom struggles can not attain their logical culmination. Failing that, even if these freedom struggles in backward countries become successful under the leadership of the bourgeoisie then the bourgeois democratic revolutions or these freedom struggles will end in a half-baked and truncated way. Freedom will be achieved no doubt though the main object of freedom will not be attained. The country will not be totally free from the influence of imperialist capital, nor can feudalism be completely abolished to bring about revolutionary transformation of the agricultural economy. That is why, to lead these bourgeois democratic revolutions to their logical culmination in the present era, what are essential, first, they are to be considered as part of world socialist revolution and secondly, they must be led and

conducted under the hegemony of the working class. It is after the Russian revolution i.e. the November Socialist Revolution, that the revolutionaries of different countries could properly give recognition to it and draw its real significance which so long remained a mere theory. The vanguard of the freedom struggle all over the world or those with revolutionary socialist consciousness at once became alive to its real significance.

Now, compare the situation of our country today in the perspective of the then Russia. Judge it for yourself whether feudalism does at all exist in our economy today or in the manner and to the extent of domination as it prevailed in the economy of Russia after the bourgeoisie had come to power before the October Revolution or at the time Lenin brought his April Thesis. In my opinion, in the agrarian economy of our country there is nothing of feudalism in so far as economic relation or production relation is concerned. What remains therefore as feudal, if any, in our country is its hangover in the superstructure of the present day society alloyed with old habits, customs, morality and values. Those who understand the relationship between base and superstructure in this way that with the change of economic base its superstructure also changes and, therefore, the hangover of the superstructure of the old society cannot continue for some time in the superstructure of the new society—should better not enter into serious theoretical discussions. They should better not engage themselves in critical examination of theories. For, I hold, they are quite unfit for such serious theoretical discussions. They do not even understand what is the relationship between the base and the superstructure. To say that superstructure is built upon the base is all right—but does it mean that as the base is changed, the superstructure is changed, that is, there is an automatic, instantaneous and complete change of the superstructure alongwith each and every change of the base? A new superstructure that develops on a base carries within it the hangover of the old superstruc-

ture for quite sometime as a result of which serious contradiction arises within the new superstructure itself. Everything in the superstructure of the old society does not disappear with the change in the base, by one stroke. Any thinking contrary to this is unhistorical and I do not know whether such a queer conception about the relationship between the base and superstructure has any place in Marxism. Of course, I do not lay claim to be a 'Pundit' in Marxism. There are now many Marxist 'Pundits' in our country. And I do not think that I understand Marxism more than them! But from the little that I understand of Marxism, I firmly hold that what they say has nothing to do with the correct understanding of the relationship that exists between the base and superstructure.

The advocates of Peoples' Democratic Revolution in our country are in reality practising economic determinism

As I have said already that those in our country who hold that without the completion of all the tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution, we cannot, by a leap, enter into the phase of socialist revolution, are in fact, practising economic determinism. Let me here take up for discussion another related question. Since the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution was called national freedom struggle in the Second Congress of the Third International, any reference to such independence struggles as bourgeois democratic revolution is considered by some now as a deviation from Leninism and they would make it an issue for discussion. Those who think that to call this phase of social revolution as the phase of bourgeois democratic revolution in general is a complete deviation from Leninism and without taking into consideration the fundamental point at issue, would start a debate on such ticklish point, should know that in Stalin's 'Problems of Leninism' and later on in many writings of Mao-Tse-tung—not his writings of recent times but his writings of that period when

they too considered Mao-Tse-tung as a Marxist—this phase of social revolution has been referred to as the phase of bourgeois democratic revolution, time and again. It was recommended in the Second Congress of the Third International that the national independence struggles should not be termed as bourgeois democratic revolution but should better be termed as the national independence struggle, instead, because of the reason that these struggles differed from the old bourgeois revolution in certain respects. For the bourgeoisie in that era was revolutionary, it is no more so. In this era, revolution will suffer if the hegemony of the bourgeoisie is established over the national independence struggles and that is why the necessity of establishing the hegemony of the working class over these movements was emphasised. Taking note of these characteristics of the present era it was recommended at the Second Congress of the Third International that these national independence struggles should be freed from the influence of the bourgeoisie. But in any discussion relating to the determination of the stage of revolution everybody uses the terms, bourgeois democratic revolution or socialist revolution. This does not make a heaven and hell difference of the whole thing. To call the national independence struggle as bourgeois democratic revolution does not even implicitly attribute any progressive role to the bourgeoisie—at least it is not called a bourgeois democratic revolution on that very assumption.

In this regard, I would call your attention to an important observation of the Chinese Communist Party. The CPC is saying that when one fights against a particular trend, a particular deviation, another trend, another deviation may sometime lie hidden within the struggle itself. This has been for long, in the Marxist movement. Take for instance, the Second Congress of the Third International sought to remove a confusion—but see the result!

It is known to all that from social, economic

and political aspects, the entire bourgeois democratic revolution constitutes a single phase in terms of social revolution. Now suppose, the bourgeois democratic revolution proceeds to some extent under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. Then it is found not proceeding a step further and that without the leadership of the working class it is impossible to complete the incomplete phase or remaining part of the bourgeois democratic revolution or even to successfully pursue the revolutionary programmes of that phase in any way. Then it is clear that the strategy and tactics to be adopted by the working class in completing the remaining part of the bourgeois democratic revolution under its leadership must be different from the strategy and tactics followed by the bourgeoisie in providing leadership to the earlier part of the bourgeois democratic revolution. But from the perspective of the phase of social revolution the entire period belongs to a single phase—the phase of bourgeois democratic revolution. And we find that a section of Marxists is making a mess of the whole thing. They have miserably failed to grasp the point from Marxist dialectical methodology. They contend, how can the stage of revolution be skipped over! And as it cannot be skipped over, so they add one more stage of revolution in between. For them, therefore, the stages of revolution are no longer the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution and the Socialist Revolution only. There is yet another stage of revolution in between the two—which they name as the Peoples' Democratic Revolution. This misconception stems from two things.

First, they have failed to correctly grasp the connotation and the political essence of the term of 'national democratic revolution'. They have failed to grasp precisely, in what context, under what circumstances and with what object Lenin used this term. What was the necessity for giving this expression and what was its limit? If anybody fails to grasp these correctly then a muddle is inevitable and that is what has happened with them. The other reason for this muddle is that they

are under the influence of economic determinism for which they contend that unless the tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution are completed the society can by no means reach the stage of Socialist Revolution. They think that with the attainment of freedom, one phase of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution has come to an end—overthrowing the old class, be it the foreign imperialism or monarchy—and a national independent state has been established. The bourgeoisie, according to them, subject to variation from country to country, have gone against the revolution either as a whole or partially. So, the bourgeoisie as a class, no longer remains an ally of revolution and even if an ally somewhere, is a vacillating ally, no doubt, and there is no guarantee whether they will participate in the revolution. But from economic aspect the stage continues to remain at the stage of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution because, the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution and those of industrial revolution have not yet been completed. In such a concrete situation what will be the stage of revolution? They have, for them, found out a solution of their own; they say, that this revolution is an 'intermediary' between the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution and the Socialist Revolution! This is the source from which their confusion of Peoples' Democratic Revolution is actually generated. That is, they have completely failed to grasp what is the real significance of Lenin's observation that 'politics supersedes economy'. They have failed to understand that the fundamental question of every revolution is the question of seizure of state power. Stalin put it more lucidly: Which class or classes are to be overthrown from the state power by which class in alliance with which other classes—such is the fundamental question of every revolution.

Otherwise, how is it, as is known to every student of history that when Lenin was drafting his April Thesis for the November Socialist Revolution, all the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks were not completed in

Russia? If anybody does not know it or if his knowledge is merely confined to certain points only which Stalin was referring to in his book, 'Problems of Leninism', while answering to certain confusions of others and even in that case, if they fail to realise the underlying meaning of those answers, that is to say—what were the specific answers of Stalin against which of the specific confusions,—where lay the confusion, why the confusion, centring round which concrete historic event was such confusion and how Stalin has answered to all this—if they fail to grasp precisely all this, they will not understand as to why the November Revolution was a socialist revolution even though many of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks remained unaccomplished after the February revolution in Russia. As because these anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks remained unaccomplished before the November Socialist Revolution, as because the November Revolution declared the programme for their completion and raised slogans on them, many confused it just as the revolution to accomplish the unaccomplished tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution. Stalin replied to them—no, the November Revolution was surely a Socialist Revolution *to that extent and in so far as* the fundamental political question was concerned, that is to say, it was a revolution for overthrowing the bourgeoisie, and capture of state power by the proletariat. And the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution that still remained unaccomplished in the economic field will have to be incorporated as the derivative tasks or byproducts within the main programme of Socialist Revolution after the seizure of power by the proletariat. Till these tasks were completed, the Bolshevik Party had to raise these demands of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution, rally the support of *the whole of the peasantry* and had to continue this, not only before and during the November Revolution or immediately after it but even after the Constituent Assembly was dissolved in 1919.

So, this is an important aspect of the lessons of the November Revolution to the workers, peasants and youths of our country, who are fighting for their emancipation. The workers want to fight, the peasants, the youths they too want to fight but against whom is their fight? The question of determining the tactics of struggle, as to who is the enemy and who is the ally, all this is intimately connected with the fundamental question of the strategy of revolution. If they consider that our revolution is People's Democratic then whatever slogans they may raise from platform speeches, however "militant" struggles, they may conduct, it is sure that from the very class alignment of their People's Democratic Revolution, they will develop a sympathy for and unity with the rich peasants in the villages. Consequently, the peasant's movements, they conduct, will inevitably come under the firm grip and influence of the rich peasants. To assume Indian revolution to be as People's Democratic will lead them either to hobnob with the rich peasants this way or that way or to make adventure. This will not serve any purpose. Rather by this, the class struggle of the poor and landless peasants and the agricultural labourers against the rich peasants who are the mainstay of capitalism in the rural economy, will be weakened and the interests of the poor and landless peasants and the agricultural labourers will be sacrificed at the feet of the rich peasants. On the otherhand, based on their fanciful theory of People's Democratic Revolution, on the assumed existence of progressive national bourgeoisie somewhere, they will be in search of them among the social high-ups who are, in fact, the pillars of capitalism and by this, the party and its leaders will invariably develop and maintain close tie with them. May be, behind the screen but happen it must. Outwardly, whatever may be the sacrifices of the rank and file members for the sake of revolution, this is bound to happen with their leaders inside the party which may not be in the

know of the rank and file members who make such sacrifices.

For, in this People's Democratic Revolution the progressive role of the national bourgeoisie is recognised. The advocates of Peoples' Democratic Revolution do not intend to overthrow the bourgeoisie from state power. They aim at overthrowing those whom they call the monopoly bourgeoisie. I have made exhaustive discussions elsewhere on this point many times before and have shown that the rule of monopoly capitalism is nothing other than the rule of capitalism and that the hegemony of the monopoly bourgeoisie is the hegemony of the bourgeoisie as a class. Without the rule of capitalism monopoly capital cannot wield state power. From any knowledge of Marxism, nobody can come to a conclusion contrary to this—as for myself with whatever little I understand Marxism, it is not possible for me to hold any other view. May be, there are theoreticians to whom this is comprehensible but this is simply absurd. This is beyond my comprehension. For, monopoly capitalism indicates a definite or particular stage of capitalism—a higher stage, when capitalism develops to the stage of monopoly rule of the bourgeoisie which means rule of monopoly capital. To say that there is domination of monopoly capital and it is to be overthrown but to call the national bourgeoisie at the same time, an ally of revolution means, in reality, denial of the existence of the bourgeois state itself and refusal of the fundamental task of over-

throwing the bourgeoisie through revolution from the state power.

Ours is a Capitalist State

Judging from all aspects you can see for yourself that the state structure in our country is capitalist in character. Slogans are being raised for introducing wholesale state trading in food grains, in our country. The ruling party is bringing measures to introduce wholesale state trading in food grains—whether they are successful or not is altogether different. Levy is being imposed on food grains. The agricultural commodities have been transformed into the commodities of the national capitalist market and everything relating to this is governed by the laws of national capitalist market. It is now being debated as how to combat the impact of inflation on the agrarian economy. Taking all this into consideration if you examine then you will find that our agrarian economy is entirely guided by the capitalist relation of production.*

Even a common man can easily understand that an industrial worker produces on the basis of capitalist relation of production. But what are the characteristic features by which we understand that capitalism has infiltrated in agrarian economy? Lenin has laid down clear-cut guideline in this regard. He has clearly shown that in determining the character of agricultural economy, it is not at all relevant whether the agricultural economy is backward or advanced or whether the

* Our great departed leader **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, in his address as the chief guest at the delegate session of Twelfth Conference of Paschim Banga Krishak-O-Khetmajoor Federation, held at Suri in the district of Birbhum in March 1970, had analysed the capitalist character of the agricultural economy of India from various angles. In his detailed discussion he had shown that "Concentration of major portion of land of our country in the hands of a few, gradual transformation of the major sections of the rural population into proletariat and semi-proletariat, transformation of land into the means for investment of capital, owner-wage earner relationship governing agricultural production and above all transformation of agricultural products into the commodities of the national capitalist market—all this conclusively prove that the agricultural economy of India is out and out capitalist in character". This speech was later published in the form of a booklet, captioned, "Chasi Andolon Prosange" (On Peasant movement).

cultivation is made with the help of machinery or by the age-old, out-moded method. Further, whether the cultivation is done in small holding of land or in big farming—this too cannot be a relevant point in determining the character of agricultural economy—whether it is feudal or capitalist or socialist. ** Then what are the criteria for determining the character of an agricultural economy? Lenin has said that it is to be determined by the nature of trade and commerce of the agricultural commodities. That is, what has become the character of agricultural produce in the villages? What is the nature of trade and commerce of this produce? These factors mainly determine the character of agricultural economy—whether feudal or capitalist or even socialist.

Why our agricultural economy which is a capitalist one and not feudal, is not mechanised' is a separate question. This question is related to the crisis of market of capitalism, is linked up with the various factors that stand in the way of uninterrupted industrial development and has relevance to the acute unemployment problem which is seriously endangering the state. I understand that some are advancing many queer arguments in this regard. I have heard that some have even gone to that extent as to argue that as because the bourgeoisie wants to perpetuate the unemployment problem, that is to say, as it is written in the Marxian classics, that the bourgeoisie creates and sustains reserve army of unemployed to have a better bargain with the workers, so our argument that the Indian bourgeoisie, at this historical phase, is not in favour of mechanising agriculture thoroughly as it would create crores of unemployed in the country-side threatening the existence of the state—according to them, tantamounts to praising the bourgeoisie as if they do not want to create unemployed! It is simply preposterous! I would earnestly appeal to those who are dabbling in this manner, and muddling these

questions, better not to enter into such serious questions, so prematurely. They should know, they should understand a little more. It is not that simple! The bourgeoisie wants to perpetuate the unemployment problem in order to have a better bargain—simply knowing this we cannot grasp the whole truth. Did not Hitler resolve the unemployment problem, even though temporarily, in Germany, by militarising the economy? History is replete with many such instances. However, that is not my subject of discussion here. Besides, here the problem is totally different. It is one thing to say that the capitalists will definitely perpetuate the unemployment problem because this is the general law of capitalist economy. But it is entirely a different thing to hold that when in the urban areas the burden of unemployment has already assumed such a gigantic proportion that the ruling class is desperately trying to grapple with it—it will go in for modernisation and mechanisation of agricultural economy knowing fully well that it is sure to create crores of additional unemployment in the country-side at one stroke and further intensify the pressure on the state! It is such a risk which the bourgeoisie can ill-afford to invite. From this apprehension they are obstructing modernisation and mechanisation of agriculture and instead, are resorting to all antiquated methods and palliatives like the "green revolution" etc. They are afraid of it very much and so are in no way inclined to modernisation and mechanisation of agriculture although there is so much scarcity of agricultural produce. Do all these mean that the bourgeoisie do not want to perpetuate unemployment problem? Contrarily, does it mean that as because the bourgeoisie want to perpetuate the unemployment problem, it will by its own initiative, create, at one stroke, crores of unemployed in the country-side in addition to the already alarming unemployment problem in the city, close their factories

** The Agrarian Question in Russia towards the close of the Nineteenth Century—Lenin.

and thereby intensify the crisis so much so that it will hasten the process of revolution—simply because the bourgeoisie wants to perpetuate the unemployment problem? Those who prattle like this, why do they at all enter into serious political discussion—I really fail to understand! Are they at all competent to enter into discussions and debates on these subjects? Such ‘irrefutable’ (!) Marxist arguments are being trotted out, now-a-days, I hear! I would rather request them to carry on such ‘profound’ discourses and try to prove that we understand not a whit of Marxism! It will do us no harm. We have full faith on the people. They have the power of reasoning. They will judge, they will examine, they will ponder over and ultimately will grasp the truth. But I must say that all these are due to their failure to correctly grasp the lessons of the November Revolution.

**Movements must have before them
correct base political line**

November Socialist Revolution provides us with many lessons, all of which cannot be covered in a single discussion. Much confusion prevails over the fundamental political question in our country. We are moving in a vicious circle, we are trying to find the way out. If we are to come out of the impasse to get the correct path then we are to grasp this fundamental lesson of the November Revolution. We are to understand that unless the base political line before the movement is correctly determined then like the innumerable struggles in the past, in future too, the struggles for emancipation of the oppressed people, will time and again, inevitably end in fiasco. Those who say that there is no revolutionary force in our country, nor there is revolutionary will and fervour among the people, the youths lack fighting spirit, lack the spirit to sacrifice their life, the workers-peasants lag behind in fighting zeal and in the spirit to give away everything for the struggle, in fact, deny history. I say—this is not true. The peasants and workers, the toilers, countless students

and youths of middle-class families have, plunged themselves in movements, time and again. “Fight the exploiters—we are to bring about revolution”—whenever anybody at an opportune moment and with minimum organisation raised this slogan, we saw how the people responded and swept the country with waves of movement. “We want revolution”—simply this passion, this dream alone spurred the youths to get involved in struggles and lay their life, again and again. What is a revolution—where will it take place—how will it come—under whose leadership will it come—what will be its correct line—hardly did they give their thought to such concrete questions.

So, that our youths are usually opposed to struggle—that the workers and peasants of our country have a natural aversion to it—they have not the fighting mettle and life-dedicating spirit for revolution like the workers peasants and youths of Russia, China and Vietnam—that our youths, peasants and workers are for revolution only if somebody can bring it about to them by fluke, otherwise, by nature, they are docile and are always for avoiding all these strifes and strains—all these are not true. The real problem is elsewhere. They had not before them the correct path, the correct base political line—here is the real problem. And if the path is not correctly laid, if there is no correct line of thinking in determining the tactics of movement—its object and goal, if the strategy of revolution is not correctly determined, that is to say, if the base political line and the very object of movement is not correct then whatever be the struggling zeal and sacrificing spirit of the people in the fight, their all sacrifice will go to waste. But does it go to waste for that moment alone? Is it not also true that this failure envelops the minds of those taking part in the struggle with despair and despondency? Doubts about movement and struggle creep in their mind. “Here, we fought, we gave our life, we suffered so much but what did we achieve”—this is what haunts their mind. They start questioning

the political cadres of the leftist parties : "We supported the movement. We gave our life but what is the result ? In our country—we have no hope. Oh, we have seen much of you—the political parties. You are all the same. None of you, of these parties can do anything good." These feeling of despair overcasts the minds of the people as an aftermath of the failure of a movement.

From this bitter experience the people very often confuse even the simple question—a trend which very much prevails now. I would like to elaborate a bit on this point. Let us assume as they say, that none of us, the political parties, can do anything good. So what ? Have you not anything to do ? Even if you reject all of us will that justify the way you are leading your life ? Can you continue that way ? Can it satisfy your hunger ? Prices are going up, no security of service, eviction from land continuing, unemployment ever on the increase, families disintegrating, no peace in the families, love, affection fellow-feeling are all drying out, sons and daughters going wayward before your very eyes, you yourselves are getting degraded and that too within your knowledge—then will you allow all this to go on ? No, certainly this cannot continue for long. So, what happens ? At times, manhood in them breaks its slumber. Even if the cause of humanity does not appeal them, they can ill-afford to ignore the dire necessities of their bare existence. Because, hunger is a stern reality. Without consciousness, without a high ethical-moral tone, one may not respond to the call of manhood. But unconcerned certainly he cannot be to his hunger. So, even after the failure, they are to stand up again. But when they rise, they again react like a mad man or a child—full of impatience and incoherence. This happens because where is the necessary network of organisation before the movements ? Where is the correct political leadership ? Thus at an interval of five or seven, eight or ten years comes a wave of movement in the country. And after testing defeat on each struggle people succumb to

despair. A bleak prospect looms large on them. Yet these defeated people, after a spell, become restive again and cry for a change. So, struggle they need and they can hardly avoid being involved in struggle. Today or two years after, if not after two years, five years hence, they are to join. When they will join in struggle, they will again show the same infantile reaction, will be indiscreet—pick any path and plunge themselves into fight chanting any slogan and believing that they are treading the path of revolution and will lay their life even. They will meet defeat again. Again they will be misled. So, we are to bring to the fore of every movement, this fundamental teaching of the November Socialist Revolution.

The Chinese Communist Party at their Tenth Congress, has upheld this lesson of November Revolution in their own way, in a lucid manner. They have said that if the ideology and the base political line are incorrect then even if somebody is in possession of enormous power and influence, ultimately he will lose them all. The term 'ideology' covers a wide range. The morals and principles, ethics and culture and all the related questions of a movement—are covered by the term 'ideology'. There is a trend in the movements of our country—we will fight, raise slogans but we need no restraint in our utterances, we need have no sense of ethics and culture, no business with sobriety, need have no concern for gentle and decent behaviours with others—this trend is doing immense harm to the cause of movement. Those who reflect this trend within the movement think that they have the right to talk in any manner of their choice, have the right to insult the elderly people by abusive words and there's nothing wrong in gesticulating and obscene swinging of bodies while raising slogans in the streets—but revolution is sure to come simply because the slogans they are raising are for revolution. But they would do well to remember that this does not happen. This can never happen. As because people are

starving they may be attracted to movement by slogans but they will get scared at the obscene gesticulations and the vulgar remarks. People shy away at their utter selfishness. As a result, they become sceptic and suspicious about the very object of movement.

One more essential point we are to bear in mind in this connection that revolution cannot succeed by the mere organisational strength of a party. For the success of revolution, not only an iron-strong organisation of lakhs and lakhs of people is needed, but what is more, the vast section of the population remaining outside the orbit of organisation must be made at least a passive supporter of the revolution. Even if not passive supporter, they should at least be benevolently neutral to revolution and will not go against the revolution in any case. This is the minimum condition essential for the success of a revolution. Say, for instance, from a liberal estimate, if we accept that five lakhs of people is the combined strength of organisations of all the parties standing for revolution, even then it is an insignificant minority compared with the total population of India. If therefore, we are not serious and are totally unconcerned about the sense of moral and ethical values, the concept of sobriety, attachment to characters, sense of civility and decency of this vast multitude of our people then we will simply be rootless.

By ideology we do not mean, therefore, some jargons borrowed from outside and some high-sounding words. Sense of ethical values and culture, morals and principles of movement, sobriety and decency of character—ideology connotes all this. Those who take part in the movement, those who lead the movement, they are all in and around the masses. Just as a rumour spreads not with the aid of newspapers but through gossips and whispers, say from Calcutta to the remotest village of Bankura, so also the impressions that grows from the mode of life of the leaders and their conducts and behaviours reach millions. Naturally, if they think that

people are not going to bother about their personal life and therefore they are free to lead their life to their liking and that revolution will come only from pulpit speeches about revolution, they would do well to remember that it is not that simple. Nowhere did revolution come in this way. The Chinese Communist Party once again reiterated this truth. They have reminded that if the ideology is wrong, if the base political line is wrong then even if you have strength now it will not last long. You cannot bring about revolution by strength alone but will do great disservice, instead. They have cited the concrete instance of Lin-piao who usurped the state power, the power of the party and the military—all this was in his grip, all this he wanted to have but he could not retain anything. Because, the base political line, the ideology, the morals and principles, the cultural-ethical values, the concept of life—all those he stood for, were incorrect. So I say, falsehood cannot reign for long. Exploiting the low level of consciousness of the masses, blunting their logical bent of mind, it may rule for sometime but never for all the time. From all these concrete instances we are to take serious lesson.

Change of this situation is inevitable

Before I conclude my speech on the November Socialist Revolution, I would like to summarise points, already dealt with, for the benefit of the peasants-workers-middle class people who have assembled here. I would like to remind you that however difficult may be the situation today, you should not lose your heart. You are to bear in mind always the truth which was so long clear only to the intelligent people, the dialectical-materialists and the devotees of science. Common people although knew it but had their doubts as to whether the starving, ignorant and the illiterate masses could be organised to give birth to an alternative political power; whether it could be done or was it at all possible and could this alternative power of the exploited masses be made

such an invincible force as to smash to pieces the deadweight of the repressive bourgeois state organ which has at its command so much power, so much might of the military, the power of capital? The November Revolution, for the first time in the history, proved to the world, not in theory alone, but by concrete instance that—yes, it was possible. The November Revolution, at the same time, provided clear answer to another question about which too, people had their doubts. People used to think that it was with the help of army of clerks and bureaucrats—the servitors of vested interest that the administration would have to be run even after the revolution—can they be spared at all! As agents, it is they who run the whole show against the people on behalf of the reactionaries. If this be the fact then how can the proletariat bring about change even if they can seize state power? Lenin gave the answer—no, there is a lot of difference between the two situations. He said: when the state power will really be at the hands of the proletariat—not the formal power, not a power through ballots, not a fake power, but where condition has been created, where the peasant's committees, the workers' committees, the Soviets or revolutionary councils, after seizure of state power are actually exercising control from the lowest level to the centre and the real revolutionary party of the proletariat is maintaining both coordination and centralism of these bodies—that is to say, when the state power is actually at the hands of the proletariat as a class, the proletariat can easily take appropriate steps against those bureaucrats who will have the cheek to defy the authority or who will fail to discharge their duties in accordance with the principles and ideology of the proletariat.

Those who, from their own selfish ends, imparts blindness in the party ranks, even if our party does the same, if it tells its workers not to read anything outside the party literature, not to engage in debates and discussions with others, not to know other's view-points—in that case, despite all the lofty principles

that our Party advocates, it will mean, in reality, that under whatever pretext, we too are blunting the logical bent of mind of the society. The political workers are called the 'General staff' of the revolutionary masses, their most advanced and vanguard detachment. At least they are supposed to possess higher standard of political consciousness than that of the masses. Then what happens if these political workers even lose their logical bent of mind? It is one thing if they discard other's view-points after giving them patient hearing and making careful examination. But what happens if they develop a bent of mind of not reading, of not knowing other's view-points? It generates blindness, narrow-mindedness, stages after stages, layer after layer within the society. Then all the obscure ideas get an easy access in the society. And once the logical bent of mind is absent, taking advantage of this, the social highups having the power of capital and state-backing at their disposal, bribe the youth to their fold. What follows then, they pamper unethical means of livelihood among the youth and the people at large to pave the ground for fascism. So, anybody indulging in blindness or fanaticism, be it on the pretext of party discipline or any other pretext, a party doing this, even if it is our party—it should be charged with committing a heinous crime against the society. What to speak of giving leadership to mass movement or revolution, it should stand accused of criminal charge on the bar of mass movement. That is why it is a common experience that the revolutionaries—the Marxists of any country did never discourage polemical discussions and ideological struggles. On the contrary, they have given all encouragement to all this even within the united mass movement. What was their only concern was to see that these debates and ideological struggles should not be conducted in such a way as to disrupt the unity of the struggle, cause no obstacle to united struggle against the main or common enemy and are not reduced to the level of physical assaults to suppress others. These

and these alone are to be taken care of and guarded against in the conduction of ideological struggle. But encouragement to ideological struggle within the united mass movement is an imperative necessity. But this is exactly what is being obstructed in our country.

Here we must remember another point, they are mercenaries—they serve their master in exchange of money. So, when the worker-peasant will be their real master and be in the authority, most of these educated sections—the clerks and the bureaucrats as they do now by licking the boots of the bourgeoisie, will obey the worker-peasant, will accept their authority for money, for getting service, for retaining their service. If they dare defy, they will be removed and it will not at all be impossible then to find out efficient people from within the worker-peasants to run the administration. And it was proved by the November revolution. The illiterate workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party seized the power and after it even succeeded to bring a section of the bureaucracy under their control. This became possible because their revolution was not like the revolution through ballot, through only meetings and processions, through waving sticks or throwing a few brickbats. They succeeded in their revolution through a great creative effort, through the emergence of an alternative political power of the people. What do we mean by the emergence of alternative political power of the people? We mean, formation of a network of the workers' and peasants' committees—these committees being the instruments in leading and conducting their revolutionary struggles through which they, though not trained in schools and colleges, will acquire and develop the organising capability and talent, that is to say—the talent and capability to keep in full view and tackle very many problems and complexities of organisation, thus developing in stages from higher to lower, throughout the country. So, it is through the revolutionary struggles that the political power of the people develop, and this

political power of the people as an alternative can take the sole responsibility of the entire administration. The conception that the workers and peasants cannot run the state administration—this too was proved wrong by the November Revolution. Taking lessons from and being inspired by the November Revolution, the workers and peasants of Europe, China, Vietnam etc. came forward to establish their own state in their respective countries.

While recalling the lessons of November Revolution what you are to remember is that a change in the present situation is sure to come. As because the bourgeoisie are powerful, as because they have in their hands the mighty state power, they will remain like mill-stone round our neck and reign for ever—had it been so, it would have been no doubt good for the bourgeoisie, such a thought might have given them pleasure—but this never happens. But how soon will come the change—it all depends upon you. How soon will come the revolution, depends on how much time you will require to develop people's alternative political power in the concrete forms of revolutionary councils and peoples' committees like the Soviets through unitedly conducting movements, organised on the correct base political line and ideology and under the leadership of the real revolutionary party of the proletariat. But remember, you can never achieve revolution through deception, through shouting of slogans, through tricks in the ballot boxes. You can achieve revolution only when you have been able to give birth to people's own political power on the basis of correct base political line and ideology and under the leadership of a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat. Electoral battles that you fight, the democratic movements on economic demands that you conduct—if you can view and conduct all these struggles conducive to your fundamental revolutionary struggles, then and then only, these will be purposive. Other than this, all these are meaningless. If you can grasp this, you are also to understand that the mass

movements that you develop, have their ups and downs, advancement and retreat, success as also defeats and setbacks—because there are twists and turns in between. But the fundamental point is this—whether you have been able to determine and uphold before these mass movements, the correct ideology and principles, the correct political line, the correct stage of revolution i.e. whether you have correctly determined that the main political task of this revolution is to overthrow the bourgeoisie that is now in state power in place of the imperialists.

India is in the stage of Socialist Revolution

Let us not enter into fruitless discussions and hair-splitting arguments as to where and to what extent feudalism exists in our country. I have shown before that feudal economic relation or relation of production no more exists in our country, what remains as its remnant is in the form of habits, customs, morals and ethics intermingled in the superstructure of the present day society. Despite all this, even if we are to accept for argument's sake that feudal land relation still remains in the rural economy as some are contending, then also, is it not a fact that the Indian state controlled and guided by the bourgeoisie is actually consolidating capitalism, to the extent possible, in the perspective of acute crisis in world capitalist market and in the context of its impact on the national economy of our country? If it is so, then we must admit that the Indian state is undoubtedly a capitalist state and here the main political programme of revolution is the seizure of power by the proletariat overthrowing the ruling bourgeoisie from state power that is to say, the Indian revolution is anti-capitalist Socialist Revolution.

Let me remind you, in this connection, of an important observation of Lenin. Once, Rosa Luxemburg, entered into a debate, on the question of determining the character of a national state, with Kautsky—Kautsky the 1, did not turn a renegade, yet. It was Rosa's

contention that the countries which were politically independent but economically fully dependent on the imperialist countries and were under the economic subjugation of foreign finance capital could not be called independent bourgeois state or national state and the state of those countries, therefore could not be called bourgeois states. Kautsky pointed out—no, the character of these states was independent national bourgeois state. Rosa contended on the basis of her above conception—no, independence of these states was only nominal; so, the people of these countries would have to direct their main struggle against imperialism and collaborating bourgeoisie of those countries just as the advocates of People's Democratic Revolution, in our country are pleading today. In reply Lenin, supporting Kautsky said, that those who think that because of their economic dependence on imperialism, these states are not independent national bourgeois states have completely missed to grasp the real significance of this present epoch of imperialism. They have completely failed to realise that it was quite natural in the present epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. Due to the law of uneven development of capitalism, a few capitalist countries have much advanced and are acting as leaders of the capitalist world—the leading imperialist countries—on which the bourgeoisie of the newly independent countries are bound to be economically dependent. He also pointed out that not only the small Balkan states but the mighty Tsarist Russia against which the imperialist countries had to be at war, had in her economy the domination of the rich European Countries. Capitalism that developed there had on it the strong domination of the West European capitalism. But for this, nobody considered the Tsarist Russia a colony of the imperialists, rather she herself had introduced a kind of imperialism. Apart from this even America was a colony of Europe, from the point of view of economic dependence, till the close of the nineteenth century. Does this prove that through the

American war of Independence, no independent national state was founded—no capitalist state established? Because of their economic dependence on imperialist capital, those who do not accept that the independent states are also national states, Lenin calls them mistaken.*

Even those who do not accept Lenin's authority will have to answer a question I put before them. Let them explain as to how America which till the close of the nineteenth century was economically dependent on Europe has practically made all the bourgeois countries of Europe, economically as its colonies? Did any other revolution take place in America, after the war of Independence? Had it not been an independent national state, a bourgeois state since the "War of Independence" how then was it possible? So, in determining the stage of revolution or the character of the stage of revolution or the character of the state whether in the economy there is domination of imperialist capital or of feudalism—are all this of that much importance?

This is nothing other than to be distracted by unnecessary details without grasping the essence of the matter. Say, for instance, if somebody while trying to determine the stage of revolution, spends page after page to give a vivid description of the distress of the people—about scarcity of rice and cereals, how the peasants are getting evicted from their lands, how much land the poor peasants have under their possession, what is the position in Bihar, why the labourers are not getting fair wages, why people are in starvation,—so on and so forth and then solemnly proclaim that in order to fight all this we are to bring about revolution—this I mean getting entangled in unnecessary details without getting at the substance. The fundamental question of every revolution is to determine the class character of the state.

I would like to draw the attention of those to another point who are confusing the fundamental question of determining the class

character of the state by getting entangled with such unnecessary details as to what extent there is domination of feudalism and imperial capital on our economy. Everybody knows that even after the establishment of the bourgeois Kerensky Government through the February Revolution in Russia, the Ministry of Defence was at the hands of a member of the Tsar family. Moreover, it should also be known to those having the ABC knowledge of history that till then, there was strong domination of feudalism in Russia. These feudal lords who had political alignment with the Cadets came to clashes with the Bolsheviks although, till the November Revolution. Did Lenin say, for this, in his April Thesis while determining the character of the state that it was a bourgeois-Tsarist state, headed by the big bourgeoisie? Why did he not say so? Because of the simple reason that it was the bourgeoisie which was in the state power. And it was this bourgeoisie that made compromises with feudalism. Before the February revolution, it was just the reverse. The feudal lords, the monarchs were then in the state power and they came in confrontation or made alliance with the bourgeoisie as per their need. But now after the February revolution, the bourgeoisie was in the state power. They were at times striking feudalism and on occasions, out of fear-complex of revolution were coming in close alliance with it. But whatever the bourgeoisie was doing, was doing as the ruling class from the position of state power. Lenin made no mistake on these points. That is why Lenin never characterised the then state of Russia as a bourgeois-Tsarist state headed by the big bourgeoisie. Rather, it is he who pointed out that the state power in Russia, after the February Revolution had passed on from the old class, i.e. Nicholas Tsar to a new class, the Russian bourgeoisie. What do we find therefore? It is evident, therefore, that in determining the stage of revolution the fundamental question is at the hands of which class is the state power.

*The Right of Nations to Self-Determination—Lenin.

Whether a state is an independent national bourgeois state and how are we to determine this, answering Rosa Luxemburg on this point, Lenin has put the matter straight by showing that in the perspective of the prevailing international situation or to be specific, in the background of crisis in the world capitalist market and its impact on the national economy, if the state strives for the freest, widest and speediest development of capitalism—in my opinion it would better be said, relatively freest, widest and speediest development of capitalism—then the character of that state must be a capitalist one.*

If we judge from this standpoint then in India, after its attainment of independence and the bourgeoisie coming to the state power, even if we do not understand well the character of agricultural production and the land relation as they obtain at present but understand this much that the Indian state is trying to consolidate Indian capitalism it would be obvious then that this is an independent national state. And in the terminology of Marxism-Leninism, a national state does not mean a semi-colonial, semi-feudal state but means a bourgeois national state. And a bourgeois national state, according to Lenin, is nothing other than a capitalist state. So, the revolution to smash that capitalist state machine is the revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie from state power *and to that extent and in that sense* the Indian revolution is a Socialist Revolution. Under whatever pretext, under whatever cover of theory, those who are bypassing this fundamental question, are, in fact, diverting the attention of the people to unnecessary details and are creating confusion on the base political line of Indian revolution. Because of this, even when there will be mounting surge of revolutionary movements of the people, they will be wasting their energies by directing their fight against the imaginary enemies. Or in the reverse, as a reaction, they will seek shelter and security

in safe parliamentary politics. Nothing can save them from either of those eventualities. Either going to the safe and secured shelter of parliamentary politics, joining in the bandwagon of revisionism-reformism or in the reverse, wasting the revolutionary fervour through adventure.

Ideological struggle is an essential prerequisite of united mass movement

If the base political line is confused then there is bound to be confusion on the tactical questions, such as the very object and purpose, approach and style of conduction of democratic mass movements. Because the democratic movements which the people are organising on so many demands on food, land, against eviction of poor peasants from land, on curbing of prices of essential commodities, fighting of corruption, confiscation of foreign capital and so on and so forth—if the main object of these democratic movements is not the overthrow of the capitalist state machine then the tactical approach, the norm, the policy and principle, tactical selection of time of struggle, alignment of forces, programme and approach—all this will be different. So, another important point is very much relevant in this connection which I would like to place before the people. We are very much misunderstood in the united movement. We stand for united movement. But in the united movement, we, the different political parties who participate, have for each of us respective base political lines—and if it is not something casual, if we really mean it, as our party surely does, then this difference in base political lines is sure to have its reflection in the programme of united mass movement. Difference is, therefore, bound to appear amongst us as to the selection of time for movement, its tactics, political goal and object, how to develop it, with what political tuning and angularity is it to be developed. We are against any compromise on this difference that appears within

* The Right of Nations to Self-Determination—Lenin.

the united movement, centring round the base political line and ideology. That is why they paint us as disruptor of unity.

Those friends who say that criticism within unity breeds disunity, I should say, they are not reflecting the correct approach to the principle of unity-struggle-unity. The Chinese Party in their Congress, have once more reiterated this principle. They have said that all unity no struggle or all struggle no unity—such a concept of unity is erroneous. Those who say that criticism within the united movement disrupts its unity, forget that even when we oppose their moves in the united movement tooth and nail, we seriously stress upon the necessity of unity and examine its possibility again and again. This, we hold, is the only correct approach to the principle of unity-struggle-unity. So, when we develop a united mass movement difference on such questions like tactics of movement, the selection of time of movement, the manner in which the demands are to be placed, style of conduction of movement, the goal and object and to what extent it can be led towards that end is quite natural due to difference in their respective political lines. Since the programme of movement is the same, hence there can be no difference between us on such questions—such thing never happens. Say for example, those of us who are developing united mass movement we all consider capitalism and the party of the capitalist class, the Congress as the main enemy. Otherwise, why are we coming to united struggle? Those who do not consider capitalism to be the main enemy are not coming in the united struggle. So, fight against capitalism is a common point in those movements. But is it not equally true that there is difference between us as to the tactical approach to this struggle against capitalism according to our respective base political lines?

So, how can this united mass movement, which all of us are coming to develop on the basis of common agreed programme, be saved, from being misled or diverted from

the fundamental goal and object of anti-capitalist struggle to which it is got to be led, from the trends and tendencies that lie hidden within the very united mass movement, without conducting relentless ideological struggle?

If we cannot guard against that, then people will fight against Congress no doubt—no doubt they will make sacrifices but all these struggles will go astray. So, you can find that Stalin has emphasised that intense and relentless ideological struggle must be conducted to isolate and defeat the social-democratic forces from within the revolutionary struggles at all stages of co-ordinating the legal with illegal movements both within the Proletarian United Front and the United Front of democratic forces at the stage of democratic movement, if the revolution is to overthrow the bourgeoisie from power. He has said again and again that without bringing an end to social democratism it is impossible to bring an end to capitalism. If the revolution is not to overthrow capitalism then the ideological struggle is to be directed against a completely different force. As for example, in the united struggle for independence against imperialism where the national bourgeoisie takes part—ideological struggle is to be directed against the national bourgeoisie in order to isolate its influence from the mainstream of national independence struggle. Again where the national bourgeoisie is in power, it is the social-democratic forces within the united movement, the forces of compromise between labour and capital, who talk of socialism and Marxism but, in reality, are sham socialist, sham Marxists—the ideological struggle has to be conducted against these forces in order to isolate them. For them, who talk of fight against capitalism, Stalin has provided this important thesis: "It is impossible to put an end to capitalism without putting an end to social-democratism". That is to say, it is his warning that in this anti-capitalist movement, if through fierce ideological struggles within the united movement, the different social democratic trends and

tendencies that lie hidden within the movements to lead it astray at critical hours by making compromises between labour and capital, are not isolated and disarmed, in order to free the working class and its movement from their influences, the anti-capitalist revolution can never meet with success. He has said that this is one of the main strategic aspects of the anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Those who grasp the essence of this thesis of Stalin, those who realise that various trends and tendencies lie hidden within the struggle itself, can very well understand why we insist so much on ideological struggle, why we fight so much on tactical questions, questions of policy and principle and the base political line within the united movement. We do it not from any malice, nor do we want to spread it. During this ideological struggle, they may feel injured from isolated expressions here and there. But they are certainly not for spreading venom or ill-feelings. Sincerely we want unity of movement, friendship with others and an attitude to understand each other. That is why we try to point out the mistakes committed by others and in turn we expect they too will show our mistake, if any. We want, in this way we will help them see their mistakes and they too will try to show ours. And let this struggle be in the open, before the people participating in the united movement so that they can judge for themselves which line is correct and which is wrong, who are providing the right arguments and who the wrong ones; who are confusing the main issue by citing quotations out of context and who are taking pains and making efforts to illumine the truth. To provide the people with this opportunity to judge for themselves is an indispensable necessity and a primary condition for united mass movement. This is the lesson that we must draw from the November Revolution.

The three essential pre-conditions of revolution

The lesson that we must draw from November Revolution is that for the success of a revolution there are three pre-conditions. First, on the basis of a genuine revolutionary theory, ideology and base political line, the emergence of a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat with adequate and necessary organisational strength to lead the masses to

power. Evading this basic issue and undermining the importance of the base political line those who speak only of organisational strength, confuse in reality, the main point at issue. This, I have already shown, referring to the observation of the Tenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Time and again, the various teachings of Lenin and the history of World Communist Movement have upheld the same truth.

The second essential condition for revolution is the united front. At the initial stage of democratic movement building up of united front of left and democratic forces and after passing over this phase, giving birth to the Proletarian United Front—a front essential for the anti-capitalist revolution.

The third essential pre-requisite for revolution is to develop through the united mass movements or joint struggles, people's own instruments of struggle, meaning in other words, giving birth to political power of the people which will be unlike the municipal committees or the local and district committees of the representatives of the constituent political parties of the United Front. These will be organisations more or less like the Soviets of the workers and peasants in Russia developed through united struggles of the workers and peasants having the competence and the right to accept or reject any programme as also having the initiative and capability to apply them concretely and independently. Unless these three essential pre-conditions of revolution are fulfilled, movements may come in wave after wave, lakhs and lakhs of people may plunge in those movements and lay their life again and again but revolution there will not be. Revolution and revolt or agitation are not one and the same. By revolution we mean the conscious, organised and armed uprising of the masses on the basis of definite base political aims and objects, a correct ideology and the genuine revolutionary political line of the proletariat. And more the people will advance towards fulfilment of these essential conditions, the brighter will become the prospect of a radical transformation of the present situation in India and more purposive will be the observance of November Revolution anniversaries in our life. With this I conclude.

**Long Live Revolution !
Long Live November Revolution !**

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