



LONG LIVE NOVEMBER REVOLUTION

*Proletarian
Era*

Defeat revisionism-reformism in the working class movement and uphold the revolutionary banner of proletarian culture and ethics

[We give here an English translation of a very important speech which **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, the great leader of the proletariat, the founder General Secretary of our Party and the former President of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani), delivered as the main speaker at the open session of the first annual conference of the Durgapur Steel Workers' Co-ordination Committee held at Durgapur Steel Town, West Bengal, on the 17th March, 1974. This speech, in our opinion, sets the revolutionary guideline to the working class movement in our country which has now been permeated through and through with revisionism-reformism, practised by the trade unions led by all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties.

A word more. In spite of all cares and cautions taken in rendering the speech, originally delivered in Bengali, into English, flaws and inaccuracies may still be there, the responsibility of which lies with the Editorial Board, Proletarian Era.—Editor, Proletarian Era.]

Comrade President and Friends,

I have been requested to discuss the present political situation in India and the tasks before the workers and toiling people at this Conference of Durgapur Steel Workers. I offer my sincere thanks for giving me the opportunity to speak at this open session of the first annual conference of the Durgapur Steel Workers' Coordination Committee.

I would like to take up at the beginning what you all have been feeling, what has been agitating you, what you all have been thinking—whatever the difference in understanding—as to why this all-encompassing degeneration of such magnitude in the country. As Comrade Banerjee (Comrade Subodh Banerjee, who was the Chief Guest at the Conference) pointed out, not in the economic sphere alone, but looking at the social-cultural, and more particularly, the ethical-moral spheres in the country we find that the situation is really alarming.

I cannot but emphasize here that a nation going without food, suffering the worst kind of oppression and exploitation, and half-fed and half-clad for days together, can also stand up, fight against, acquire the power to combat, organise itself and rise up holding its head high, provided its moral strength remains intact and the people have a correct ideology before them. Look at Vietnam. Go through the history of the Chinese Revolution. Recall the extreme level of economic misery, exploitation and oppression the people in pre-revolution China had to suffer from. Yet the masses and the organised power of people in all these countries were able to rise up. They were able on the strength of one thing. And that is, in spite of so

much oppression and humiliation, the people could still retain in their character, in the character of the nation, within society itself, the moral-ethical sense of values to some extent, centring round the old moral and ethical concepts though, and could grasp the correct revolutionary ideology and give birth to the new sense of ethical-moral values conducive to their struggles. That is why the Vietnamese people could not be cowed down by showering bombs upon. The starving, hungry, illiterate peasants and the whole people of the country could not be made to yield even by reducing the whole country to ashes. This death defying spirit—boys and girls in their early teens, and the old, men and women, giving a life and death battle—where did it come from? Were they all Lenin and Stalin? Did they all grasp all the revolutionary theories thoroughly and correctly? This is simply absurd. But one thing they surely did possess, and do still possess, is the moral and ethical values, on the strength of which they stood up with indomitable courage against all sorts of exploitation.

The ruling class in India is engaged in a conspiracy to destroy totally the moral and ethical standards of the character of the nation. They are shrewd to the bone; they know that even by extreme

oppression and repression, and by keeping starved, a nation or people cannot be kept for long under foot with the help of the coercive apparatus of the State, of police and military alone. The history of oppression and tyranny of the despotic rulers of all ages tells but one thing—that no amount of brutal and coercive forces of the police and the military can ultimately defend the rule of injustice, or put down the organised power of the people. People's power asserts itself and stands up if the masses can keep their moral strength intact and find correct revolutionary ideology. The Indian bourgeoisie, the ruling clique, has not learnt the good part of the lesson of history. Devil as they are, being the exploiting ruler, they have not failed to take that part of it which serves their need—that is to destroy the moral-ethical strength and ruin the very character of the nation. In that event, the people, being starved, will only whine like dogs even when oppressed hundred times and more, will only vent their grievances, and may even, at times, burst into sporadic revolts, but will fail to give birth to organised revolutionary movement—will fail to organise revolution. Because, besides the correct base political line and the correct revolutionary leadership, what is essential for accepting the revolutionary ideology and

organising revolution is this moral-ethical base.

Heinous conspiracy to incite base instincts in man to serve the petty, sectarian party interests on the plea of the so-called practical politics

So, the cultural-moral degeneration that you witness at present is not just an accident—not something spontaneous. It is not just like something pre-determined, something fatalistic, *fait accompli*—as if destined to happen and is so happening. If you can see through the game you will note that, though it is happening beyond knowledge of the people, there is, behind it, a calculated move of the ruling clique, a definite patronage. In their pulpit speeches they are asking the people to be good and honest. But at the dictate of petty, sectarian party interest, and on the plea of practical politics, not the ruling party alone but even many pseudo-revolutionary parties are inciting the base instincts of man. In the name of militancy and class struggle they are giving indulgence to the trend of cowardly violence—a gang attacking a lone individual and showing extreme intolerance to polemics and ideological battle. Greed, avarice and meanness, which make a man inhuman and spoil the courage and self-respect in him, are now being encouraged. The

cadres of political parties are being engaged on money to do regular party or union activities and even election work. And all these have been going on in the name of 'practical politics'. The whole of the country teems with millions of unemployed, people are left with no means to fill their empty stomach. Taking advantage of this misery of the people, political parties are using them, providing them with this kind of so-called employment.

You all know that man has both virtues and vices. Only by helping to bloom further all the good aspects in a man—that is his qualities like courage, valour, compassion, broadness of mind and sense of obligation to people—his failings and shortcomings can be eliminated. Simply asking them to shun their vices will not help them to get rid of their vices; simply asking them to be good and honest will not automatically make them good and honest. But giving advices to people to be good and honest on the one hand, and simultaneously inciting the base instincts in them on the other on the plea of practical politics—whichever party it may be, whatever may be its vocabulary, and it is immaterial whether their leaders are personally honest or not—they are, in reality, knowingly or unknowingly, helping the game of the bourgeois

conspiracy to pollute the ethical-cultural atmosphere in the country and to destroy the moral character of the nation.

Only the ideologically-politically conscious and organised exploited people and not the lumpens and beggars are the forces of revolution

If this be the trend, the situation, then the morality of the nation is sure to die. And without morality there can be no revolution. They are nothing but fools who think that the economic distress mounting and oppression multiplying will bring about revolution spontaneously. They do not know that in no country the beggars did ever organise a revolution. It is the exploited people who bring about revolution. This has a definite and deeper meaning. Lumpens are not the forces of revolution. Rather lumpens have been used by the bourgeoisie, by the fascists, as forces of reaction against revolution in every country. That is why from Marx to Lenin and Mao Tse-tung, every one of them, had to say that those among the proletariat who are becoming lumpen from economic misery are none of us, are not the revolutionary proletariat. The revolutionary proletariat are to fight this lumpenism in the interest of revolution itself. So it is clear that from poverty alone revolu-

tion does not surge forth. What bursts out of it is agitation that goes more to the benefit of the exploiters. The direction being wrong, leadership faulty, strategy being erroneous and no clear-cut political outlook about revolution being there, when such an unorganised struggle of the masses meets the inevitable doom before the organised coercion of the State apparatus, defeatism is sure to come in its trail. The struggling spirit that was in men, spent up thus, brings frustration and defeatism as a reaction, and engulfs the mass movements, even if temporarily. The exploiting class makes the most out of it. They capitalise the situation to their advantage. They consolidate further their class rule and tone up to some extent their political organisation.

Just pause and ponder over the history of this country, and you can easily recall that there have been struggles her time and again in the past. Nobody can say that the youths, the workers the toiling people of this country had showed any aversion to fighting, or had not come to the field of struggle, or were afraid to go behind the bars, to lay down their lives, and to die. None would dare say this. Those who are conversant with the history know it very well that people in this country have burst forth in fighting time and again. Even after

attainment of Independence, during the last twenty seven years, not only in West Bengal but in the whole of India, how many self-sacrifices, what amount of bloodshed there have been—how often the workers, peasants, the youths and students have laid down their lives! With what an intense urge for revolution, time and again, people of this land have come forward in the movements and have faced death! But what has been the outcome? All say now that it is reaction that has gained in strength. Repression is let loose, fascist attacks are unleashed on the democratic movements. Why this? How can it happen? Democratic movement should have been led easily by this time, to end of capitalism, should have unfurled the victorious banner of revolution. For, what was essential for the victory of revolution—the popular support had been mobilised in favour of mass movements. At the call of the leaders the youths came in thousands and plunged in movements craving for revolution. How then could reaction gain in strength? It is the revolutionary movement that should have gained in strength. Is it the handiwork of God? Is it mysticism? Is it sorcery and witchcraft? Those who believe in all these may no doubt draw some solace. But if there is nothing like

if there is nothing like whims and caprice of Allah or God then why does it happen? This is the real question.

Not merely realising the economic demands but giving birth to the revolutionary political power of the workers is the principal task of the revolutionary trade union organisations

At the very outset, I would like to remind you one of the teachings of Lenin. Lenin gave repeated warnings to the workers on one point. Right from Marx, all have dealt with this important question on many occasions. All of them have pointed out that the workers, however militant movements may they conduct for the realisation of their economic and democratic demands, however much democratic rights and economic demands may they realise by shedding blood, by that alone they cannot bring an end to their slavery, and they still remain wage-slaves as before and the darkness in their life still persists. Their condition too cannot be changed simply by shouting slogans like "Long Live Marxism-Leninism", "Down with capitalism", "Long Live Revolution", during the struggle over economic and democratic demands. If their fight is for the extension of democratic rights only, then however much democratic

rights they may earn, that can never bring about the emancipation of the workers. For their emancipation the workers must realise that these struggles built up on economic and democratic demands are nothing but struggles for their survival protecting the minimum rights against exploitation, are nothing but means through which they are to give birth to their own political power capable enough to overthrow this exploitative system. They can achieve emancipation only if, through the process of these struggles they can gradually build up their own political power in the concrete shape of struggle committees, can initiate and conduct protracted war or revolutionary battle for the overthrow of capitalism—the protracted war that will not collapse in the face of even thousands of onslaughts of the capitalist State machine, just as the people of Vietnam could not be subdued by Napalm bombs by turning the whole of the country into a desert—the US imperialists had ultimately to bow out.

This is why Marx had posed the question right from the beginning: why should the workers join trade union movements? They should join because trade union is the school of communism where they can learn the elements of communism. While fighting collectively against injustice and oppression from this platform daily, the

workers get the opportunity to analyse events and search out truth. Consciousness dawns on them as to why there can be no emancipation without revolution. While conducting the day-to-day struggles, the revolutionaries alone, and none else, want to educate the workers thus. Others, the pseudo-revolutionaries, ask the workers to join trade unions, to take active part in these, but give rise to, on their part, bureaucracy in trade unions and get the workers used to it. And this is how bureaucracy takes root in trade unions. The leaders create the air that they are “big people”. Their words carry much weight. The management is afraid of them, and gives them platitude. Remember, fear and platitude are like cousins. These leaders need both. They want that the management should appease them and this is why they intimidate them at times.

The workers too approach only those leaders who, they think, can manage some concessions for them. So, we find that workers usually run after the bosses of those unions that are run by the party in power in the hope that these leaders can make the management hear their demands and they have a chance to get some concessions. When this becomes the sole concern of the trade union movement, such movements do not advance

the struggle for emancipation of the workers even by a single step. It never can. This type of workers' movements, whichever banner may it project—red, white or green—has nothing to do with the revolutionary movement, with the struggle for emancipation of the working class. When the sole activity of the trade union leaders is to agitate the workers and get them into their fold by projecting a false image about this ability to wrest concessions from the management, then know it for certain that this party or union leadership is practising moderate trade unionism or economism like the Labour Party in England, or the giant trade unions of the USA. You can very well see that these big trade unions in England and the USA off and on, at times, organise nation-wide industrial strikes and paralyse the production. These forces, in reality, play the role of opposition in between the different monopoly capitalist groups and are controlled by the monopolists. A typical example is the Labour Party of England, which stands for and defends the interest of the British imperialism. When these parties bring the whole of England to a standstill thus by such nationwide strikes the general workers run frantically after them in the belief that the revolution has started here and now. But this does

not even scratch the British imperialist interests a bit—rather the monopolists, the imperialists laugh in their sleeves seeing that the shrewd union leaders have bound the workers, and have trapped them in such tricky manoeuvres. They are very much appreciative of the well-served fun. The workers, thus trapped like cattle tied in the noose, fail to realise that they have fallen victim to the devilish design of the leaders. That is why Marx as also Lenin have time and again cautioned that trade unions should be the school of communism. They said, the workers who come and join in thousands in the day-to-day struggle—don't agitate them by senseless fiery speeches just to draw their applause. Don't waste your time by loading your speech with hyperboles over the definition of the known enemy; say something concrete, something useful. Even in a movement full of promises—make the workers conscious about the failings and deficiencies that might be there and when it meets a setback, educate them as to the reasons for this setback as also the elements of success that are there in the midst of apparent failures—this is the task of leadership.

But seldom do you find this in our trade union movements. What ultimate political goal these day-to-

day movements are to be led to and what should be the style of these movements for that—the workers are not told, they are not educated either. The workers are only fed with fiery exhortations to be prepared for revolution: build up strong organisation, as strong as a fort—such a fort where nobody else can enter. At once the workers stand up, sticks in their hands, and build up the fort—a fort where a person even when he wants to say something reasonable, something logical, is gagged if he does not belong to the particular party or organisation!

You are aware that once many such 'red forts' sprouted up in different parts of the country. They were as if the private preserves of, or free zones under a particular party or organisation where entry was barred to others. How is it that if somebody says even words of reasons we will not listen to him since he does not belong to our party or organisation, nor will he be allowed to enter into the area as we claim it to be our fort?

Might be, the criticism would have been helpful to the very cause of revolution, but shutting out even that because a 'fort' has been built up—does it stand to reason? Leaders are saying: build up fortresses everywhere. Does this mean building baffle walls against logic or reason? What has been the result? This breeds blindness, and

blindness or fanaticism is the very base of fascism—it helps the bourgeoisie. Workers' movement and revolutionary struggle have no truck with ignorance and irrationality. They believe in logic, debates, discussions, ideological-political struggles and polemics. Because, they are in search of truth. They are not afraid of debates, discussion and ideological struggles. Only they want to suppress, want to discourage discussion who are on the wrong and on the side of reaction. That is why sometimes on the plea of discipline, and some other time on the plea of unity or under the cover of pseudo-militant slogan like 'convert the organisation into a 'fort' what in reality they do is gagging all discussions and debates. They fear debates and discussions, they are very much afraid of logic and analysis. If somebody presents a searching analysis in his speech, they remark that he is taking a class. As if speeches are meant for inciting people only. Then, being incited, let the people die in sporadic battles here and there. And it is the people not the leaders who die in such battles. When and where such leaders died of police firing? They do not die in battles, but of course the revolutionary leaders face such death. But here are these leaders whom the police always protect and address in platitude as 'Sir'! So, these leaders only incite

the people and the more the people die getting excited the better for the leaders. They would then observe martyrs' days, whip up public sentiment against the ruling party and make political capital out of it for getting through election battles.

Correct base political line is the essential precondition for revolution

True, people have to lay down their lives for revolution. But how is it that in spite of so many struggles, so much sacrifice of lives reaction has been gaining ground? What is then the heart of the matter? The essential point is the correct revolutionary ideology and the correct base political line. We must grasp correctly the character of the State structure, the concrete social, economic and political condition of the country where we are to organise the revolution. Just the other day, the Chinese Communist Party at its 10th Party Congress made a very important observation which I liked very much. A giant party as this which successfully led the revolution, then organised the cultural revolution, which enjoys an overwhelming command over the masses of as big a country as that—even such a party does not plead that because it enjoys so much popular support, has so vast a membership strength, so many committees are behind

it, that is why it is correct. They are saying on the contrary that if the base political line is not correct then even if there is mass support and strength, the army at command, and even if the organisation is very big today, they cannot be retained in the long run. If the line is incorrect, everything will be lost today or tomorrow. By this it is presumed that even an incorrect line may draw popular support for sometime, till people can realise from their experience where the mistake lies. If this is not true then how could Hitler once become the undisputed leader of Germany? How could a dictator like Nasser and the political bosses of Egypt become national leaders and suppress the communists? So, even if the line is wrong, popularity can be earned at times and can be retained for sometime too. The glaring proof of this is the overwhelming political influence of the Muslim League over the Muslim peasantry, labourers and the middle class during the freedom movement.

But could this support be maintained for long? No.

So, the Chinese Party, a giant party at that, despite so big a mass following and so many cadres, reiterates that a party even if it begins with one will double itself, trebble itself and thus multiply its strength manifold

and give birth to political power and capture the State power one day provided its base political line is correct. So, correctness of the base political line is one of the principal preconditions of revolution. Marx, Lenin and all of them highlighted this truth, although in different languages. It is Marx who pointed out that the proletariat alone can change the world. And it is he who, with the help of dialectical materialism, showed for the first time, the scientific process to change the world. But he cautioned at the same time that to say that the proletariat can change the world does not mean they can change it just because of their position as the proletariat. Does it mean that the proletariat, any how organised in thousands and raising slogan for revolution, can bring it about? Only those proletariat can achieve it who have transformed themselves so as to be worthy of fulfilling the task of revolution.

Proletarian culture is not the culture of degenerated workers, victim of bourgeois decadence.

Only those proletariat can change the world who have been able to develop the quality of revolutionary leadership, and that not in political battle alone or in slogans, but in behaviour and life style, in ethical-moral standard, cultural tone

and taste, by freeing themselves from the narrow confines of the vile bourgeois culture. So long the workers are not freed of the influence and impact of bourgeois individualism, bourgeois ideology and its decadent culture acquired from the bourgeois society they cannot organise revolution however much their economic distress may aggravate. The evil influence of the bourgeois decadent culture reflected by the workers can by no means be called the proletarian culture simply because workers are reflecting it. At one time some people who joined the working class movement with philanthropic ideas thought that whatever the workers do and reflect is revolutionary. That is why all from Marx to Lenin gave a good dressing down to this idea reminding that proletarian culture could never mean that the culture itself was proletariat! They showed that picking up the language and habits of the illiterate and backward sections of the workers who are victim of decadence of culture which once grew on the edifice of humanist and bourgeois liberal values conducive to the bourgeois revolution should not be mistaken for the assimilation and practice of proletarian culture based on proletarian ideology in this era of proletarian revolution. Proletarian culture is for

freeing the workers crushed under the burden of a wretched existence and rotten bourgeois culture who have succumbed to this law of exploitation being slipped in fatalism, have taken for granted this miserable life, have fallen victim to vicious circle of economism-opportunism and it is to instil in them a new ideology, make them stand erect with indomitable spirit of defiance and transforming them into communists. Here, in India, we find just the reverse.

Here, the so-called communists justify that as they are to mix with the workers, they are to take to the bad habits and addictions to narcotics and drinks of the workers. Once so many people came in the Labour Party from the ranks of workers with the urge for revolution, leaving their families, careers, everything. What a pitiable position to which such a big party has landed itself today—a party which got so many cadres from the workers which no other party, even our party, has till now, been able to draw. In the name of inculcating proletarian culture, they have, instead, reduced them to degenerated proletariats. None of their cadres they could mould as revolutionary. What incalculable harm was wrought to them? They wanted to rouse the workers but instead they themselves became the victim

of the culture of the already degenerated proletariat. All their possibility went in vain based as it was on this quick-sand. So, unless the workers can change themselves first they cannot change the world—such is the principal condition for the success of Marxist or working class movement. That is why, the question of establishing correct revolutionary leadership on a correct base political line as also on the edifice of proletarian culture is intimately connected with the success of revolution. Workers will have to grasp the inner law and character of class struggle and will have to correctly analyse the socio-political-economic condition of the country with the help of the only weapon or science at their disposal i.e. Marxism-Leninism. The struggles that are constantly developing inside the society centring round wants, miseries, repressions and exploitations—to what ultimate goal they are to be led, who are the main enemy against whom the struggle is to be directed—to know and realise all these is the fundamental question before the workers movement. You want struggle and, for this, organisation too. And you are happy when you get both organisation and struggle. Nothing short of these can satisfy you. But why this struggle? What

for the organisation? But struggle, surely not for struggle's sake? So also organisation is not for the sake of organisation only. Then be it struggle, be it organisation, all are for revolution, for the workers' emancipation. Emancipation from whom? Who is the exploiter? Where is the obstacle? When I am being exploited by Ram if I get ready to fight Shyam I shall never be able to achieve my emancipation. So, the all important point at issue is to determine the correct path. Honesty, dedication, sacrifice, struggling spirit given all these but the path is wrong then everything will go to waste. Remember, these are elementary base qualities without which, not to speak of the revolutionaries, even the reactionaries can do nothing. The Fascist Nazis who in Germany established a fascist state and stopped the march of revolution and gave birth to counter-revolution, the Japanese imperialists who let loose a nefarious imperialist rule and oppression all over the South-East Asian countries as also held out such a great threat in the last world war, they too, had to take up their ideology with all the honesty, sincerity, dedication and base it on a moral strength. They practised 'Harakiri'. Surely you have heard about 'Harakiri'. The followers of Japanese imperialism, when-

ever they thought they had betrayed the State, the military or had failed to discharge the duty allotted to them, they would punish themselves. It symbolised their sense of dedication and discipline.

If you go through the life stories of the Nazis and are acquainted with their sense of discipline, you will see that this is also a kind of discipline, a kind of militancy which even the reactionaries do also need. Those who mean to do something everyone of them must have this. But what is most important thing is whether the base political line, whether the main political approach is correct or not. Honesty you may have but have no correct scientific idea about the thing you want—then you can never have it.

Say for instance you do not know what are the ingredients required to prepare Tincture of Iodine. Now you choose lime, sand and mortar as the ingredients for iodine and you are prepared to put hard labour, undertake starvation and even ready to give your life. That is to say, there is no dearth of honesty and dedication on your part but will that enable you to make iodine with the ingredients you have chosen?

True, honesty, sincerity and dedication are necessary but only with these qualities as capital can anyone prepare that compound

with fanciful idea? This is very important and applies equally well in politics and social science. You are to understand first of all what is the nature and character of the Indian revolution that you will have to accomplish. That is to say, what is the root cause of economic exploitation in India, what is the character of its State, which class or classes are wielding the State power. So long as our conception about these basic questions is not clear, we will not be able to determine the correct base political line which in political terminology we call, the strategy and tactics of revolution. And here on this point, if anyone with fanciful idea, on the basis of wrong conclusions builds up a party with the avowed object of revolution, organises the people and conducts struggles on the issues of people's sufferings and exploitations then he can at best build up a strong party but will never be able to bring about revolution. Rather by this, the fighting zeal of the people being diverted to wrong course, the revolutionary potential will be exhausted and as a result, the capitalist class and the reactionaries will further gain in strength. That is why we are to grasp thoroughly what are the fundamental problems in our country and why are they aggravating more and more. In my considered opinion three basic problems are at

the root that are agitating the politico-socio-economic life of India.

The causes of cultural degeneration about which I have alluded to earlier, even if they are to be understood in the proper perspective, you are to realise thoroughly these three principal problems.

Three fundamental problems of the Indian Society

Of the problems with which are related all other problems of our social life—the principal one is the ever-accentuating unemployment problem. Nothing can stem its tide. Plans are being taken one after another but the problem of unemployment goes on unabated. Why is it happening? The rulers say that population increase is the principal reason. Whether this is so could be a matter for consideration only if they could prove first that there is no wastage of existing resources, i.e. no wastage of the productive forces and labour power, no corruption, no wasteful expenditure and the installed capacity is not lying idle but is being fully utilised or at least there is a serious attempt to fully utilise it—nothing further is left to be done. So even after fulfilling all these conditions if the total work force could not be absorbed then and then only the problem of excess population could have

been a matter for consideration. But what we see is just the reverse.

Even the existing installed capacity is not being fully utilised at present. Corruption and wasteful practices are ever on the increase—they have even exceeded the limit. What is the reality then? Is it for excess population that the existing installed capacity cannot be fully utilised? Or is it the reason for which corruption and wasteful expenditure cannot be stopped?

So, is it anything other than a bluff? And to give bluff an air of credibility crores of rupees are being spent on commissions, conferences and technocrats. And the country has now become a fool's paradise, the fools going by the name 'technocrats'! In our country the specialists are those who do not specialise in knowledge, but in ignorance—the grand idiots! Otherwise how could they be protagonists of such a nonsense—"population increase is the principal cause for aggravation of unemployment problem"? I do not mean to say that unemployment problem is not at all a problem in our country today. What I mean is that the rulers and the ruling class are arguing in circles or are resorting to deceptive logic with the motive of concealing the real causes behind the unemployment

problem. They are raising the bogey of excess population only to make it a scapegoat and sidetrack the main point.

Why then the unemployed cannot be absorbed? The unemployed can only be given employment by opening up newer and newer industries and establishments. How many of them can be absorbed in idle jobs in top-heavy administration? There is a limit to it and has its adverse effect. An inflated army, inflated police, producing nothing but only subsisting on public revenues must have its evil effect on social life. Inevitably parasitism will prevail in our administrative activity as well as in all other fields of activity. But that is a different issue altogether. Leave aside also the question of wastage of national wealth. But practically how many can be provided with jobs in this way? Another novel avenue for employment has been opened up, of late. I mean the so-called volunteer forces. The parliamentary political parties today are, as it were, entrepreneurs or business concerns where vacancies exist and you can have jobs. That is to say, if you hold sticks for these parties, be their so-called volunteers, their election workers, you can earn five to ten rupees as daily wage in exchange. And this perverse practice is on in

our country today. This novel practice of giving employment to such a large number of unemployed youths is quite unheard of elsewhere in the world. In this country, big jotedars, money lenders, big sharks—the blackmarketeers-wholesalers are employing in smuggling of rice, a large number of economically distressed people. And such an unethical means of livelihood like blackmarketing has become an open thing in this country. Drawing rice, sugar and other articles from the ration shops against ration-cards and selling them at higher prices openly is now an open secret. And the Government of the country is mere onlooker, it feels no shame. If this be the state of affairs, can there be any moral standard left in a country? It is getting indulgence from all powerful quarters. However, can all these methods of giving employment minimise a bit the pressure of unemployment that is ever on the increase? The only rational solution to this problem lies in opening up the path of uninterrupted growth of industries. And the question of uninterrupted industrialisation is intimately linked up with the question of modernisation and mechanisation, and without modernisation and mechanisation of agriculture it is not possible to remove the distress and miseries of 75 to

80 p. c. of the rural population. And this modernisation of agriculture in its turn, is not also possible unless the uninterrupted pace of industrial development is maintained. For, only when the uninterrupted pace of industrial development is maintained, lakhs and lakhs of rural work-force rendered unemployed due to modernisation of agriculture can be absorbed. But the reality is that in the cities scores of factories are closing down, thereby adding further to the number of unemployed. When the already established factories are closing down how can there be modernisation in agriculture? But without modernisation of agriculture the condition of villages cannot be improved and the purchasing power of people cannot be increased, or in other words extension of market cannot be achieved. But without the extension of market wherefrom will come the urge for production? And so the vicious circle. What then is the real problem with which is linked up all these questions?

What stands in the way of development of production in our country? What stands in the way of investment of capital? The answer to all these is the same—want of sufficient market. But whose is this problem of market? Of capitalism or of feudalism? This is the crux of the prob-

lem. Whether feudalism exists or not and to what extent, I do not intend to enter into this polemic here. To me, this is a most irrelevant question. Suffice it to say that feudalism does not exist in land relations of our country. If time permitted I could have proved this contention with elaborate analysis, facts and logic. But suppose, for argument's sake, feudalism still remains in land relations at some places. But it is the teaching of Marxism that in any analysis of a mixed phenomenon, its character is always to be determined by what is its dominant character. Let us now see what the principal characteristic feature of Indian economy is. Is it feudal or capitalist? What is the basic structure of Indian economy—feudal or capitalistic?

**Law of monopoly
capitalism is operating
in the entire economy
including the agricultural
economy in India**

Say, for example, the production of steel is being obstructed—but who is obstructing? Is it the feudal lords, or is it due to the crisis in capitalist market? Is not the crisis of capitalist market the cause of productive capacity remaining idle? Capitalist relations of production is no longer of use for social progress. Even if someone shows with the help of statistics that land has

been concentrated in the hands of a few—a phenomenon which some may term as capitalist landlordism, then it does not *ipso facto* prove that feudalism or semi-feudalism is existing as the dominant production-relation in the rural economy. True, capitalist landlordism is a term used in the agricultural economy. In England one can find it. At one time in USA too it grew and developed in certain areas, for some time. But this phenomenon of capitalist landlordism is related to capitalist production-relation itself. This is nothing but the phenomenon of the admixture of feudal habits with capitalism and can only be eliminated through overthrow of capitalism. Keeping the capitalist economy intact, or bypassing it, there is no scope of eliminating the outmoded feudal habits. So why bring up all these irrelevant issues only to confuse the principal question of revolution?

State power here is in the hands of the capitalist class, the bourgeoisie. And the struggle to overthrow the State is revolution. The workers fight, build up their organisation—are not all these for the ultimate object of overthrowing this exploitative capitalist State machine? It means they will forcibly dislodge a class from State power, they will strike against to remove a particular socio-economic

system. But, a class is to be dislodged from power—which class is it? You will be striking against a class economy—which class economy, which class system? Is it anything other than the capitalist economy and social system and the capitalist State? But to confuse this basic question, many have been raising slogans against imperialism and feudalism, and along with these, monopoly capitalists. Particularly against monopoly capitalism, all are raising slogans, even Chhatra Parishad and Yuba Congress—the student and youth wings of the Congress; CPI and CPI(M) too join in the chorus. They, all of them, are giving the same hoax. But is the fight against monopoly capital a fight against an individual monopoly house like that of Tata or Birla, a fight against an individual or against capitalism as such, against the bourgeoisie as a class? So the slogan should be directed against the class as a whole. Monopoly capitalists by themselves do not constitute a separate class. They are just a section or a group within the capitalist class. The owners of banking and industrial institutions, who are in control of finance capital, constitute the Financial oligarchy. And this group is the leader of that bourgeois class against whom we want to direct our attack. But to bring to the fore only the leader, sparing

the class whom it leads, means to shield the principal enemy—capitalism, the bourgeoisie as a class. Can we overthrow the bourgeois class by shielding the class itself? You will find that Marx, Engels and even Chou-En-lai the other day at the 10th Party Congress of CPC have posed the same question although in different language. They all have said that our fight is not against an individual. Individuals may come and go but so long the capitalist class remains, it will inevitably give birth to monopoly. Monopoly capital does not mean individual monopoly house, say of the Birlas. Monopoly capital is the inevitable outcome of the capitalist productive system of bourgeois class rule. So, so long capitalism exists one Birla may go, but it will breed the Birlas of Birlas. That is why when the fights against the Tatas, Birlas or individual factory owners are not conducted from the basic angularity of overthrowing capitalism—if people and the working class are not organised on the basis of the necessary revolutionary ideology and consciousness conducive to the struggle to overthrow the class rule of the capitalists, then all these struggles howsoever embellished with revolutionary jargons cannot strike against capitalism anywhere, cannot scratch it even.

India's revolution is anti-capitalist socialist revolution

Thus it is clear that this so-called anti-monopoly slogan of these pseudo-revolutionary parties is nothing but one to protect capitalism by obstructing the course of anti-capitalist revolution behind the facade of so-called fight against individual monopoly houses of Tatas and Birlas. In this way, the most simple and essential things for the understanding of the real question of revolution are being deliberately confused in this country. And we all know that according to Marxism-Leninism the revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie where it wields the State power is nothing other than Socialist Revolution. It does never alter the stage of revolution if, along with the bourgeois class, there are a handful of feudal lords in State power. Go through the history of Russian revolution and you will find that after the February Democratic Revolution, almost all the important portfolios in the Kerensky Government in ministries like defence, finance and foreign affairs were in the hands of persons coming from the Czar family. But still then Lenin said in the April Thesis that the moment the Russian bourgeoisie had assumed the State power by overthrowing Nicholas Tsar, that is a new class had assumed the State

power in the place of the old one—to that extent and in that sense the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution was completed politically and Russia had entered the stage of Socialist Revolution. Was not Lenin aware that the Kulaks were there, Kulakism still prevailed—the influence of Tsardom was very much there? Did he not also know that large volume of foreign imperial capital was operating and its influence and domination over the Russian economy was still intact? There too were 'Marxists' of this variety who, referring to all this, argued vociferously that how could one jump directly to Socialist Revolution without making a clean sweep of imperialism-feudalism! Giving them a good dressing down Lenin stressed a very important point. He showed that "Marxism is not economic determinism", and that "politics must take precedence over economics and to argue otherwise is to forget ABC of Marxism". The relationship between politics and economics is not that simple, is not mechanical—that politics simply follows economics. Say, for instance, the influence and domination of imperialism-feudalism still prevailing economically, with the capture of State power by the bourgeoisie politically, a new question comes to the fore. Taking cognizance of this particular phenomenon,

Lenin pointed out that since the bourgeoisie had come to State power before these changes in the economic field had been accomplished, so imperialism-feudalism cannot be pushed out an inch without overthrowing the bourgeoisie. In that respect and to that extent the Russian revolution was socialist in character, and so long as it had not been accomplished, the unaccomplished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution ran parallel as an admixture.

But a section of the so-called Marxists in our country, without drawing any lesson from Marx or Lenin, without caring a bit that the character of the present State structure is capitalist and that in determining the stage of revolution this is the principal question, are clamouring that feudalism still exists in our rural economy. Their way of argument is that in our villages the mode of agricultural production is still backdated, it is still a small peasant economy—lands being distributed in small plots—and that a major portion of lands is concentrated in the hands of a few. Big peasant farming or improved types of machines and implements as can be found in advanced capitalist countries are absent here, and all that. Lenin has provided on this question some very important lessons. He has given serious warnings in this regard. Speaking about agrarian

reforms, Lenin showed that land farming in small plots, or lands with antiquated methods, or modern type of farming through big farms with the help of improved machines and implements—none of these determined whether the character of the agricultural economy was socialist, capitalist or feudal. The character of agricultural economy is, however, really determined by the production relation and the nature of trade and commerce system of the agricultural produce.

In other words, what is the character of agricultural produce? What is the nature of its trade and commerce? Are they the commodities of localised agricultural market? Or the commodities of the trade and commerce of capitalist national market? Or are they produced on the basis of socialist economic planning as a means of exchange in terms of socially necessary things? Is it that the Government, just like in a barter system, is bringing them to circulation in the market for distribution to people with a view to gradually minimising the commodity circulation? Is the production in agriculture being conducted with this basic aim and objective? So you see that the character of agricultural economy is determined by the motive force of production and the nature of trade and

commerce of the commodities.

What is happening here—in our country? The owners of land here are investing capital in land and are selling the surplus as commodities in the market to extract profit. Production here is principally not for individual consumption but for extracting maximum profit by selling in the market. As a result, land too has been transformed into capital, i.e. capitalist means of production. By this process—the agricultural produce being sold in the market as commodity—the volume of capital invested in land is increasing. In other words, in the agricultural economy of our country, the economic law of $M-C-M'$ (Money-Commodity-More Money) is fully at work. Investment of capital in land economy is therefore the reality. It is the law of capitalist economy, pure and simple, and obvious at that.

So, whether the land farming is done in small plots of land, or through big farming with machine tractors, are all irrelevant. I have dealt with the question many times before as to why land farming is not being widely done in our country with machine tractors and higher technology. In Japan too there is small peasant economy, big land farming is absent there. But does that prove that Japan is not a capitalist country? The

bourgeoisie of our country have taken note that if machine tractor is introduced widely, then at one stroke it will push lakhs of people out of land and will render them unemployed. Unless, therefore, there is an uninterrupted development of industries in the cities to absorb these adding millions of rural unemployed, capitalism which is already groaning under the pressure of ever increasing urban unemployed is sure to stumble down.

In the nineteenth century, when the advantage of world market was wide open and in order to shift more and more rural work-force to industry in the very interest of uninterrupted industrial development, the bourgeoisie once introduced machine tractor to free the surplus work-force from agriculture; but how can the bourgeoisie modernise agriculture in our country in the face of severity of crisis in the world capitalist market which has even lost the relative stability and when capitalism today is moribund, is mortally afraid of revolution, and fails even to fully utilise the installed productive capacity and keeps it idle? Being afraid of radical land reforms the bourgeoisie is moving rather in the opposite direction. It is keeping the bulk of rural population arrested in small plots of land in a state of half-fed, half-clad condition, and is

holding out the illusion of 'green revolution' to them. This is nothing other than a sinister design of the bourgeoisie enmeshed in crisis. What is simply astonishing is that the CPI and the CPI(M) who talk of agrarian revolution, of overthrowing feudalism, present basically the same kind of planning in their agrarian programmes. Note their self-contradiction on the question of introduction of machine tractor and modernisation and mechanisation of agriculture. The CPI(M) in its Majaffarpur thesis has declared its opposition to the introduction of tractor and its intention to build up movements if it be introduced. Why? Are the peasants and workers as a matter of principle opposed to introduction of machine tractor? Are the machine tractors their enemy? True, so long capitalism is there machine tractors will create unemployment, will take away jobs of many as the motive force of its production is to earn maximum profit. But the machine tractors do not create unemployment in a socialist social system, on the contrary they uplift and modernise the standard of living of the masses.

So, the slogan should, instead, be: "Let machine tractors come for the upliftment of villages—we want it. But since in this capitalist system no alternative jobs are being provided, machine

tractors should not be introduced without guaranteeing that first". The workers and peasants should understand that unless capitalism is speedily overthrown the purchasing power of the people cannot be enhanced, their standard of living cannot be upgraded through large scale introduction of machine tractors and electricity cannot be brought to the countryside, the condition of villages cannot be improved. The present backwardness of villages cannot be removed. No improvement will come over village life. But without integrating movements against introduction of machine tractors in a capitalist economy that creates unemployment with the struggle to overthrow capitalism, these so-called communists are instead linking up this movement with the so-called anti-feudal struggle. What has it got to do with feudalism? All these are entirely linked with the capitalist relation of production. Rather we all know that in the era of capitalist development in the Western countries, when machine tractors were introduced, it had helped eliminating feudal economic law in agriculture. So how does this question of linking up this movement against introduction of machine tractors with the movement against feudalism at all arise? But how queer logic are they advancing!

There is, therefore, no basic difference between the land reform policy or programme of the Congress and those of the parties in Opposition including the so-called communists.

The programme of anti-feudal agrarian revolution and industrial revolution through distribution of surplus land only, as the CPI and the CPI(M) contend, is basically the same as that of the Congress. According to the declaration of the Congress, the surplus land above the 'ceiling' should be distributed among the landless peasants; not only that, only the other day a Congress Minister was talking of bringing down the ceiling to 5 acres. Then we are to say that he is the greatest revolutionary because, by this, more land will be available for distribution! I say, this is all utopia. For, even if all the surplus lands above ceiling are taken possession of and distributed among the landless of the whole country, all individual peasants, according to simple arithmetic, cannot get more than two to three bighas of land. But this can hardly sustain him and his family; it would be an uneconomic holding. Besides, for want of requisite money for cultivation, ploughs and bullocks, he will even be unable to cultivate that land. As a result this will bring in its trail an adverse effect on production, too. Food crisis

is bound to develop. Alienation of land out of poverty and destitution is sure to happen. So, all these programmes are no effective solution. At best they may serve the politics of stunt.

Distribution of land is no doubt a big problem. It is known and accepted on all hands that distribution of surplus land to the landless by pressure of movement is an important aspect of democratic movement of our country. But only they who knowingly or unknowingly are helping capitalism, which is responsible for all the problems and miseries in people's life, to perpetuate, hold it that, merely by this, the unemployment problem will be resolved, the door to uninterrupted industrial development will be opened up, market will be expanded, and they also disseminate this idea among people to spread confusion. How queer is their self-contradiction! On the other hand they are telling that the number of agricultural labourers is on the increase in villages, capital is being invested on land, old economic relation is breaking down. They also say that capitalism has made a decisive inroad into agriculture. But if it is a fact that capitalism has made a decisive inroad into agriculture, how can feudalism remain the main enemy, either in villages or in the strategy of revolution?

Faced with this question they are proffering a new explanation that feudalism, being the old production-relation, is no doubt giving way, but even while it gives way, the feudal lords in combination with the rich peasants are exploiting the people.

According to their analysis, if anyone, being owner of hundreds of bighas of land, stays in village and take part in cultivation, then he is not a landlord but is a rich peasant, an ally of People's Democratic Revolution. And who are the landlords? Whatever be the quantum of land holdings, those who do not stay in villages and do not take part in cultivation are the landlords! Then a person having say fifteen bighas of land but who does not cultivate himself but is a city dweller is a landlord! And another person having several times more land in possession, if he stays in village and takes part in cultivation, at once becomes an ally of their People's Democratic Revolution. Because, unless they are on their side, they can hardly build up peasants' organisation. Unless they are with them, wherefrom will they get their votes? These rich peasants who stay in villages, take part in cultivation, hoard agricultural produce, mint speculative profit out of this, it is these rich peasants who actually control the election politics in villages. So, this is the

real character of politics of those who raise the high-pitched slogan of the People's Democratic Revolution. Has it got anything to do with revolution or is it a programme of some reforms within the confines of the present capitalist economic structure?

**Three Essential Pre-conditions for Revolution
—Correct Revolutionary Theory, Correct Base Political Line, and A Genuine Revolutionary Party**

Hence, let me remind you once again of the teachings of Lenin—what are essential for revolution—a correct revolutionary theory, a correct base political line and what is more, a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat. Unless you fulfill these essential preconditions, then like many of your fights in the past and many more in future, they will all be mere mock fights. So, while taking part in trade union struggles you must make yourselves conscious of all these serious questions. Give serious thoughts to all this while you are in your collective struggles. While trying to build up your struggles you are to understand why and where lies the difference between your organisation and those of others. Your sincere efforts should be to unite the workers in one union, despite political differences. For this is necessary

philosophical tolerance for each other in political ideological struggles. What is there to object if somebody can convince the majority about his superior politics and on this strength of ideology comes to the leadership? But if anybody curbs the freedom of expression of others, snatches away their right to criticism and imposes his leadership just on the strength of majority in the committee, factionalism is bound to arise. And factionalism entails avoidable wastage of time—and because of it, we are to move against one another and cannot always devote ourselves to develop revolutionary consciousness and organisation among the workers correctly and wholeheartedly. Therefore, the real hindrance to building up one unified union of the workers is this spirit of impatience or lack of philosophical tolerance. Splits cannot be avoided if we do not listen to the views of others, gag them and forbid discussions. Because, any worthy ideology will refuse to condemn itself to servility. Just as you are a believer of your view-points so also another person, even if wrong, has a belief of his own. There should be free scope for struggle between these two view-points. If you want to impose your opinion on me, I cannot accept it. So, if there is free exchange of opinions and open debates

and discussions, criticism, counter criticism, people at large get the opportunity to know who is right and who is wrong. If you are correct you have no reason to be afraid of polemics, rather your victory is assured. Only those who are on the wrong track, who cling to untruth, have weaknesses, and are afraid of debates, discussions and ideological struggles. They only, on various pretexts—in the name of discipline and unity—keep their cadres and supporters away from open debates and try to confuse the masses too. My appeal to you—never take this wrong course. Let exchange of opinions be your endeavour. And through this course, try to unite the working class in united struggle.

Struggle you must. Not that you will not struggle. For, hunger is a stern mistress. Even if you think today that struggles will beget nothing, day after tomorrow you will have to come down on the field of battle. Indications are already there. Thousands will take the field, engage in battles, but change will remain a far cry. For this change to take place, it demands of you those three things—correct base political line, correct revolutionary theory and a genuine revolutionary party. If you miss these, if your path is wrong, then, despite all your honesty, self-sacrifice and struggles, you cannot advance forward. Reiterat-

ing Lenin's teachings, let me remind you once again that however much democratic movements and struggles on your demands you may conduct, observe martyrs' days, confront the police in movements and strikes, shed your blood, you still remain a slave as before. Capitalism would remain and its exploitation would continue unabated. Perhaps you would earn wage increases by ten or thirty rupees, but the prices which are already high would increase many times more. You would again struggle for wage-rise and shed blood, get a rise of five rupees, but the prices of commodities would soar again. What is more, this uncertainty, aimlessness will bring despair and moral degeneration in your life. The dream of happiness centring round the family you have reared up and the most intimate and the precious relations you cherish to grow within it, cannot escape the imprint of the social malady of the present society; rather, it will worm its entry into it. You thought of a sweet home, many a dream of happiness you nurished. Go home and see how fleeting is your dream. The wife you have chosen as your life's partner, there too you will find no love, no peace. Stability is nowhere in this society. Even love loses its essence and beauty. Children, for whom you spared no pains, no amount of hardship you

grudged, nothing could stand in your way, have each become a caricature of manhood—one making a filmstar his idol, another a sportstar. In other words, even living in the world of only your kith and kin and of dreams of your own, leading a life completely detached from strifes and struggles outside, from politics, simply a tranquil life of only attending to office desk, of coming home, of eating and sleeping, you cannot save yourself and your family. The spectre of social problems would haunt you in your homes, will vitiate

your personal life, kill your love, reduce your love and affection to shambles. To live like a man fight you must. And your fight must be on a correct revolutionary line. Mere chanting the word 'revolution' will not bring you to the path of revolution. Only if you can organise the workers under the leadership of a correct revolutionary party and educate them with adequate political consciousness on the basis of a clear conception about the correct strategy of revolution and class character of the State, you will be able

to give rise to people's own political power and establish their political hegemony. And then will come the cherished moment when tens of millions of the down-trodden Indian people will behold the revolution. Till then—only agitation and defeat, only outburst and despair. The road to emancipation from this, emancipation of the society, liberation of mankind lies in revolution and revolution only. This is the way, the only way, and no other way.

Long Live Revolution !

"In a.....capitalist country like ours three types of influences of the existing social system are found on the workers.....The section of workers who have come from peasant families and who still maintain a link with the peasantry carry in them many rustic habits, prejudices and orthodox feudal outlook still prevalent in our rural social life. Even though they are workers they are victim of the hangover of the old feudal culture of rural life. They shall have to free themselves from these influences. There is another section who have come from the lower middle class families and have turned into the ranks of the workers due to economic reasons ; even though they have become workers, they still carry to the workers the seeds of middle class mentality, petty bourgeois vacillations and economism, and quarrel over individual leadership as they have not been able to break the cultural-ethical link with the middle class. There is another section of workers who constitute a third category. Even though they are small in number, they are the most revolutionary section of the proletariat from the class point of view, detached as they are from both of those two categories. They constitute the most revolutionary section among the workers in the sense that all their social link with the old society has been completely cut off. But they too are complete victim of the most reactionary culture of the bourgeois society, that is they are victim of vulgar individualism and a desparateness which is aimless and therefore blind in nature.....Hence, they too will have to acquire the communist character."

—COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

On some aspects of CPI(M)'s political resolution at Jullundar

Ever deepening crisis in the capitalist order of the country in the context of the third phase of intense general crisis of world capitalist system; imposition of the Emergency rule by the bourgeois party in power,—the Congress, in order to negate all fundamental democratic rights and liberties of the people which are not restored by the replacement of one bourgeois party by another, the Janata; the determined efforts of the crisis-ridden bourgeoisie to install a two-party system in the country so as to arrest militant mass movements and divert people's resentments to parliamentarism-legalism by exploiting the situation where the crying need of a left and democratic alternative remains unfulfilled; the split in the Congress after its debacle at the poll and the faction led by Indira Gandhi, being bolstered up and projected as the alternative by the bourgeoisie when the Janata, the present ruling bourgeois party is fast losing its credibility due to its anti-people acts and policies as also internal squabbles and dissensions and this being possible again due to the absence of the much needed left and democratic alternative—all these were the concrete political developments setting the background of the Tenth Party Congress of the CPI(M) held at Jullundar from April 2—8, 1978.

The crux of the problem before the working class movement in the country lies in meeting the historic need of providing the toiling people with a real alternative of a left and democratic front not only to foil the bourgeois conspiracy of installing a two-party system but what is more, to provide the toiling people with the instrument under the leadership of which they are to advance their fight against the mounting capitalist onslaughts and for restoration, preservation and further extension of the fundamental and democratic rights and liberties as a precursor to the ultimate battle to overthrow this very exploitative capitalist order.

In the light of this political reality, we would like to examine the main political resolution of the CPI(M) adopted at its Tenth Congress. The central focal point of our examination is the question of a left and democratic alternative—how it has been visualised by CPI(M) leadership, what is the contemplated correlation of forces composing the front, to be more precise, whether it is posed as a fighting instrument in the hands of the toiling people so as to foil the bourgeois design of a two-party system or just a parliamentary device calculated to serve the ambition of the party as the third alternative within the ambit of the bourgeois design.

In any discussion of the main political resolution of a party claiming to be 'Marxist' not only its analysis of the international situation and more specifically its stand on the struggle between two lines within the international communist movement but also its organisational report are very relevant and important. But the leadership of CPI(M) has not yet been able to give a final shape to those. That is why on the international communist movement, they said something, against the Chinese leadership in their draft which was later dropped. Again, in a speech said to have been delivered by Mr. P. Sundarayya, their former General Secretary at the Congress, as reported in the

press, it has been stated that differences of serious nature do exist within the party so much so that the Polit Bureau could not function as a cohesive body for years together and even during the Emergency. The leadership also does not deny this fact and that is why a party plenum is going to be held. We, therefore, refrain from commenting on these issues till the final picture comes. The present article covers only some aspects of CPI(M)'s political resolution adopted at its Tenth Congress.

The CPI(M) has given a call in the Political Resolution (PR) of its Tenth Congress to unite the left and democratic forces in a front to develop what it terms 'the real alternative' in Indian politics. This is the essence of the PR. The question of the left democratic front is a vital and burning one. This front can and should be developed into a massive instrument in the hands of the people in the anti-capitalist struggle. But what is the nature of 'the real alternative' proposed, what is the programme of this 'Left and Democratic Front' and who will constitute the 'left and democratic forces'?

The statement of the CPI(M) Central Committee, as quoted in the PR, says: 'This spectacular success of the people of West Bengal rallied behind the united left and democratic forces spearheaded by our party constitutes the most vital link in the country's fight for democracy, its expansion and the economic amelioration of the masses. Our party has always held that only the left and democratic forces can offer a real alternative in the present situation and the West Bengal victory immensely strengthens these forces throughout India' (p. 21). Had the electoral victory come in the wake and on the basis of sustained mass movements, this 'success' of the people of West Bengal would indeed have been spectacular and significant in the revolutionary sense. Was there any massive movement in West Bengal during the dark days of Emergency in West Bengal

in which the CPI(M) participated, let alone spearheading the same? In fact, CPI(M) as a political force opposing authoritarianism was conspicuous by its absence in West Bengal, like elsewhere in India during the Emergency. The victory, therefore, was an electoral victory, pure and simple. Experience of the last fifteen months is that, after winning the elections through whatever means, the CPI(M)-led government is sparing no pains to ensure that no militant movements develop in West Bengal and that the 'peace and law and order' (which cannot but be in the interest of exploiters in the present society) are not endangered in anyway. The assertion that the victory in West Bengal immensely strengthens the left and democratic forces throughout India makes sense only if such forces are viewed to be parliamentary, election-oriented in character providing an electoral alternative within the bourgeois parliamentary framework. Lest this observation of ours be considered premature, let us see how the CPI(M) elaborates this theme: 'Our success in West Bengal has been outstanding, followed by our success in Kerala and Tripura. In these three states, the polarisation has taken place between the front led by us and the Congress (West Bengal and Tripura) or the front led by the Congress (Kerala). It is unlike in other states where the major division is between two rival bourgeois-landlord combinations. This is a **qualitative difference** and it has been our endeavour to bring about this change all over India.....The struggle to build this front is part of our endeavour to bring about a change in the correlation of class forces to end a situation in which the people can choose only between two bourgeois-landlord parties, and get imprisoned within the framework of the present system' (p. 34-35). According to this, in whichever state the CPI(M) or a front led by it becomes an electoral alternative to the established bourgeois parties, polarisation will have taken place. The CPI(M)

calls this a **qualitative difference** and will endeavour, through the 'Left and Democratic Front', to bring about such '**qualitative**' '**changes**' all over India so that the 'Left and Democratic Front', presumably led by it, becomes an electoral alternative on an all-India scale. The CPI(M) considers that when the people get an opportunity of choosing, in bourgeois elections, a third alternative led by a party like it instead of choosing only between two alternative bourgeois parties, they cease to be imprisoned within the framework of the present system! This is the essence of the 'change in correlation of class forces' to be brought about by 'a period of mass struggles', of the call for 'the real alternative'. It is nothing but a parliamentary alternative within the existing framework, and this concept is totally contrary to all Marxist-Leninist teachings which hold that one cannot bring about a qualitative change, cannot end imprisonment of people within a system through elections without putting an end to the system itself.

It is not as if the CPI(M) has emerged, or is going to emerge as the third alternative within the present system immediately. But it is orienting its policies and mental make up towards that end. There is a growing urge among the Indian ruling class too, to have a third alternative, preferably a 'left' one, in the country. Through installation of the Janata Party at the centre, they have been able to give rise to two-party form of bourgeois democracy, which is safer from the point of view of their class interest. In a specific situation where one or both the bourgeois parties are unstable, it may be better for the ruling class to have a third or even a fourth alternative in reserve. The Congress has split, is showing instability and is extremely discredited in the public eyes. In the context of the in-fightings of the Janata Party and the resultant doubts about its stability, the possibility of the CPI(M) being envisaged as an alternative cannot be ruled out pro-

vided that party conducts itself in an 'acceptable' manner. Performance of the ministries headed by the CPI(M) in West Bengal and Tripura should be unmistakable pointers. Later in this article, we shall see how this party is striving hard not to displease the ruling class where it is in government. It is to be noted, that the performance in West Bengal so far has been highly commended by the Statesman: '.....the government has been widely accepted as moderate, businesslike and well-intentioned. Political stability and administrative order under Marxist rule compare favourably with conditions under the Janata regime of the Centre and states.' (Leader in the Statesman, 21.6.78). Thus, from the point of view of ensuring stability and administrative order which cannot but be bourgeois stability and order in the last analysis. The Statesman, a mouthpiece of Indian monopolists, finds the performance of the ministry at least as good as if not better than that of the Janata ministries. The utterance of the President of India reported in the press a few months back to the effect that there should better be three parties for effective and stable functioning of democracy in India—the third one being a communist party, is significant as this also reflects the growing appreciation and awareness of the ruling class that in the period of ever-deepening crisis of Indian capitalist economy, it may be better to have such a party as the third alternative because of its potential to serve, through its 'Left' image, their interest better than the marked bourgeois parties confusing the people and gaining a longer lease of life for the existing system.

That the CPI(M)'s objective is not a revolutionary alternative will be clear from a study of the PR. Instead of laying bare the class-basis of authoritarianism, instead of marking the struggle between the exploited masses and the ruling class as the major contradiction, the CPI(M) has tended to show authoritarianism as

the handiwork of an individual or at best of a particular bourgeois party and not inherent in the system. It follows from this that the danger of authoritarianism can be removed and fundamental change brought about through elections. This is bound to give rise to illusions about the existing system. Says the PR: 'The victory of the people against the Congress and its political meaning should not be underestimated. It was not just an electoral change-over from one bourgeois party to another' (p. 13) and 'The opposition bourgeois-landlord parties which were the victims of the emergency rule, opposed one-party dictatorship and supported the return to democratic rule. They supported democracy against dictatorship in the electoral struggle' (p. 16) and 'the authoritarian dictatorship has been removed with the electoral defeat of the Congress and the restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights' (p. 19).

By characterising the electoral defeat of Congress (R) as 'not just an electoral change-over from one bourgeois party to another' and by stating that 'the authoritarian dictatorship has been removed with the electoral defeat of the Congress', it has been implied that a fundamental change in favour of 'democracy' has come about through elections and as if authoritarian dictatorship has been put an end to through the elections. Is this not an out and out non-Marxist approach? Does it not slur over the class basis and class analysis of the situation? Can a Marxist speak about democracy and dictatorship in general terms as if these are supra-class in nature? The present Indian state cannot but be the instrument through which the ruling class exercise class-rule, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Since in the present era of crisis-ridden capitalist economy, it is not possible for the bourgeoisie to carry on its rule in the normal fashion, there is an ever-increasing tendency towards

authoritarianism in the aggregate interest of capitalism in capitalist countries, India not excepted. It is imperative to marshal all forces against onslaughts of authoritarianism at a critical juncture including those elements of the bourgeoisie who come forward, but it is a grave mistake to lose sight of the fact that the 'democracy' these bourgeois forces help to restore is nothing but truncated bourgeois democracy keeping bourgeois class-rule intact and that the new bourgeois combination, being a bourgeois alternative entrusted with running the government in aggregate interest of ruling class and their state, is bound to take recourse to repression and show up authoritarianism in diverse forms. To indulge in talks about democracy and dictatorship generally as if those are supra-class in nature, to depict the struggle as one between democracy and dictatorship in general terms forgetting that the real struggle is against the bourgeoisie by the exploited masses in order to smash the capitalist state machine and put an end to bourgeois class-rule which generates authoritarianism, to hide the fact that the Indian state remains a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie irrespective of whether there is 'one party dictatorship' or running of the government by two or three parties by turn and to imply that the battle against authoritarianism can be won without putting an end to bourgeois class-rule—do not all these amount to creating illusions about the bourgeois state? It is in the interest of the bourgeoisie to proclaim that authoritarianism can be ended and democracy made victorious by changing the government within the existing system just as the hoax about ending exploitation and misery of the people through reforms within the present state-structure is. By branding an individual or this or that party responsible for all evils, is not the CPI(M) creating

illusions about the system and objectively shielding capitalism and the capitalist state—root cause of authoritarianism and peoples' miseries, from the wrath of exploited masses?

In sequence with these, the CPI(M) says in the PR about the tasks of the party and the working class: 'The danger of dictatorship arises from the domination of the monopolists, big capitalists and landlords and the growing influence of foreign monopoly capital. Therefore, while utilising the present possibilities of broadbased resistance the party and the working class must concentrate on weakening, undermining and eliminating the power of these classes. The economic situation as well as our programme demands immediate and urgent attention to it' (p. 21). It is thus envisaged that the danger of authoritarianism arising out of domination of the ruling class can be removed by weakening, undermining and finally eliminating their stranglehold through utilising the present possibilities of broad-based resistance. It is one thing to organise movements to resist onslaughts of authoritarianism emanating from aggregate interest of the ruling class but it is quite another thing to talk about eliminating the domination of the ruling class within the present system. To a Marxist, eliminating the power of monopolists, big capitalists and the rural rich can only mean that socialism has been ushered in through revolutionary transformation of the society by smashing of the state machine, thereby eliminating power of the exploiting class. But it seems that the CPI(M) is determined to bring about a revolutionary transformation minus revolution! Clause 3 of the programme of the 'left and democratic forces' set out in the PR speaks of bringing about 'Basic changes in the constitution to eliminate the grip of the big bourgeois-landlord classes over the State and the power of bureaucracy'. Clauses 12 and 13 plan for step by step attainment of full employment for the rural

unemployed and the industrial working class respectively' (p. 39-40) Can reforms of constitution within the existing system eliminate the grip of the ruling class or change the present exploitative order? Can any sort of planning in a bourgeois set-up solve the fundamental problems of the masses like unemployment which is an inevitable outcome of capitalist economy in the present era? Are not all these calculated to confuse and lead the masses to believe that the goods can be delivered through constitutionalism and reformism so that they support the CPI(M)'s bid for coming into governmental power at the centre, leading the so-called left end democratic forces? This is nothing but capitalising the sacrifices made by the masses in movements for parliamentary gains. Following the footsteps of Bernstein, Kautsky and the likes, the CPI(M) leadership have thrown overboard in true social democratic fashion the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism and teachings of the leaders of international communist movement. While accusing the CPI incessantly of revisionism, they themselves are skilfully propounding the theory of peaceful transition to socialism of the modern revisionists, pseudo-revolutionary verbiage notwithstanding.

What is the composition of the 'left and democratic forces' envisaged by the CPI(M) as 'the real alternative'? Basavapunniah, a front-ranking CPI(M) leader, has said that 'the great bulk of the political forces which can be characterised as left and democratic at the present are behind the Janata, the Congress (emphasis added) and other political parties and they will have to be politically won over to the left and democratic front and its programme'. (Peoples' Democracy, April 30, 1978). The PR states that the 'left and democratic front' 'should include the left and democratic forces in the Janata Party' and 'However, there are elements and groups in it (Reddy Congress) who not only are against the authoritarianism of Indira Gandhi but also tend to take a

radical position on many socio-economic issues. These elements should be cultivated with a view to winning them over to the left and democratic programme' (p.42). The CPI(M) holds the view about parties like AIADMK, DMK and Akali Party that 'these parties though they include some local landlords and bourgeois elements.....play a helpful role in the democratic movement'. (Basavapunniah in Peoples' Democracy, April 30, 1978). The PR says that the 'left and democratic forces' 'include the democratic forces like the AIADMK and DMK in Tamilnadu, the Akali Party in Panjab and the Republican Parties' (p. 42). The PR also says that such forces 'include the Right CP, its followers and mass organisations headed by it'.

Thus the bulk of the 'left and democratic forces' are in the Janata and the Congress which, according to the CPI(M) itself, are the two principal 'bourgeois-landlord' parties in the country! Parochial and obscurantist parties like AIADMK (which has all through been a supporter of Indira Gandhi in the bargain), DMK, Akali Party and Republican Parties, although parties of local landlords and bourgeoisie on CPI(M) admission, are still 'left and democratic' forces. One wonders whether such 'left and democratic' forces are meant to fight against anybody at all, and if so, against whom? Presumably, for fighting the authoritarian forces represented by Indira Gandhi and her associates. But at the same time, it should be noted that as soon as some recent signs of Indira Gandhi's possible comeback in politics have become evident, the CPI(M) has subtly started shifting its stand through utterances of its leaders to the effect that it may become necessary one day to fight along with her for defending democracy! Can all this have any meaning unless the objective is to maintain closeness with all and sundry, including the 'bourgeois landlord' forces, so that unprincipled opportunistic alliances can be struck with any party or force as,

when and where it is profitable from the pragmatic, consideration of securing parliamentary advantages? The CPI(M) is cultivating the regional parties for gains in regional politics and eventual access to governmental power in the different states, through these, and by means of the 'Left and Democratic Front', the CPI(M) hopes to move step by step towards forming government in Delhi for making fundamental changes in the Constitution and removing the peoples' misery !

In the context of the objectives, programme and composition of the 'Left and Democratic Front' proposed by the CPI(M), it is not at all surprising that the 'left and democratic forces' include the bulk of the leading bourgeois parties, various regional, parochial and obscurantist parties and the CPI whom they used to call the 'revisionist Dange clique' even the other day—but not the SUCI. Understandably so. The SUCI, the only revolutionary party in India, cannot be part of a scheme which proposes to assemble disparate parties and groups including those of the exploiting classes, creates the illusion that the burning problems of the people can be solved by forming ministry at the Centre and through reforms within the present exploitative system, and by conforming to the rules of the game of bourgeois parliamentary politics, tries to keep the people's grievances and agitations within its confines in the aggregate interest of Indian capitalism. That the SUCI is not considered to be a left and democratic force reveals, at one stroke, the non-revolutionary character of the proposed front.

The PR has waxed eloquently about the CPI(M)'s so-called consistent anti-authoritarian role. We are glad to note that the CPI(M) has discovered that Indira Gandhi is 'the main focus of authoritarianism', but are constrained to say that the CPI(M) is saying this now in order to take advantage of the strong anti-Indira sentiment in the country and to develop closeness with Janata Party for gains in parliamentary politics and not

from anti-authoritarian conviction. It should be borne in mind that authoritarianism in the aggregate interest of Indian capitalism has not come about suddenly in one day. It has a history of origin, consolidation and growth. Who can forget that when the Congress (R) was engaged in consolidating its position and moving towards fascism through various measures under the cloak of radical slogans, the SUCI under the leadership of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of this era, engaged itself in exposing this bourgeois conspiracy which the CPI(M) helped the Congress (R) to consolidate and build up a radical image? Who does not remember that at the time of split of the Congress and birth of the Congress (R), the CPI(M) discovered 'radical' and 'progressive' sections within it in much the same way in which it is now discovering such elements in huge numbers in the Janata Party and the Congress? When she did not have majority in the parliament, Indira Gandhi's faction of Congress was sustained with the support, among others, of the CPI(M) MPs. During the days when she was consolidating the position of her party through the election of her nominee, Sri V. V. Giri, as the President of India and through so-called radical measures like bank nationalisation designed to lay the rock-bottom foundation of fascism while confusing the masses with illusion about radical progressiveness of such measures, the CPI(M) far from pinpointing it as the main enemy and exposing it, actually assessed the Congress (R) led by Indira Gandhi to be progressive and helped it in mobilising public support and consolidating its position through numerous speeches of its leaders, writings in its organs and statements of its Politbureau and Central Committee. CPI(M)'s published party organs and documents of those days are replete with instances of this. Has anyone forgotten that, whereas the SUCI, under the leadership and guidance of the great leader of the proletariat, Comrade Shibdas

Ghosh, concretised, elaborated and enriched the Marxist-Leninist teachings on fascism and correctly assessed the role and character of Congress (R) led by Indira Gandhi and marked it as the main enemy seeking to usher in fascism, the CPI(M) found in it 'a healthy trend which hates big landlords and monopolists' and found its slogans and measures to be 'in tune with anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people' ? The CPI(M) assessed that bank nationalization had 'opened up some new possibilities' and urged the progressive forces to rally 'to beat back determined reactionary opposition and see that nationalised banks become a tool for fighting monopoly interests'. It hailed the victory of Sri V. V. Giri as a 'political victory of the popular and democratic forces against the forces of extreme reaction' and spoke of 'the process of mass radicalization and the new mass polarization that have been set in motion following bank nationalization and the winning of the Presidential contest against the Syndicate's nominee'. It said that a 'country-wide fronthas come into existence' for a long drawn out struggle against 'extreme rightist forces', pointedly assured in a letter to Indira Gandhi its support to her government in this 'fight' and talked about 'development of a far broader front of the democratic forces including a section of the Indira Gandhi Congress' (all quotations are from Peoples' Democracy).

When the growth of authoritarianism climaxed into the Emergency, the CPI(M) took up an attitude which can only be described as tacit approval of the Emergency measures, did everything so that Indira Gandhi was not antagonized in any way and even eulogized her fascistic 20-point programme. It reassured that 'It is therefore a canard spread by interested quarters and repeated by the Right C. P leaders that our only aim and objective is to pull Mrs. Gandhi down from the Prime Ministerial gaddi' (Namboodiripad's Article in Peoples' Democracy, 12. 12. 76)

and further that 'We had.....no hesitation to give our support to Indira Gandhi and her colleagues when a confrontation developed between them on the one hand and the Syndicate Congress supported by non-Congress rightist parties like the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra' (Peoples' Democracy, 19. 12. 76). On the morrow of clamping down of the Emergency, a meeting of the opposition parties and forces was held at Calcutta on 28th June, 1975 in order at least to strongly protest against the same. While all the other parties agreed about registering a protest, the CPI(M) took the stand that they would give their opinion only after discussions in their Central Committee. And throughout the period of Emergency, their Central Committee did not express an opinion, whatever its deliberations might have been. This was not lost upon the CPI. Rajeswar Rao, the CPI General Secretary, appreciated the CPI(M) position thus: 'the CPI(M) has not passed any resolution on the present Emergency. We think this is an improvement. The CPI(M) leaders are now in contact with Siddhartha Sankar Ray and the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi,For what I do not know. Let us hope for the better'. (Statesman, 19. 7. 75). It may also be recalled that Saugata Roy, a Congress leader from West Bengal, said in a statement published in the Statesman on 10th October, 1977 that when, during the Emergency, even many in the Congress were opposing Mrs. Gandhi's wrong policies, Mr. Jyoti Basu's party tried to come to an understanding with her. The CPI(M) has not protested against these statements.

Compare this approach and attitude of the CPI(M) with the unequivocal stand taken by our party, the SUCI, under leadership of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. In a statement on 26th June, the Central Committee of our party said: 'Although there exists no danger of internal security

In the country, the government of India by declaring the order of Emergency has attacked at the very root of democracy.

"Being faced with utter failure to solve the economic problems of the country, ever-increasing peoples' outburst against the ruling party and the internal crisis inside it that has been created by the recent judgment of the Allahabad High Court and the Supreme Court against the Prime Minister, the ruling party has become absolutely perturbed and scared and declared Emergency.

"We strongly condemn the manner in which the internal crisis of the ruling party has been posed and made to pass on as the danger for internal security of the country, a false pretext to take away the fundamental democratic rights of the people. We demand immediate withdrawal of Emergency and release of all leaders including Shri Jayprakash Narayan who have been arrested".

As a pretext for clamping Emergency, Indira Gandhi raised the hue and cry that security of the country was endangered by right reaction and foreign imperialism, especially U. S. imperialism, in order to confuse the people and screen from them the fascist path on which Congress(R) was moving in aggregate interest of the bourgeoisie as their trusted agent. The CPI(M) started chanting in unison with her. Mr. Jyoti Basu said, 'The Emergency requires us to be all the more watchful against anti-national imperialist conspiracies and safeguard the fight for democratic rights from being exploited by such elements who specifically direct their fire against the Indo-Soviet treaty to explain the emergency and the steps taken by the Government.' (Peoples' Democracy, 23.11.75). Again, five Politbureau members met Indira Gandhi on April 9, 1976. The memorandum they placed before her was reported thus in the Peoples' Democracy dated 25. 4. 76 : 'The party's record, the memorandum asserted, is one of

consistently carrying on a political-ideological fight against rightist policies, whether pursued by internal or external forces and against policies of the extreme left.....The CPI(M) has a consistent record of fight against imperialism and particularly against US imperialist machinations and we have never hesitated to support the Government whenever it took an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial stand'. It is as if they were producing testimonials of good conduct so that Indira Gandhi should not find fault with them.

Indira Gandhi sought to confuse the people and rally popular support in her favour by announcing the 20-point programme. In page 25 of the PR, the CPI(M) says that 'the 20-point programme more or less conformed to these requirements (requirements of the World Bank—Ed., P. E.)' but during those days, the tone was quite different : The party is of the opinion that if these points (of the 20-point programme—Ed., P. E.) relating to peasants and agricultural labourers' are honestly and sincerely implemented, they would give some relief to these sections' (from the memorandum referred to above—Peoples' Democracy, 25.4.76). The CPI(M) leader, Mr. Jyoti Basu, said after meeting the Prime Minister : Why should we not be allowed to conduct propaganda movement in support of issues in the interest of the people—some of which are included in the 20-point programme ?' (Jugantar, 17.4./6. Translation from Bengali ours—Ed., P. E.). The CPI(M) is now saying, that the 20-point programme conformed to the imperialist requirements of the World Bank, but at that time they said that this programme was in the interest of workers and peasants. These two cannot be true at the same time. Which one is true will the CPI(M) please answer ?

Such examples could be multiplied, but the above suffice to show that the CPI(M) consistently supported and lent a

radical image to the authoritarian forces acting in interest of the ruling bourgeoisie through the Congress (R) during the origin, consolidation and culmination of such forces. Is it not duplicity to claim, as the CPI(M) has done in the PR, that it had correctly analysed and pinpointed the danger of authoritarianism rising through Congress (R) and Indira Gandhi, had warned the country about the same and that subsequent events have vindicated its analysis and stand ?

When on the eve of the Emergency, movements in Bihar, Haryana, U. P. and other places were on, Indira Gandhi government launched all-out attack on these. Our party participated in these movements with all available strength, but the CPI(M) Central Committee took a decision that, since the rightists were leading these movements, they could not join in these. They did not take any initiative to build up movements in West Bengal even, where there could be no question of the rightist forces usurping the leadership.

Even while not participating in the movements, the CPI(M) skilfully maintained contacts with the forces who now constitute the Janata Party and whom it was then calling the 'forces of right reaction' just as the Congress (R) and the CPI were doing. The CPI(M) did this in order to have an option open in the manoeuvres of parliamentary politics. When the Emergency was lifted and the general elections announced and it became clear that Janata Party would sweep the polls due to the strong anti-Emergency feeling of the people, the CPI(M) found that the 'forces of right reaction' were now less dangerous than the Congress (Sundarayya, Hindusthan Standard, 7. 2. 77) and more progressive than the Congress (P. Ramamurthy, Times of India, 7. 3. 77). Now Ranadive said, 'strong leftist feeling of the masses have been reflected in the manifesto of Janata-CFD' (Anandabazar Patrika, 1. 3. 77, English translation ours—

Ed., P. E.). Throwing ethics to the winds and without admitting past mistakes, the CPI(M) entered into an opportunistic electoral alliance with the Janata. After the rout of Congress (R) at the polls, the CPI(M) has now discovered that Indira Gandhi is the main forces of authoritarianism !

The present position is that, due to the strong anti-Indira feeling still prevalent among the masses, the CPI(M) is finding it more convenient to move with the Janata Party in order to gain in parliamentary politics and considers the Janata to be the better alternative to associate with. But they cannot directly support many activities of the Janata as that would impair their 'left' image. That is why they are posing the issue thus : Janata's economic and political stands are serving the monopolists, but since Janata still has a role in restoration of democracy, it should be supported. Therefore, they say, the Janata Government of the centre is a 'friendly' one. But recently, squabbles and in-fightings of the Janata Party have tarnished its image, a crisis may develop anytime within this party, doubts about the stability of the Janata ministry at the centre have arisen coupled with signs of Indira Gandhi's comeback and the situation has tended to become fluid. As soon as the CPI(M) sensed this, it has subtly started to shift its stand and take up a softer attitude towards Indira Gandhi in order to cover all eventualities, as a 'second front', so to say, which may become useful in future. Utterances of top CPI(M) leaders reported in the press a few months back to the effect that the situation being fluid, it cannot be ruled out that the CPI(M) may have to work jointly with Congress (I) some day in defence of democracy, assume significance.

Its whole politics being hinged to securing parliamentary gains, the CPI(M) has all along tried to avoid confrontation with the bourgeoisie, collaborated with and labelled some sections of them as radical. Usually, it has associated itself with the

ruling bourgeois party as that has paid better dividends. When situation became fluid, it associated itself with the next winning combination of the bourgeoisie. The CPI, by open alliance with the ruling bourgeois party, has exposed itself before the masses whereas the CPI(M), by skilful handling to maintain a so-called 'independent left image', is objectively serving the ruling bourgeoisie better. Now, due to the instability in the political situation and rapidly growing disillusionment of the masses with the bourgeois parties, a stage has been reached when the CPI(M) feels that it might be able to provide a third alternative acceptable to the establishment. The proposed 'Left and Democratic Front' is a means to achieve this goal.

On the economic situation, the CPI(M) notes in the PR that during the last few years, the Indian economy has been experiencing crisis after crisis and that 'For the Indian economy, or rather the big capitalists and monopolists, faced with the shrinkage of the home market, the export outlet was an immediate weapon of maintaining their profits and the viability of their industries. It offered an easy manoeuvre against the crisis though it increased the dependence of the economy on foreign market.....This is further leading to a new development—the striving by the Indian big bourgeoisie for partnership in foreign capitalist concerns in India,.....The desperate effort to secure a foothold in foreign market is leading to joint ventures with foreign monopoly firms in the hope of subcontracting etc. in Third World countries.The trend for collaboration and partnership with multinationals is to be fought and eliminated. It will meet with resistance from within the bourgeois class itself as it can progress only by growingly invading the home market at the expense of indigenous industry.

'It is the duty of the party to rouse the people to this danger on all occasions and thwart the machinations of the multina-

tionals and the World Bank and defeat policies which enable them to penetrate *our* economy.' (p.26-27, Italics ours).

It is quite true that, faced with repeated and ever-increasing crises which are inevitable in a capitalist economy in the present era, the Indian capitalists, in order to counter the effect of shrinking home market, are resorting to export promotion, are trying to secure a foothold, in foreign markets. While continuously increasing participation of Indian capital in foreign capitalist concerns in India, they are allowing them some concessions here and there and are becoming junior partners in joint ventures with foreign multinationals in third countries thereby exploiting these countries. Although the PR does not mention it, apart from such joint ventures which are imperialistic in nature, Indian capital on its own has been exported to many countries to set up industries there for imperialist exploitation, *albeit* on a much smaller scale than the principal imperialist countries. All these are being resorted to by Indian capitalists—not merely a handful of monopolists as implied by the CPI(M) but even by medium industrialists and traders to overcome crisis and to establish themselves in the international market for maximisation of profit. They are doing these obviously in the aggregate interest of Indian capitalism. But the CPI(M), by not analysing and exposing the unquestionably imperialist character and significance of such export of capital and collaboration or joint ventures with multinationals is shielding the Indian bourgeoisie. In order to justify and rationalise its collaboration with bourgeois parties and the bourgeoisie in the hope of forming combinations in quest of governmental power, the CPI(M) is saying that the bourgeois class will resist the activities which, in fact are being organised by them to safeguard their own interest! By picturing the Indian bourgeoisie as champions of 'national interest' and progressive, the CPI(M) is serving them even

better than the Congress or Janata and is creating, the grounds for supporting the bourgeoisie by trying to ensure moral sanction of the people for the same.

The CPI(M) is thus shielding from the masses the capitalistic and even imperialistic character of the Indian state. Although it sometimes raises anti-monopoly and anti-multinational slogans, from its party platform for public consumption it is in reality inviting monopolists and multinationals to invest in West Bengal where it is in government and is giving them all facilities and encouragement. It has assured them that there is nothing to fear and it would see to it that class conflicts do not intensify. It has advised the workers to avoid even strikes and use it only as the last resort and is appealing to the business community to practise self-discipline regarding profits and to take voluntary steps to lower down prices !

This has given rise to a politics of duplicity in as much as the CPI(M), which is raising anti-monopoly and anti-multinational slogans and is accusing the Janata for supporting the monopolists and multinationals, is itself guilty of the very same things in West Bengal. Naturally, this party is discovering friendliness among those who are defending the present capitalist-imperialist system.

It is also noteworthy that the CPI(M) makes out in the PR as if a handful of monopolists are responsible for the economic crisis and misery of the people. They do not point out that the miseries and crises are inevitable products of the exploitative capitalist order. They talk about fighting monopolists without pointing out that the crisis, misery and exploitation can be ended only through overthrow of the capitalist state machine. Thus they shield the capitalist system from the masses and act in aggregate interest of Indian capitalism. They suggest that economic ills result from 'wrong policies' pursued by this or that government or party and not inherent in the present system, the implication being that another party—[presumably the CPI(M)]

coming to govern at the centre could set matters right by pursuing 'correct policies'. In this way, is not the CPI(M) subtly advocating reformism and has it not become a party to the bourgeois design of keeping all agitations and movements confined within the bounds of parliamentary politics ?

With fanfare, the CPI(M) has declared that henceforth it will be 'A period of mass struggles' in order to bring about 'a change in the correlation of class forces' (p. 33-34). Can this have any meaning unless it is understood that the battle against authoritarianism is in reality a battle against capitalism to be conducted continuously against successive bourgeois alternative governments serving interest of capitalism and authoritarianism generated by it ? In the two-party system introduced in India after the last elections, authoritarianism is bound to rear its ugly head through the second bourgeois alternative, the Janata Party in the governmental seat. This has already been seen from the dilly-dallying by the Janata Party in restoring even the limited bourgeois democratic rights prevalent earlier which had been curtailed during the Emergency. This they are doing under cover of so-called acceptable and good elements said to have been contained in the 42nd amendment. Further, the anti-democratic and authoritarian measures like preventive-detention have not been removed in the 44th amendment. A 'mini-MISA' has been promulgated by the Janata government in Madhya Pradesh and from the series of mass killings of workers and peasants voicing their legitimate rights by the police at Bailadila, Panthnagar, Kanpur, Bokaro and other places which have surpassed even all bloody records of previous Congress governments in this respect prove the same authoritarian character of the government. Should not the CPI(M) have striven to forge unity of all left forces to build up strong movements against the repressive, anti-people measures and actions of the Janata governments ? The CPI(M) cannot do so

since it considers the Janata to be 'friendly' and has taken a position of general support to it. Even while deprecating incidents such as at Bailadila (verbally and through statements—not through protest demonstrations or movements), the CPI(M) holds the bureaucracy responsible for such incidents, thereby virtually exonerating the Janata governments just as the CPI did to Congress. And this is precisely providing an excuse to the Janata Party on these incidents! The CPI(M) has rejected a proposal from the CPI for joint movement on these incidents (why the CPI, which worked hand-in-glove with the Congress(R) throughout is now suddenly a champion of the oppressed is, of course, another matter).

The truth is that the CPI(M) never views mass movements as means of making people politically conscious and organising the exploited masses so as to help them acquiring adequate class consciousness and building up instruments of struggle required for the revolutionary transformation of society. It has use for agitational movements in order to rally public support so that through the struggles and sacrifices of the people it can reap electoral benefits and make a place for itself in the parliamentary politics of the country. With this objective, the CPI(M) conducted and participated in numerous movements in the past. However, after tasting governmental power in two states and with its growing closeness with the ruling class the CPI(M) now aims at forming governments in other states and ultimately at the centre with the blessing of and good certificate from the ruling class. Even agitational movements are fast losing utility to them and are now being discarded. Further, political association with forces like the Janata Party, AIADMK, DMK and the Akali's is also making it difficult for the CPI(M) to organise even agitational movements in the states were they are in the government. A recent instance was the proposed one day strike in all public sector establishments of the country which was

scheduled for June 28, 1978. Decision about this strike was taken on 15th May at a convention of different trade union bodies. But the CITU, alongwith trade union wings of the Janata Party and the Congress, deliberated with the Central Government, came to a secret understanding behind the backs of the workers and suddenly called off the proposed strike with less than two days to go without any of the workers' demands having been met. Significantly, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) although a central trade union, was left out of these parleys—perhaps because its participation might have proved to be a hindrance.

If the CPI(M) were really serious about ushering in 'a period of mass struggles', would it not have taken advantage of being in government in West Bengal and tried its best to develop mass and class struggles? But the CPI(M)—led Government is actually doing everything in its power to see that struggles and movements are reduced and dampened as far as possible and is giving assurances to that effect so that the ruling class allows them to continue in the government. Mr. Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister, West Bengal and a front-ranking leader of the CPI(M) has, through many public utterances, stated that he would seek to ensure that class-conflicts do not intensify and that workers should view even a strike as the last resort. He has requested the business community that they in return should 'accept the reality of the Left Front Government in West Bengal and give it five years to serve the people'. It seems they are determined to depend on bureaucracy and move in an utterly legalistic manner instead of relying upon mass movements in the farms and the factories, forgetting that even for adopting reforms and providing some relief to the masses, the policies can be given pro-people orientation in the revolutionary sense only by loosening the grip of the police and bureaucracy and depending on mass initiative and mass movements. This

government is laying great stress on maintaining 'law and order' which can, in the present society, mean only bourgeois 'law and order' to the detriment of the exploited people and is crushing agitations and movements in a bureaucratic manner using police and paramilitary forces.

The SUCI is a living challenge to this type of politics. Faced with specific situations in 1967 and 1969 when opportunity arose for a revolutionary party to participate in government within the bourgeois system in West Bengal, the SUCI, under the leadership and guidance of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, concretised, elaborated and enriched Marxism on Indian soil by integrating it with practice to evolve guidelines for furthering the revolutionary objective in these specific conditions. The SUCI showed that the main question was: Whether such a government should serve the capitalist state as the Congress Governments had done, or whether it should give the discontent of the people against capitalism the concrete shape of organised movements? The SUCI formulated that if the impression was created that such governments could remove the misery of the people, it would tantamount to deceiving the people, would not only mean wastage of time but would also help parliamentary illusions to take deeper roots in mass mind. Being in government, the main task should be to restrain the bureaucracy and the police, to keep the legitimate movements free from their interference and to unleash a mighty wave of democratic mass movement. Never should a movement be discouraged, far less crushed, on the plea of maintaining 'law and order' because whatever is legal is not necessarily justified, moral and humanistic. It is more true in a capitalist society of present day where 'injustice has become the order' and 'every student of ethics and jurisprudence knows that what is legal may not be always justified and moral. Similarly, everything illegal

in the eye of law is not necessarily unjustified, illegitimate and immoral' (**Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**). Dependence on the administration will foil the main task which is to create an upsurge of movements, form peoples' committees from the lowest to the highest level as instruments of struggle and to develop these committees to give birth to peoples' political power, the harbinger of revolution, as an alternative force to the capitalist state power.

The CPI(M) betrayed non-revolutionary approach wherever it came into government earlier—in Kerala as well as West Bengal. Participation of the SUCI in the two UF Governments in West Bengal in 1967 and 1969 acted as a brake on such tendencies of the CPI(M), and it was possible, particularly through Comrade Subodh Banerjee as the Labour Minister in the first UF Government in 1967 to give a left-orientation, conducive to preparation for revolution, to some policies of the government being guided by the historic teachings of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh** as pointed out hereinbefore. But now SUCI is not in the government, the CPI(M) has developed closer relation with the ruling class and is engaged in brightening the prospect of its acceptability to them in its bid to become the third electoral alternative within the establishment.

It is not impossible that a revolutionary party may come into government in some states and then at the centre and can be, even in the electoral sense, a national alternative. But the acid test would then be: Whether that party is using governmental power to encourage, develop and intensify mass movements as a preparation for revolution or whether it is discouraging and trying to dampen mass movements, trying to develop closeness with and become trustworthy to the ruling class, the bureaucracy and the state machine through hobnobbing and adjustments in order to secure and enhance its gains within the existing system? The CPI(M) has stated in the PR

that 'the spectacular victory of the left alliance headed by us in West Bengal defeating both the Congress and the Janata has made it an object of admiration of wide sections of masses, who are watching every step taken by the ministry and are in full support of its measures' (p. 42) and further that '.....the victories in West Bengal and Tripura strengthen these (left and democratic) forces throughout India. They show the path to a new crystallisation which can secure an abiding advance for the people'. (p. 43). How we wish these were true ! But the unfortunate fact is that the ministry led by the CPI(M), a party calling itself communist and Marxist, is betraying non-revolutionary approach in every step taken by it.

Not to speak of encouraging movements, during its rule of over fifteen months of this ministry, the police have interfered with and crushed workers' movement in factories and other democratic movements on numerous occasions in much the same style as during Congress Ministries. Last year, medical students' agitating over legitimate demands were mercilessly beaten up by the police at Calcutta without any provocation. SUCI organisers were manhandled and arrested in presence of Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, leader of SUCI in the state assembly, at a convention to voice legitimate demands of the people displaced and evicted for construction of the Kolaghat Thermal Power Station. Police and paramilitary force harassed and coerced the people in rural areas of Bankura in the name of large scale 'combing operation' against alleged Naxalites. Hapless refugees from East Pakistan who had been forced to return to West Bengal from camps in other states because of unbearable living conditions there, were inhumanly left by this ministry to the mercy of nature without food. They were starved, harassed, arrested, beaten and killed even, and finally many of them were forced to return. Those who did not, were hounded and confronted by the police in large scale operations. This

ministry raised the bogey that the crippling power-crisis was due to sabotage by the workers of the Santaldih Power Station (which contention was to be proved wrong and malicious later on) and under direct instruction of the Chief Minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, the whole power station was turned into a vast police camp with the police far out numbering the workers and the workers made to work on gun-point, so to say. On the wake of the unprecedented havoc caused by floods, hungry people demanding food and relief have been fired upon by the police of this government to maintain 'law and order', resulting in several deaths.

The CITU and the SFI, trade union and students' wings of the CPI(M), are being used to wreck workers' and students' movements from within and to break up strikes.

The ministry is busy appeasing the bureaucracy and the police and relying upon them rather than on mass movements, just like a bourgeois government. One of the early acts of the ministry was to substantially increase the budget-grant on police. The Police Association of this capitalist state has returned the compliment by conferring the title of 'Bangabir' (hero of Bengal) upon Mr. Jyoti Basu ! Mr. Jyoti Basu said at the state assembly : 'Nothing could be achieved by holding bureaucrats responsible for the ills of the State. There was no choice for the Government but to carry on with "this bureaucracy."... ..He, however, asked the officials not to become "slaves" or "sycophants" of ministers but to guide them'. (Statesman, 1st. September, 1977).

On the question of recovering 'benam' (held under other names) land from rich peasants and vested interests in the villages, this ministry just like its predecessor Congress ministries took up an attitude of bourgeois legalism and declared that forcible seizure of land would not be tolerated, knowing fully that there is no legal means of making the vested interests disgorge

such land and that the only way to recover them is through the pressure of organised peasant movements. Obstructing, on flimsy pretexts, the formation of peoples' committees as instruments of struggle, the government has formed instead Block Committees in the rural areas to confuse the issue and with the declared objective of ensuring 'peace' in the villages! These committees include rich peasants, money lenders and their agents and touts, all political forces serving the bourgeoisie including those of the ruling 'Left Front', the Congress and the Janata, but characteristically, not the SUCI! These committees are virtually functioning as 'united front' of the vested interests against the poor and landless peasants. In their concern to protect bourgeois 'law and order' so that the ruling class and the centre cannot blame them, the CPI(M) leaders are prone to boast that West Bengal is more 'peaceful' than the states administered by the Janata, this when at least twenty-three peasants died in clashes, with vested interests within the very first year of the ministry. Is it not clear as to which class interest is served by such 'peace'? This government undemocratically superseded the Board of Secondary Education with the help of an Act under the hated 42nd amendment to the Constitution effected by Indira Gandhi against which the CPI(M) leaders cry hoarse at every opportunity, organised the Panchayat elections in such a manner as only be termed as total rigging.

This ministry is not invoking the Essential Commodities Act to check rising prices and is doing practically nothing in its power to curb and bring to books the blackmarketeers and dishonest traders. On any issue, it pleads inability on the ground that there is not enough power in the hands of the states. The sole political slogan of the CPI(M) in West Bengal has become—'More power to the states'. But interestingly, the ministry or the CPI(M) has not cited any specific instance where its progressive

measure has been hampered due to lack of power or thwarted by the centre. If they had been honest in their assertion, they would have taken the masses into confidence regarding the issues involved and built up movements against the centre on such issues. Therefore, the purpose of clamouring about 'more power to the states' is something else. First, it diverts attention of the people from the total incapacity of the government to act in their interest. Secondly, it seeks to create the illusion that, if the CPI(M) formed a ministry at Delhi, they could solve the problems in favour of the people. The CPI(M) is nurturing this illusion in the hope to capitalise it in the bid for ministerial 'gaddi' in Delhi. The slogan for more power to the states has been thrown with the purpose of facilitating the CPI(M)'s access to governmental power at the centre in future.

We have seen that the CPI(M)'s approach towards movements before it forms a government and after are totally different. This indicates that this party considers mass movements to be passports to governmental position and little else. What more and new will be achieved by the CPI(M) if it is installed in a ministry at the centre as an alternative to Congress or Janata? Will the left minded people ponder?

The Tenth Congress marks a watershed in the politics of the CPI(M). Moving along the path of revisionism, *albeit* under cover of revolutionary phrase-mongering, it has at this Congress taken decisively the position of practising parliamentarianism pure and simple. It is now openly preaching peaceful transition to socialism and fundamental changes through reforms. The 'Left and Democratic Front' envisaged is just a means of placing the CPI(M) in government in Delhi.

Understandably, many questions have been raised inside the CPI(M), and there has been widespread dissidence on the issues,

In the PR, the party has sought to counter the questions and dissidence by raising anti-authoritarian hue and cry, by talking about 'a period of mass struggle' and by taking a supposedly anti-monopoly, anti-multinational stance. But we have examined and seen that the CPI(M)'s claims and assertions in these regards are not corroborated by facts and this party has been practising quite contrary to what it preaches or asserts. It has acquired the habit of exercising duplicity by inserting militant, revolutionary jargons and slogans in its political resolution while actually negating the revolutionary line at every step in practice, like the Congress which used to adopt high-sounding 'socialistic' programmes in the AICC resolutions while actually consolidating capitalism in the country.

Formation of a genuine Left Front is a burning question today. SUCI had given call for this earlier too, but the CPI(M) had not paid heed to it. Absence of a genuine Left Front had made it easier for authoritarianism to gain ground. Today, absence of such a front is facilitating the bourgeois design of establishing two/three party parliamentarianism.

Our Appeal to the workers of CPI(M)

We would like to appeal to CPI(M) workers to recall and ponder what their leadership told them at the time of the split in the party in 1964 about the utterly revisionist political formulation of the leadership of the united party and compare that with the formulation given at their recently held Tenth Party Congress. Justifying the split, the CPI(M) leadership then showed :

"The crux of the differences repeatedly raised (was).. against whom—the Congress or against its opponents from the right is the Communist Party to direct its main fire". Whereas the revisionist 'Dange clique' hawked unity "with the so-called 'middle of the road' (which according to this view included the Congress)" in order to "thwart the forces of right reaction, communalism

and separatism", the view of those who broke away from this political line to form a new party, CPI(M) was that the "growing forces of right reaction, communalism and separatism could not be stopped by strengthening the ruling Congress Party" because these were being "generated by the very policies of the ruling party" (Fight Against Revisionism' 7th Party Congress Document. —Dec. 1965).

But today, after the political formulation, already put to practice at the poll and only ratified at the last Congress of the CPI(M), you are only to substitute the words "right reaction, communalism and separatism" in Dangeite formulation with only one word, 'authoritarianism' and you will find not only the 'middle of the road' Congress but all the bourgeois parties including Congress (I) and the ruling Janata Party as also regional, communal and parochial parties and forces like AIADMK, DMK, Akali, Muslim League, all and sundry who can be brought to the bandwagon called by them the "left and democratic front" for 'weakening' but not for overthrowing the national and foreign monopoly power which is defended and protected by the bourgeois state power and that too, by peaceful parliamentary means meaning parliamentary majority at the Centre and constitutional changes. Even Dange and the old CPI leadership could not go thus far! What a wonderful gift the leadership has given to the rank and file thirteen years after they came out of the old revisionist party with the avowed object of fighting revisionism for a correct revolutionary line. Let them pause and ponder whether the line, the leadership has formulated and is being avidly pursued is anything other than bourgeois reformism? Does it not mean renunciation of the basic tenets of revolutionary Marxism and to stand in defence of crisis-ridden bourgeois class? Is it for this that they formed a new party, toiled hard, undertook untold sufferings and sacrifices, all these long years? Are they not called upon by the leadership to stand

opposed to the very class aspiration of the proletariat and goal of the exploited masses by adopting a political line of open class collaboration instead of organising and strengthening the class battles which are becoming sharper more and more with the ever-deepening crisis in the capitalist productive system ?

Lastly, just to refresh their memories and help comparing their present party life with that of the united party from which their leadership promised them to make a break, we quote from the same 7th Party document the following extract :

“With revisionism and bourgeois nationalism on the ascendancy, principles of Leninist organisation were given the go by.... Added to this was the fact that without that revolutionary fervour born out of the revolutionary Marxist theory and practice, with activities in the parliamentary, legislative, co-operative and such spheres being on the ascendant, with the colossal growth of

the bourgeois corruption in social and political life all around, communist norms of life were getting shattered, and bourgeois habits and mode of life—softness and easy going life began to grip party comrades, particularly at the top levels”.

(Ibid page 95)

Has the picture changed for the better or the process that started has now reached a stage where the party loses all difference from the bourgeois parties ? In the life style of the leaders, in morals and ethics, in the matter of resorting to vile bourgeois tactics and manoeuvrings, it rather outbids even the branded bourgeois parties. And this political corruption pollutes the party life through and through. Will the honest workers of CPI(M) respond to the cause of revolution or remain the mute tools at the hands of those who do the worst kind of treachery to that solemn cause of the proletariat ?

“if they (the CPI(M)-Ed. P. Era) still cling to their pet theory that the national bourgeoisie is an ally of their ‘revolution’, then the very object of such a revolution can in no way mean overthrow of the present capitalist State machine, rather it boils down to nothing but the programme of parliamentary election battles within the framework of a national bourgeois State, and their ideal of ‘revolution’ is thus reduced to empty talks and meaningless slogans—which their cadres and theoreticians have so hopelessly failed to grasp.”

—Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

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