

In the Koraput Region Some Experiences in Imparting Marxist-Leninist Education to Adivasis

-- by a correspondent

In discussing the problem of imparting Marxist-Leninist education to adivasis, in particular to those of undivided Koraput (Orissa), we must realise the complexities involved in this task. Marxism and Leninism have been formulated in advanced capitalist societies where working people are reduced to mere instruments. Whereas adivasis are a people involved in rudimentary methods of production — stuck somewhere between the stage of food-gathering-hunting and cultivation of land, though the latter stage, i.e. 'feudalism', is gaining the upper hand day by day. Adivasis still have all their cultural richness as producers — they are not mere instruments; but their communication system is rudimentary. They are a strong, creative and lively people with strong cultural bonds, but, because of the rudimentary communication system, there are many obstacles in the path of imparting political education to them.

Capitalism, as an economic system and mode of production, is something which the adivasis have not experienced. Marxism-Leninism, as a product of this system, demands from its pupils the knowledge of the capitalist mode of production, knowledge about its operative forces — economic, political and social. This itself creates obstacles for imparting Marxism-Leninism to adivasis, in that certain pre-conditions do not exist here. The organiser has to re-create these conditions. (This has to happen to some extent anyway with any pre-capitalist peasant society where such Marxist-Leninist work is undertaken.)

There are about 66 adivasi communities in Orissa, out of which 90

per cent are from undivided Koraput district. All these communities form separate language groups and separate cultures. During the colonial days, the group identity of each community was more or less static, and their economic and cultural activities were more or less limited to certain specific geographical stretches. But during the last hundred years, when the colonialists tried to rule this area by promulgating special Agency Area acts and manufacturing ever-new forest acts, revenue acts and excise acts, the static tribal characteristics started melting slowly. There are just a few tribal groups, such as the Bondas and Didoyis, whose social institutions and geographical settings prohibit social interaction and thereby preserve their cultural staticity. All other major adivasi groups have opened up to the outside world, interacted both with the intruding cultures and among themselves, and, as a result of such interaction and exposure to the outside world, developed a completely new language known as 'Desia'.

Desia reduces the language problem for the non-tribal organiser in undivided Koraput region. He/she need not learn all the languages of the different tribal communities he/she deals with — such as *Kesi*, *Kaya*, *Dhurua*, *Halbi*, *Paraja*, *Saura*, etc. In any case it is also humanly impossible to master such a large number of languages. But it is not difficult to learn *Desia*, which is a dialect of Oriya with a mixture of various tribal languages. This has been evolved naturally during the last hundred years or so, through a common administration and market transaction during British colonial rule and after. Apart from British rule, certain agricultural, social and religious festivals (like Bali, Halpoda, Badayatra, Dasara, Chaiti Parab, Push Purab, Benta, Phulabenta, etc), where people from all communities gather and participate, must have played its role. As a result, *Desia* has developed into a distinct dialect spoken by about 15 lakh adivasis and non-adivasi people of undivided Koraput district as their first or second language. This vast terrain, extending from Umarkot to Motu at one end, and Raygada to Pottangi at the other, borders long chunks of M.P. and A.P.. Thus one will find some Telugu and Hindi words also strewn into *Desia*, which has been influenced by these languages. The script of *Desia* is that of Oriya. Though *Desia* has many similarities with Oriya, there are also significant differences. (Similarly, we find another common language, 'Sadri', among adivasi communities of western Orissa's Sundergarh. Santhals, Mundas, Hos, and Bhuyans use *Sadri* as their common inter-community and market language, though

each tribe has its own language. Non-tribals of these districts also know and use this language extensively.)

In the matter of mastering a language, more than any textbook or literary book, the people can help the best. Language is closely associated with a people's life and culture. So one has to integrate with the people among whom one works, and analytically study their economic history, political history, cultural history and military history. By this the **organiser can get to know how the adivasis' consciousness has been moulded. At the same time, he/she can also get to know their world, and formulate policies to change this world.**

Thus, mastering the language of the adivasis is not just a linguistic or educational task, it is a political task of utmost importance which demands revolutionary hard work, talent, and creativeness. To drive home this point, Mao has said in one of his articles ("Oppose Stereotyped Party Writings"): "Let us learn language from the masses. The people's vocabulary is rich, vigorous, vivid and expressive of real life." Again, at another place, he tells us ("On Propaganda Work"): "To be a good teacher, **one must first be a good pupil. There are many things which cannot be learnt from books alone. One must learn from those engaged in production.**"

Material base of adivasi culture

Nowadays the sociologists and anthropologists are writing and saying a lot of things about adivasi culture to serve the ruling class interests. It is fashionable among such sections to admire the more primitive cultures and to lament over cultural groups which are more vulnerable towards change. But the organiser, without getting swayed by these trends, should **probe deep into the material base of any culture. The material base of adivasi culture flows from his/her (the adivasi's) activities as a producer. His/her involvement in production activities ranges from agriculture, collection of minor forest products, and fuel, hunting, and self-defence from wild animals and oppressors. Accordingly, all the cultural materials of the community are set, and are passed in the normal course of productive and social life from generation to generation. Therein also lie the basic elements of education. For example, during his very childhood days, the adivasi boy plays with *tangia* (axe), bows and arrows, pitchers, and living animals (such as dogs, goats, pigs, hens, etc) instead of varieties of**

toys. Thus he knows how to use *tangias*, bows and arrows and animals from a very early age. By the age of eight or nine an adivasi boy joins in agricultural activities. Similarly the adivasi girls raise chicken or fetch water in pitchers and collect *mohua* flowers (for food and drink) and fuel from the jungle. Thus they do not dream of cars and aeroplanes and buildings, which are given in toy forms to non-tribal children. **These objects, given to them in various welfare schemes, are so alien to the adivasis that even if they are taken away by the *sahukars* it makes no difference to them. So the perception of life and living of an adivasi individual is structured from the very beginning in a distinct way from non-adivasis.**

Similarly, unlike in societies with capitalistic elements, a quite different system of learning has been stressed in tribal communities. Generally, the majority of tribal cultures place little emphasis on speed and more on learning correctly. Elements of competition are not to be found here. They generally learn by memory and rote. Very few tribal cultures emphasise logic. Tribal cultures associate learning so much with the struggle to live that learning is generally a pleasurable activity, done through play and dance. **But non-tribal learning-methods abstract education from life, and emphasise learning through competition.**

The organiser as a political educator must not follow these non-tribal ways and methods of learning through which he/she might have passed. The tribal ways of learning have to be mastered. There are some other positive aspects in tribal cultures which should interest and excite the organiser and inspire him/her to take up the challenge. This task, taken seriously, has all the attributes to turn into a struggle by itself.

As we saw in the example of playmates and toys how the perceptions of adivasis are structured from childhood by their culture, similarly the non-existence of any authority or respect-related word in their vocabulary (except '*ajna*', which they apply only to the non-tribal people with power) proves the amount of independence they enjoy. Adivasi vocabulary provides for '*tu*' and '*tuu*' (ie familiar and intimate forms) for the second person. In the adivasi family, after the son or daughter is married, the couple builds a separate cottage and becomes economically independent of the father. The older people are respected in the community, as a custom, for their age, and their advice is taken. But such respect is shown only customarily. The same '*tu*' or '*tuu*' applies there too. Thus the social or religious or political ladder we find in non-tribal societies is not to be

found in tribal societies.

So adivasis naturally abhor strict discipline and are very conscious of their freedom. Non-tribals have to understand this as against the modern-day capitalist discipline, where children are taught discipline from the very childhood days. Concepts like "respect toward social superiors, however oppressive they may be" are drilled into those children till they become instinctive to them, unlike to the tribals. By contrast, the tribal bond between man and man inside a community, the tribal bond between community and community, the spontaneous rising to the occasion when others are in trouble or when repression is let loose — all these provide a natural strong base for revolutionary work. One has to correctly handle these features and turn them into solid trustworthy elements for revolution.

Tasks of an organiser as a Marxist-Leninist educator

So, while imparting Marxist-Leninist education, one has to give importance to the medium of education, and use the adivasis' own language for proper communication. One has to use story-telling, songs and dances and dramas and even '*shikar*' as a medium of education. One has to give importance to explanation with reference to examples. Once the adivasis get the conception, one has to reduce that conception to rote, for easy recall. This learning process should be long, steady, repetitive, and at the same time interesting and ever-new.

However, the organiser also has to explain the importance of taking notes. This is because even rote, after being properly formulated, must be noted down in short form for even easier recalling when needed. There are genuine problems in convincing the participants, who are schooled in an oral language, to take to this practice of taking and using notes. For that, the necessity of this new practice for properly organising and leading the struggles has to be related to the adivasis. Culturally the tribals are habituated to learn things through work (related with production and fight). Therefore to properly convey the meaning of Marxism-Leninism, the organiser must involve them in struggle activities and relate their instinct to fight to this. And after every struggle, the organiser must analyse their experiences bit by bit, so that the activists can see for themselves their mistakes, weaknesses, orientational gaps as against the correct orientation, and hence feel the need to note them down and rectify themselves.

Actually, all the participants in such sessions, whether Party members

or militants in the Party fold, have come forward through various struggles to this stage. But while educating them one finds illiteracy to be the main impediment. Illiteracy here does not mean not knowing letters; but the inability to use written language. **Since tribal culture is mainly an oral culture, there is hesitation on the part of participants to take notes. Even if notes are taken due to pressure of the organiser, they are insufficient for their future use.** So the organiser has to give training in taking notes after explaining to them the positive qualities of the written method as a vehicle of knowledge and action. **He/she has to convince the participants that oral communication, however good, is insufficient because they have to face and fight against the sophisticated ruling classes who are highly capable of using the best of knowledge stored in computers and the cleverest intellectuals who are their paid servants against the peasants and workers.** So the adivasi activists have to read and write and master the art of writing.

At the same time, the organiser has to develop different techniques and methods by which learning becomes more picturesque, lively and physical so that it can be engraved in their minds and become part of their lives and can be applied in the struggles. All the while they have to be reminded that the written method is complementary to the oral, not contradictory. And that to develop oneself to the level of a political organiser, one has to develop the writing/noting habit, as an important political task.

Whenever stories or tales are related during political deliberations, the organiser must be careful to see that they never condemn the common folk (ie people from labouring classes). Rather, it is better if they expose the vanity and worthlessness of the exploiters, and describe the inventiveness of the innocent, who win at last (as happens in many folk tales told through symbols). Symbols in folk tales should be explained in terms of their class significance, so that the adivasis can identify themselves with the main characters. It is always better to relate tales of nearby villages involving living people. Some recent struggle, some fraudulent land transfer, cases of exploitation and their modus operandi and the role of *sahukars*, bureaucrats, contractors and bourgeois politicians can be related with touches of humour here and there. And in this process the participants can be encouraged to come forward and open up, and tell how far they have understood the central point, and if possible relate some experiences in that context. They are really mines of such stories, since they are in the

frontline of struggles. Lastly, after every tale, the organiser must point out its linkage to experience and its political significance. In this way the whole session can be lively and interesting.

Some experiences

To substantiate this, the following experiences can be related. With regard to the cadres' neglecting to take notes, and as a result of this, lacking in leading a cell, making an independent investigation, preparing a report on any struggle, or sending a communication or instruction, an organiser-political educator related the following story: "Fimiti keta din? Na pelu pelu jete din." ("How long can one go on like this?" "As long as one can push!")

There were two brothers in a village. One of them was cultivating whatever small land they had, and the other brother was a school teacher. They stayed together in a joint family. But the wives of the two brothers did not get on with each other. The younger brother's wife would not do any household chore, on the plea that her husband earned ready cash, so she wouldn't labour. The elder brother's wife got annoyed over this one day, and demanded from her husband that he take up a teacher's job. Unless her demand was fulfilled, she would not touch food. The elder brother promised to do a job and left the house that night for a faraway village. There, he organised a 'chatshali' (primary school). Parents of the students paid reasonably. But since he was almost illiterate, with just the knowledge of the alphabet, he took the help of an older boy, asking him to take classes in his place. When some officer came to inspect the school, he left the school premises on the pretext of having a sudden attack of dysentery or diarrhoea. This went on for some time. Once his younger brother somehow got his address and came down to the village 'chatshali' to see his brother. But as always, the elder brother played the same trick and went to the jungle with a container full of water. After some time, when he came back, he found his brother and embraced him. They discussed the problems of their wives and children's health. Then the younger one asked, "Brother, being almost an illiterate, how are you managing this school?" The older one told him of his standard tricks -- of getting the older boy to teach and of disappearing on the pretext of dysentery whenever an officer arrived. Then the younger brother asked, "How long will you go on like this?" The elder brother promptly an-

swered, "As long as I can push!"

After telling the story the organiser explained, "Whatever tricks one may follow, can one rise by this to a higher level? Can one by such tricks be able to deal with and develop militants? So should not one try sincerely to practice and know the use of written language?" Its effect was immediate. When some comrades from another province visited thereafter, they found 10 to 12 comrades sitting in a place, reading some political literature and making notes!

In the early days of work in undivided Koraput, classes used to be taken on the following topics: 1) the Sangh's manifesto; 2) the Sangh's charter of demands; 3) history of adivasi struggles, or 'phituris', of Koraput; 4) class analysis; 5) some weaknesses of the peasantry; 6) the State; 7) historical materialism, etc. The organiser's earlier experiences with students, workers, and peasants of plains areas were not of much help with these adivasis. After one such camp class attended by more than a hundred people for three days, an old activist who had spent about seven years in jail during the pre-1947 era, and who had attended some Marxist classes there, asked some advanced elements (who participated in the class) -- "What did you follow from the class?" Everybody fumbled. Whereas he could relate all the main points (from "historical materialism"). That was shocking, but all the more revealing. When the matter was properly probed, it came out that the main problem was that of language. Because of his association with the pre-1947 freedom movement, the old activist knew Oriya well, and developed the habit of taking notes. Others did not follow the class properly. Thus the method of communication (including absence of noting and inadequate association with struggle) betrayed the purpose of the class. The whole exercise was repeated after three months. This time words from *Desia* vocabulary were plentifully used, and whenever problems came up in finding an accurate expression or *Desia* synonym, the help of participants themselves was taken. In this way the stream of communication between the participants and the political educator started to flow.

At the same time, another defect of the classes of the early days was also corrected: the large number of participants was creating difficulties in the way of members' participation. Now the number was consciously curtailed -- the upper limit being 25. This practice has proved really helpful.

With regard to the fact that, during the classes, many adivasis kept nodding their heads without having understood the message, an organiser tried to address the problem by relating the following story: "Once a pundit was explaining the 'Bhagabatas' to some villagers. The night was advancing. All the devotees left the place one by one, but one old woman didn't move. She was looking at the scanty beard of the skeletal pundit and tears were falling from her eyes. The pundit looked at her and said, 'You are my only worthy disciple. Everybody has left but you are listening so intently.' At this, the old woman said, 'Punditji, it is not you or your words I am weeping for. I am weeping for my lost goat whose beard resembles yours. As much as I see you, the more I remember my goat and my tears could not be controlled.'" After telling this story, the organiser told, "Please try to get at the points explained here, because your intent looks may be quite misleading, like that of the old woman."

After about three months, in another class, while a serious political question was being discussed, the organiser asked the participants if they had followed. One woman comrade promptly said, "I am really looking at your chin." Thus, the organiser got his reply, and re-explained the same point, relating it to struggle experiences in which the woman comrade had participated.

As Georgi Dimitrov observes in one of his articles, "When writing or speaking, always have in mind the rank and file workers who must understand you, must believe in your appeal, and be ready to follow you! You must have in mind those for whom you write, to whom you speak." So, the organiser must try to know from the facial expressions or physical participation of the participants as to how far they have understood him. Otherwise, he must try to explain the whole thing again, more creatively, taking the help of the adivasi participants.

In the early days of Marxist-Leninist schooling, along with classes in the daytime, dances were organised in the night. In this the adivasis and the political educators all participated.

Along with such classes, practical training in health care was also arranged to meet an eager interest of the comrades. During such camps, political aspects relating to health care (such as prejudices, blind beliefs, religion, scientific world outlook, etc) seemed more relevant and the participation of the adivasis was excellent.

(At the mass level, arranging dramas written to impart knowledge of

the history of tribal struggle and experiences of the Sangh's struggle has also been very fruitful. 'Birsa Munda', a drama written on the struggle of Mundas in Bihar, was played at different places on the demand of the local people, who also paid all the expenses of the drama troupe. In one panchayat-level conference, where another drama on the Sangh's minor and major struggles was enacted, an old adivasi told the organisers that "Whatever I understood from your two-day conference was five per cent, and the drama conveyed the remaining 95 per cent of the message".)

When the national situation portion of the Political Resolution was taken up among selected comrades who are in the forefront of the struggle, some stories from the Panchatantra were very helpful in explaining the imperialist role and Indian indebtedness — especially the story of the birds and the hunter who spread a net to catch them. The birds, while flying over a hunter's net, saw the rice strewn beneath. One old bird argued with the younger ones that, since this is uncommon in such a jungle, we must avoid pecking at the rice. Somebody must have strewn the rice there with a wicked plan. But the young and smart ones argued back, "You may be correct. But since we are hungry, and a hungry stomach knows no logic, we must go down and eat the rice first. Later on if some danger comes, we will face it collectively." These arguments went on for quite some time, and at last the old bird was silenced. All of them went down for the rice and got caught in the net. Then all the birds looked towards the old bird. He advised them to put all their strength together and fly towards the sky. This they did and flew to the sky along with the net. At this point, the hunter came out of the bush and threw his stick at them; it did not strike them. The old bird then instructed them to go to a mouse, who was his old friend. All the birds got down there. The old bird requested his friend to cut the net with its teeth. He obliged the old bird, and all the birds were released.

United States of America and all of imperialism are the hunters. Their aid and loans are but strewn rice. The conditionalities of the loans are the net. Our Party is the old bird. The smart birds are busy in pecking the rice. The more they peck it, the more they are trapped by the net. Nobody is listening to the advice of the old bird, to fly to the sky, and with the help of the proletariat (the mouse) bring in people's democratic revolution. But that is the only way for liberation. Many complex economic aspects of the Resolution could be explained by relating them to this story. With

the help of some more stories from the newspapers (like the seams, atomic explosion and its financial implications, price rise and the bankruptcy of the ruling political parties) the major part of the Resolution could be explained.

When a recent document was taken for discussion, various concepts and Marxist terminologies were apparently inconceivable for tribal comrades. Therefore, for each abstract concept, the organisers took the help of some folk tale, some proverb, some folk song or some tale from the Mahabharata, Ramayana, Bhagavatas, Puranas and the classics. Similar difficulties were faced while the Basic Documents were taken for discussion (which discussion continued for 12 days in three camps). For example, when concepts like 'form' and 'content' came, one educator took the example of five pundits who came to a king's court to earn some gold mohur. The king was very fond of pundits and organised discourses in the court. His minister thought of a trick to discourage the king from the practice of emptying the treasury for such purposes, and proposed to allow him to test them. The king agreed. The minister arranged their accommodation at the king's inn, and gave them some money to purchase materials to cook for their meals. The grammarian went to the milkman. When the milkman was milking the cow, he uttered some words which, according to the pundit, were grammatically wrong. He objected to this. Hearing this interference, the cow kicked the milk bucket. The milkman, enraged at this, slapped the grammarian, who therefore came back empty-handed. Meanwhile the musician was boiling the rice. When the rice started bubbling, he started to beat the vessel to the tune of the bubbling. But when the bubbling doubled, his singing got disturbed. Angered at this, the musician broke the earthen pot in which the rice was being cooked. The ayurved specialist went to purchase vegetables, and found fault with each vegetable — some would create gas, some would affect the skin, some others would create drowsiness. Thus he came back empty-handed. The astrologer went to get fuel wood, and climbed a tree. At that time one lizard shrieked overhead. Taking it as an ill omen, he climbed down. At that moment another lizard shrieked below. So he remained at that position throughout the night, till the king's men came in the morning and rescued him. The fifth pundit, a 'nyayavaka', or logician, went to procure ghee. While coming back, a problem bothered him: "*Ghrutadhara patram*" or "*Patradhara ghrutam*"? That is, is the container the form

and ghee the content, or vice-versa? To test this he turned the container downward, and all the ghee spilled out. The logician danced at the result: "*Ghrutadhara patram!*" ("Ghee is the content; container is the form!") Thus all of them remained hungry, and the king could understand how worthless are these pundits!

This long story, out of which 99 per cent seems irrelevant, is related only to convey the concepts 'form' and 'content'. Abstract thinking is a new experience for the adivasis. So abstract terms have to be explained in some other way, even if it be roundabout. For adivasis, modern methods of audio-visual education using diagrams and maps, etc, are not very helpful, whereas interesting plays or dances are.

Songs, especially those written in *Desia*, are also helpful. Adivasis can compose songs very naturally when dancing. But the lines they sing vanish after their singing. They do not write the songs down for future use. At the same time, when songs are given to them in written form, they make them part of their dance very fondly. These revolutionary songs in their language become part of their life. And a picture of the exploitative society, struggle against such a society and call for such a struggle become easily comprehensible by them. But when songs are given to them in a written form, we have to see that the poet in the adivasi does not get suffocated as a result.

Learning from struggle

Struggle is the best school of the people. Such struggle does not take place in any class room. The organiser has to keep this always in mind and he/she must try to involve all the members in such pre-planned struggle. The members must remain in the forefront and guide it from close quarters according to the party line. Then the experience of such struggles, when analysed to depict the manifestations of the line and orientation, enlightens the members more. Therefore, for whatever purposes, we must not allow any lull period to be long and keep the struggle continuing. For the political organiser, such struggles are a gold mine. And this process of waging struggles and analysing their experiences to get lessons also educates the educators. Thus the people become the real heroes, the basic source of education and educational inspiration, and the struggle moves to the higher stage.

In this connection, one example will suffice. Among some youth of the Kandha tribe, which is numerically the second largest tribe in Malkangiri and the largest in undivided Koraput, two self-defence unit

were formed and termed volunteer *vahinis* of that panchayat. After two sessions of theoretical discussion, when some practical training arrangement was made for bows and arrows in line with *shikar*, they did not show much interest. All these youth had come forward to join the Sangh from three land movements in that area. The organisers were puzzled as to why they did not come to the training. But after some months, when another land struggle was launched in a different Kandha village, all the *vahini* youth went there unhesitatingly, or rather, enthusiastically, and participated in the land seizure as if it were a festival. This was very enlightening for the organisers. It proved the importance of the connection of education with mass movement.

Formulation of an appropriate rote is really a difficult task. Memorising a story, with just the mention of the characters or significant object or incident, is simple. The use of songs is still easier. But since everything cannot be transformed into stories or songs, some terms have to be memorised as such. Terms like 'democratic centralism', 'reporting system', 'criticism and self-criticism', 'party of the proletariat', 'united front', etc. can be learned by heart. But their different aspects and explanation do not have rote-value. So in such cases, examples from everyday life or struggle experiences have to be given *again and again* so as to leave an imprint on the minds of the participants. Words that are alien to the *Desia* vocabulary create difficulties for communication. Therefore, they need to be turned into rote, that is to memorise them and repeat them if needed: for example, expressions like communism, cadres, CPRCI(ML), names of different Marxist stalwarts and isms, names of different countries, Paris Commune, May Day, October Revolution, names of wars and revolutions, etc. But if such rote is merely accumulative, memorising becomes difficult. Educators have to take into account the central concepts and relate them with some popular stories or examples, so that along with the rote these tales automatically follow, not only helping the *adivasi* comrade to understand the concepts, but to use them elsewhere to educate the militants and members when he/she has to take up the role of an organiser. This aspect still requires more attention and hard labour.

Although the above experiences reflect years of such efforts, this challenging work is still in its early stages. Much has yet to be done. Assessing the impact of such Marxist-Leninist schooling on the mass struggles and development of the political organisation will yield richer understanding. The development of *adivasi* comrades as political organisers too will enrich the process of political education.

From the peasant front in Punjab Some Small Struggles with Significant Cues

— by a correspondent

The Bharti Kisan Union (Ekta) — BKU (Ekta), an organisation of the landed peasantry in Punjab — needs to be transformed from an economist-reformist outfit into being a contingent of the revolutionary peasant movement. The present stagnation of the organisation has resulted from the limitations of its existing recruitment base, which is the entire land-owning peasantry, the limitations of the class composition of its leadership, and consequently, limitations of the propaganda activities undertaken by it. Growth of new leading teams and emergence of new units have almost stopped; the stagnation in the mobilising capacity of the organisation and the unenthusiastic mood in its gatherings are apparent symptoms of the overall stagnation.

Despite all this, BKU (Ekta) is still more active and has better mobilising capacity than other peasant organisations in the state. The question of how this organisation can be brought out of its present situation, and how it can become an active, assertive, and militant organisation, is becoming the focus of concern for all the ranks of the Union. Different groups of peasant leaders following different revolutionary or communist revolutionary politics form the leading core of this organisation. They are actively trying to take it forward and transform it into a revolutionary movement. However, they differ quite widely in their respective perceptions and practices on the question of how to salvage it from its existing stagnation-like situation.

One view (in a nutshell) is that in the prevailing situation of acute crisis, there is a great need for direct propagation of revolutionary democratic politics among the peasant masses, and that to this end the plat-

form of the peasant organisation should be fully utilised. Thus emphasis must be kept on joint activities with all of the political parties whatever their politics may be — ruling class, revolutionary, or revolutionary democratic. This they project as the basic remedy for breaking the stagnation of the organisation, and further, for revolutionising it.

In contrast, the other view is that emphasis must be kept on developing it as a struggle-oriented organisation; and that the approach towards propagation of revolutionary politics should be of propagating it through concretely linking it with the ongoing struggles. The politics to be propagated through the platform of the peasant organisation should be such as may be digestible by the peasants with different views. Beyond this, direct revolutionary politics must be propagated among the advanced layers of the peasants; however, the approach to be adopted for this purpose should be of propagating it from without, through different platforms of the revolutionary party or other semi-political revolutionary outfits. If the structural composition at the state level of the peasant organisation does not yet fit the needs of running it as a struggle-oriented organisation, that orientation should be given at whatever level such a leadership capable of this is available. And efforts should be made for step by step advancing towards the revolutionary goal, by initiating struggles and gathering forces from that.

In the middle of May 1999, a state-level delegate conference of this peasant organisation was held. On the basis of the false majority manipulated by recruiting bogus delegates, the organisation was made to adopt the approach represented by the first view mentioned above. The main office-bearers, consequently, were elected from among the leaders holding such views.

On the other hand, while the peasant leaders adhering to the second view, of building a struggle-oriented organisation, have accepted the majority view as the organisation's view upto the next conference, they keep on trying, whenever and wherever they find the occasion, to initiate peasant struggles on burning issues and advance in the direction of rendering the BKU (Ekta) a struggle-oriented organisation and ultimately transforming it into a revolutionary contingent. We wish to share here with the readers of *The Comrade* a brief report of some such struggles.

Walianwali villagers' struggle against electricity officials

The people of village Walianwali (block Rampura, district Bathinda), along with the people of all the nearby villages, had to do without electricity supply for several weeks in June 1999, because a storm in some pockets had disrupted the entire electricity and communications system. In terms of household needs, these were the days of excessively hot weather, and in terms of agricultural needs, this was the peak season for paddy plantation. Accepting it as a natural calamity and accepting too that it would take some time for the electricity men to reinstitute the whole system, the people somehow kept on bearing the hardships for many a day. But when the supply was restored, it was quite insufficient (not more than three or four hours a day) and totally uncertain in terms of timings (making it difficult for the people to plan their engagements). Moreover, a burnt transformer supplying electricity to the fields was not replaced for weeks. Although it supplied electricity to four motors only, for the concerned farmers it was a great loss as the paddy planting remained totally blocked. Electricity officials demanded bribes. Though these peasants obliged them by giving Rs 1,000, it did not help them get the transformer replaced. Exhausted, the peasants approached the village unit of the BKU (Ekta).

A village gathering was held. In it, apart from the BKU (Ekta), the local (officially elected) panchayat and a youth club of the village also participated. Thus, the village gathering, as a whole, decided unanimously to take to the path of struggle for settling the whole issue. On the next day (June 24) a representative deputation of the village, along with the leaders of the block unit of the BKU (Ekta), met the SDO of the concerned (Rampura) Sub-Division. They demanded regular and full supply of electricity for the villages, apart from replacement of the transformer. The SDO, instead of giving any assurance, said arrogantly, "Go wherever you want, a transformer is nowhere available in Punjab". To the question, "When would it possibly be available", the answer was equally evasive and negative. At this, the BKU (Ekta) leaders, knowing well how the electricity authorities can be made to work faster, said in a confident tone, "Well, then we give you four days to get the transformer replaced, otherwise, we will come again on June 28 and then you will have to arrange it instantly."

The department remained unmoved during all the four days. So, on

June 28, nearly 200 men and women from the concerned village (Walianwali), along with their supporters from the nearby villages, under the leadership of BKU (Ekta), reached the concerned SDO's office, symbolically gheraoed him for about half an hour and then started a sit-in demonstration for the realisation of their demands.

A special feature of this action was that it was being led by the village-level leadership of the BKU (Ekta), as the entire district-level leaders, along with presidents and secretaries of the block-level committees, were engaged in an urgent meeting on some other issue. Though these village-level leaders were not well-versed in handling situations like this one, they anyhow led the action successfully till 4 p.m., when the district leaders came and took over charge. The district president of the union immediately called a meeting of the leading teams available there; the whole situation was assessed, including the stance and attitude of the authorities on the one hand and the need and preparedness of the gathered masses on the other; a demand charter was made, including the demand for transformers in two other villages and some other important demands concerning regularity of supply to the villages.

After the meeting, the district president addressed the gathering and declared assertively that the sit-in demonstration would continue indefinitely, until all of the demands were met. This started a sequence of resounding slogans and forceful speeches by other peasant leaders, sending the authorities into a panic. At about nine p.m., when the peasants were engaged in preparing their food, the concerned S.D.O. and Junior Engineer (J.E.) came to them and said, "Mr President, your transformer has reached Walianwali and uninterrupted supply has been assured in the village. Now please go, take rest, and let us take rest as well." At this the district president, sensing well that the authorities were under pressure, said, indifferently, "Taking rest is not our fate. We will have to stay here, till all of our demands are met. You may go and take rest." Thus, the sit-in demonstration, along with its thunderous slogan-shouting, continued for the whole night.

The next morning, (29th June), the number of men and women in the demonstration increased to some extent. At 11.00 a.m., the Executive Engineer (Ex. En., the main executive officer concerned) came and asked the leadership for a dialogue. But, when the peasant leaders reached there for talks, after settling among themselves what they should stick to dur-

ing the talks and what concessions could be given, etc, they found the Ex. En. had gone to the city. The leaders took note of this.

After two hours, the Ex. En. again sent in a message, but this time, the leaders refused to go there, unless the S.D.O. came to the gathering and gave some satisfactory explanation of their previous behaviour and some assurance of the official's serious intent about the talks this time. They gave him 15 minutes to do so and warned that if he did not come himself to the gathering, they knew how to make him come there; and after waiting for 15 minutes it was announced from the stage that a contingent of 20-25 women should go and bring the S.D.O. to the stage, hearing which he rushed to the stage instantly, apologised for their previous behaviour and gave the desired assurance regarding the present round of talks. Thus followed an interesting dialogue with the Ex. En. for two and half to three hours.

At the outset of the dialogue, the district president of the union (hereafter 'the president') sought some clarifications from the Ex. En.. First, "How much time, according to your rules, should the replacement of a burnt transformer generally take?" "Twenty-four hours after official reporting", was the reply. "But, in this case, 24 days have gone and even seven days after the notice of the union for struggle; is it not a serious violation of your own rules as well as the so-called daily reporting system about the condition of electricity and the demand for transformers, etc.? Would you take some action and inform us about it." The Ex. En. said, "Surely it is a violation, I will take action and inform you unofficially about the action taken." The second clarification: "If your S.D.O. says in your presence that taking bribes is obligatory, is it not a confession of taking bribes? What will you do in this case?" "I will take action" was the reply. "Well, then, here is your J.E. and he has said, 'Taking bribes is a must' in the presence of this S.D.O. of yours and as many as 40 peasants." Then he was told that the J.E. had taken Rs 1,000 and the S.D.O. had taken Rs 2,500 from specific peasants. "What will you do in this case?" "You yourself will see", was the reply. Again he was told that, in one village, 40 meters were to be supplied by the department to the lower castes free of cost; but in fact they were sold by the officials through a contractor for Rs 700 to Rs 800 per piece; similarly an unauthorised transformer was installed for a handsome bribe of money.

The Ex. En. assured action in all these cases; he also accepted the

long-standing demand for diverting a line that passed through a pond in one village; further, he assured the due and regular supply to the villages after checking the load in the villages, which he himself offered to check. But on the question of transformers he demanded two days' time to fulfill the demand. This was firmly declined by the union leaders. Thus the sit-in demonstration was not lifted. Instead it was declared that it would be continued till the transformer, at least in one village, was installed.

On the third day (30th June), the number of demonstrators had somewhat decreased, instead of increasing. Why? Because the problem of Walianwali was totally solved. It affected their interest and they came in lesser numbers as compared to on earlier days. Thus, the leadership was faced with the problem of keeping things going continuously while maintaining the tempo. None of the authorities appeared on the third day till noon. Union leaders decided to gherao the S.D.O. should he come there. But he too had slipped away. Time was passing, so the union leaders decided to gherao whichever official they could lay their hands on. So they gheraoed some lower officer, assuring him that they had nothing against him personally. He handed them the phone for informing the concerned S.D.O.. So, in a short while, both the concerned J.E. and the S.D.O. came to the scene. At this, the concerned J.E. was gheraoed while the already gheraoed official was freed after due and formal apology. At this, the S.D.O. called in the police.

In no time the Deputy Superintendent of Police came with a heavy posse of police force and directly entered the gherao with the intention of liberating the J.E.. He was threatening the agitators, "Who has gheraoed him, leave him, and get away from here". The president sensed that the police were now prepared to use force. So, in a bid to save the situation, he shouted, while maintaining firmness: "Stop there! The J.E. is our culprit, we have gheraoed him; talk to us first; what do you want, to institute cases against us or to arrest us; do what you want!" Observing the firmness of the leadership as well as of the peasants, and despite his tough posturing, the DSP could well imagine that the peasants could not be made to run with brave posturing or with a mild use of force. So he stopped advancing and said to the president, "Well, then, all of you are under arrest!" At this, the president and the agitators started raising slogans and moving towards the gate where the police vehicles stood.

At the same time 15-20 agitators were having a fight with the police

officials who were forcibly trying to take away utensils, the loudspeaker, and other belongings of the peasants. One of the sub-inspectors tried to snatch the union flag from a peasant, who was clinging to it firmly, confidently, and patiently, saying at the same time, "You can never snatch the flag from me!" Irritated, the inspector pounced upon a club and raised it in the air with the intention of hitting the peasant on the head. In retaliation, the peasant also laid his hands on a club and said, challengingly, aiming at the small patch of baldness on the inspector's scalp, "Oh, let it come! And see yourself paid in the same coin!" Another policeman raised his hand to slap another peasant who, instead of getting frightened, offered his face to the policeman, saying, "Dare hit me! And see what I do in reply!" The policeman lowered his hand instantly.

On the one hand, the DSP sent a message to his higher-ups informing them that arrests of peasants had been made after resorting to a lathi-charge. He asked them to send reinforcements. On the other hand, the union leaders had also rushed their workers to the nearby villages to tell the people about the arrests and ask them to reach the spot immediately in as many numbers as possible. The first to come was the SDM, accompanied by the local tehsildar. Immediately, he called the peasant leaders for talks. But before the talks could start, the DSP asked the union leaders in a commanding tone: "First go, and stop them from shouting slogans." "But why", retorted the president, "if it hampers our talks, we can shut the door; but if you are otherwise objecting to the slogan-shouting, we know the meaning of that; in that case we shall go back outside; should we?" At this, the SDM asked the peasant leaders to be seated and start the dialogue.

The SDM started the dialogue with a long speech, regarding the hard-working nature of the peasants and the hardships being faced by them in the peak season due to the scarcity of electricity; he also spoke about the union leaders' right to represent the peasants and about their past practice of fighting responsibly and on just demands. He stressed the need for the department to be quick in solving peasant problems. Then he phoned the ADC and forcefully put the peasants' case before him, requesting him to approach the Ex. En. and arrange the required transformers immediately, from wherever they may be available. He then asked the concerned SDO to arrange for a transformer, failing which, he should give the extra transformer which fell in the jurisdiction of the city subdivision. He also

asked the SDO to give a list of the employees who could go early in the morning in search of the transformer and warned him that he would make a raid in the morning and would arrest any employee who failed to go hunting for the transformer.

When the peasant leaders came out victoriously with such strong assurances from the SDM, the gathering had swollen to four times of the earlier one. The peasants' enthusiasm knew no bounds, all of them were ready for any eventualities: 30 per cent of them were women, who had left their household work unfinished, responding to the emergency call of the union; included in this enthusiastic gathering was a lathi-wielding contingent of 15-20 peasant workers from the village Korda, who, hearing about the news of a lathi-charge, had rushed to the spot in a hurry, not waiting for others to come lest they be late for the confrontation. Two jeeps and two trolleys, fully loaded with men and women from Walianwali, which were also on their way to the spot, met the agitators on the way back to their homes after victory. All this not only enthused the peasants and union workers, but also had an impact on the mood of the leaders themselves, one of whom said: "We were fighting even previously, but now we will fight even more energetically!"

But why was the SDM so persuaded and in a mood to settle the issue? One reason was the fighting mood of the peasant agitators and the maturity and firmness of the leadership in handling such a complex situation. The other came from the previous experience of this SDM with the same leadership, in the same block, at the time of paddy procurement, when the SDM and his men had to pass through a much more tense situation than this. At that time, after a series of sit-ins and gheraos for three or four days, the same SDM had come prepared with a posse of 100-125 policemen to lathi-charge the peasants and teach them a lesson; but he was forced to retreat by an enraged and determined force of more than 500 peasants who were not only prepared to bear the police brutality but were ready to retaliate if need be. Ultimately, the SDM and the procurement authorities were forced to buy 8,000 bags of paddy at the maximum market price, which earlier they were not prepared to buy at any cost.

Some words about the follow-up action to this struggle: Problems of Walianwali village had already been solved. On the next day a transformer was installed in the village Gill Kalan by noon. After a few days, the concerned J.E. and SDO were both standing with folded hands before

the people of the village (Walianwali), returning Rs 1,000 taken as bribe (Rs 2,000 out of another Rs 2,500 had already been returned); and finally the Ex. En. himself went to the village, as promised, to check the load so as to ensure the due supply for the village.

Thus, the peasant struggle has proved to be a successful specimen of small, localised struggles on burning issues. The key point in the success of such struggles is the determined and fighting mood of the peasants, which cannot be stifled by the police or administration without the use of such a heavy force as may entail a heavy political price to be paid by them. That is why they generally try to find some way out, and ultimately are forced to give concessions to the people and concede their main demands. Such achievements, in turn, propel the peasants onto the path of struggle and organisation. The class angle and the assertion of peasant rights shown by the leadership during their talks with the authorities become educational and inspirational schools for the peasants and their activists.

Such struggles fought on the initiative of the local leaderships have the full potential for further developing peasant activists and local leading teams from among the mobilised masses of the peasants. The militant and fighting mood shown in the instance of the peasants rushing towards the site of confrontation instead of getting frightened at the show of force by the authorities, is a clear manifestation of the class-hatred among the peasant masses that gets sharpened through such struggles. On the whole, such militant and victorious struggles at the local plane on burning issues of the people do also indicate the possibility of developing local pockets of peasant struggles, having great potential for attracting the lower fighting sections of the peasantry, and ultimately, thus, laying the foundations for building new centres of peasant force.

Two agitations against usurious exploitation

The other two struggles of this kind that deserve mention here belong to district Mansa. Both of these cases are related to the ruthless usurious exploitation of peasants by the commission agents and the suicidal deaths caused by such perennial stranglehold of indebtedness combined with the tyrannical behaviour of moneylenders and with the totally cynical behaviour of the State and political parties of the ruling classes towards the peasants and their sufferings.

In the first case, the commission agent from Mansa had forcibly taken away a tractor, a buffalo, and a trolley of wheat from the house of peasant Kuldip Singh of Jatana village (district Mansa). The peasant went to the city to show his resentment against this high-handedness of the agents; but he was further abused and humiliated by them. The peasant could not bear all this and committed suicide by consuming insecticide. No political party of the ruling classes, including the so-called "leftist" parties, uttered a word against this. Even the BKU (Lakhowal) did not take up the case; instead it had tried to pressurise the peasant in favour of the commission agents. Ultimately, relatives of the deceased peasant approached the BKU (Ekta).

The BKU (Ekta) reached the village, enquired about the case, and then took the village people with them to the police station for registering a case against the commission agents for driving the peasant to suicide. But the concerned SHO refused to oblige. Then BKU (Ekta) launched a campaign at the district level, and held a demonstration and a rally at the district headquarters. But to no avail. The district authorities, under definite political pressure, were not prepared to do anything against the commission agents. Then again, a demonstration and a rally were held with the help of other district units of BKU (Ekta) from nearby districts. At the end of such a three-month struggle, the authorities had to compel the commission agents to write off Rs 65,000 that still stood against the name of Kuldip Singh and pay Rs 90,000 as compensation to the aggrieved family.

However, what is most significant about this struggle is not its final achievement in material terms, rather, it is the interest that it awakened among the peasants — not only in the district but also of nearby districts. Not only was there an encouraging response to the rallies and flag marches of the union and an enthusiastic response to the handbill issued by the district union exposing the role of the BJP-Akali Dal government and other ruling class parties and also exposing the class bias of the administration (a second edition of the handbill had to be issued); but there was actual participation in the connected activities of the union. The participation was spontaneous and encouraging. For example, in the last demonstration at the district headquarters, people in the Mansa block, responding to the campaign, came spontaneously with trolleys full of peasants from at least 11 villages. Such was the response when there are not

more than two or three regular units of the union in the block. Similarly, from the nearby district Bathinda more than 400 peasants participated in the demonstration, which may be considered a good participation compared with the record on other issues even at the general district level. Even more significant than the participation was the mood and determination of the participants, who seemed ready to go to any lengths. Had there not been some serious lapses on the part of the state leadership at the last stages, the struggle would have had much greater potential both in terms of material achievement, in terms of building of the union, as well as in terms of the peasant movement in the district.

In the second case, Paramjit, known as Parma, of the village Chak Ali Sher (Mansa) had committed suicide by immolating himself recently, on June 30th. As the enquiry revealed, Paramjit's father had taken a loan from the commission agent of Budhlada (Mansa) which was repaid by him nine years ago, by selling some land and other household belongings. But the commission agent, taking advantage of the uneducated state of the peasant, had made him fill up a pro-note for the same loan. The commission agent did not utter a word about it for seven long years, and then, all of a sudden, had succeeded stealthily, by dint of powerful connections with the ruling circles, in getting attachment orders from the court for the entire four and a half acres of land of Paramjit.

BKU (Ekta) had not allowed this order to be implemented in practice through mass protest. But the commission agent kept on issuing dire threats to the peasant. Unable to bear the pressure, Parma had committed suicide. Immediately then BKU (Ekta) took the issue in hand. On the very night of the suicide, state-level BKU leaders accompanied by the village people went to the police station, and asked them to register the case. In the morning, three trolleys full of men and women accompanied Parma's body to Budhlada where his post-mortem was to take place. There was a demonstration held in the city and a rally where the union leaders declared that Parma's body would be cremated at the door of the commission agents if a case were not registered against them. The police got panicky and registered a case. The bhog ceremony of Parma (that is held generally on the tenth day after the death) was turned into a rally by the leaders of BKU (Ekta). Also, a decision was also taken for a demonstration on July 22 at Budhlada. This proved to be a great success, in which 700-800 people, mainly from the concerned block, participated. Now the

BKU decided to raise this struggle to the district level and a demonstration is to be held on the 10th of August.

This struggle has all the specific positive features that were there in the previous case of struggle in the district mentioned earlier. It has similarly a great potential both in terms of material achievement as well as in terms of the development of BKU (Ekta) and a peasant movement in the district.

Introduction to **The 'Andhra Letter' of 9th July 1948**

We publish below what is popularly known as the 'Andhra Letter'. This document is dated 9th July 1948. It is a Resolution of the Secretariat of the Provincial Committee (P.C.) of Andhra which the P.C. Secretariat sent to the Centre of the Communist Party of India requesting that it, along with the alternative document written by P. Sundarayya (member, P.C. Secretariat, who alone disagreed with the line of the P.C. Secretariat), should be circulated among the ranks for discussion. The P.C. Secretariat hoped that in this way greater ideological clarity would be arrived at on "the general revolutionary perspective" of the Political Thesis which the Calcutta Congress of the CPI had earlier adopted. The imprecisions in that Thesis had led, through varying interpretations in Andhra, to political differences and deviations in practice. By spelling out their own argument, and getting it discussed, the Andhra P.C. Secretariat hoped to clarify the ideological political perspective and to clear the associated hurdles in the way of revolutionary practice.

The 'Andhra Letter' is a break away from the ideological political confusions prevailing at the time. Until this time, no line of the Indian Revolution had been clearly spelled out by the CPI. This had led to ideological political confusions, swings between Right and Left deviations, confused practices, and "the horrible mess of reformism" in the 1942-46 period. The Resolution of the Andhra P.C. therefore concerns itself with the fundamental question of the line of the CPI: It spells out the revolutionary line for India. It, for the first time, clearly characterises India as a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country; the peasant question (and the land question in particular) as the core of India's current stage of revolution; the stage of the revolution as the New Democratic Revolution (NDR); bourgeois revolution of the new type as distinct not only from the Octo-

ber Revolution but also the February Revolution; the crucial importance of the united front of revolutionary classes for carrying through the NDR; the necessary hegemony of the proletariat (ie, the ideological-political leadership of the proletariat) in carrying through both the new democratic as well as socialist stages of revolution; the categories of the bourgeoisie as big and collaborationist with imperialism which is in State power, on the one hand, and middle bourgeoisie which is endangered by the big bourgeoisie and its State power, on the other; and differentiation among the peasantry as landless, poor, middle, and rich, versus the land-lord-feudal class. Significantly, with a Marxist-Leninist approach, the Resolution lays to rest controversy by laying down the scientific/objective bases for this differentiation in revolutionary practice. The document counters the ideological opportunism of important sections of the CPI leadership and exposes the confusions in the speeches, writings, and resolutions of the CPI and the dangers for the revolution inherent in them.

The Telangana Armed Struggle, for the seizure and redistribution of land and for political power, was in its heyday in 1948, when this document was put out. The document naturally reflects the political confidence, born out of the practice of the mass revolutionary line in Telangana at this time. With a theoretical approach, the document expects to do away with the reigning confusions, particularly as regards the role and placing, in the Indian revolution, of rich peasants, middle peasants, and agricultural labour. Rooted in revolutionary practice, the document points to the concrete manifestations of wrong thinking and analysis in the practice of some comrades in Andhra. And it posits the relevance of the Andhra experience of differentiating among the peasantry to the rest of India after allowing for specific secondary variations. It turns to Lenin and Stalin to grasp analysis of class forces in the different stages of revolution; and the strategy and tactics required by each stage. Finally, integrating Marxism-Leninism with the concrete conditions in India, it spells out: the objective; the strategy (the main force of the revolution, the immediate reserves, and the direction of the main blow); and the tactics (plan for disposition of forces, and alliances in the fight for crushing the enemy force and paralysing the unstable forces) for the Indian revolution.

In doing all this, it acknowledges the signal contribution of the Communist Party of China and of Mao Tsetung, the great leader of the Chinese Revolution and "the practical, political, and theoretical leader of the

mighty revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries". It specifically relies on the document "On New Democracy" by Mao Tsetung. In a counter to the prevailing predilections in the CPI, it characterises the Nehru government as the political representative of the collaborationist big bourgeoisie in league with imperialist and feudal forces, opposed even to land reform, let alone land redistribution. It asserts the necessity of guerrilla warfare and the establishment of resistance bases of the Chinese type for India. Conscious of the need for self-defence and for defence of the movement, it points to the need, in the given conditions of all-out repression, to fight even day-to-day partial struggles armed or semi-armed. At the end it states: "Either we understand the perspective clearly and plan out our work in future or we drift into spontaneity and all sorts of deviation and disruption. The revolutionary history and its richest lessons demonstrate before us the path we have to choose. The path is that of the Chinese liberation struggle under the leadership of comrade Mao...."

The Telangana Armed Struggle suffered political defeat not at the hands of the class enemies and their State, but at the hands of the general staff of the CPI. With that, in 1951, the proponents of the revolutionary line in the Central Committee were replaced by the revisionist leadership (in the years that followed, some of the proponents themselves crossed over to the revisionist camp). The betrayal cost twenty years of lost time to the Indian revolution and disarmed it. But twenty years later, after the Naxalbari armed uprising, when the formal break with revisionism and neo-revisionism came, the basic path of people's war organised on the basis of a concrete agrarian mass revolutionary programme and movement was historically re-asserted. The two-line struggle within the revolutionary camp on the cruciality of this programmatic and mass basis for preparing, waging and sustaining people's war, has continued since then.

The 'Andhra Letter' is not only an inspiring historical document concerning inner-party struggle; it is a testament to the contribution of the Telangana Armed Struggle itself to the basic formulation of the correct line for the Indian Revolution, notwithstanding some inexact formulations at particular points in the text. That correct line was asserted, it must be noted, before the Chinese Revolution had become victorious; before the status of Mao Tsetung Thought had been universally acknowledged in the international communist movement on par with Marxism-Leninism; before the editorial of the Cominform journal *For a Lasting*

Document

The 'Andhra Letter' of 9th July 1948

(Typed from xerox of original cyclostyled copy.)

Bombay, 9 July 1948

FROM CENTRE:

DRAFT RESOLUTION BY ANDHRA P.C.

for Discussion Among Ranks

Herewith sending a draft, concretising the general line given in the thesis adopted by Calcutta Congress, whose main things have been accepted by the P.C. Secretariat, excepting Comrade P.S. He has submitted a separate draft which is also being sent to you along with this draft.

The PC Secretariat has decided to circulate these drafts to the members of our PC and seek permission of the PB for its circulation to the Party ranks, so as to sharpen our line. It has also been decided to request the PB to circulate these drafts to the other provinces, as this is a general matter, concerning the whole of India.

This draft is mainly based on the experience of our province; and so the comrades of other provinces have to be careful in not getting confused about the details; but take a general conclusion and see whether they apply to their provinces or not. This way helps to sharpen our understanding of our Party policy.

These drafts became necessary because, though all comrades have unanimously accepted our present policy, when it came to the application of our policy to concrete issues, there arose serious differences. The result is confusion and impediments in the way of advancing forward. So, the Secretariat thought it necessary to clear this confusion, if we have to march forward to our goal.

To give a few instances, differences arose over our attitude towards rich and middle peasants in Telangana, our attitude towards rich in the matter of procurement of paddy in circars districts; i.e., whether it is possible to mobilise him also against the forceful procurement of the Govt.; whether the fixation of the wages and formulation of the other demands — hours of work and leave etc., — to be done on the same basis as an industrial worker. When the Secretariat sat for discussion of the above practical issues, it found that these differences on practical issues have deep roots in fundamentals of our Party policy. So, the Secretariat has decided to submit drafts on the concretisation of our policy.

The Secretariat, except Comrade P.S. is of the view that —

1. Because the present stage of the revolution is New Democratic stage, not Socialist stage, the middle peasant is a firm ally in the revolution who participates in the revolution. The rich peasant who has no feudal tails, can be neutralised as a class, but in areas like Telangana and Rayalaseema, where feudalism is very strong, it is even possible to get sections of rich peasantry in the struggle (though vacillating).

Com. P.S. is of the view, because it is essentially a Socialist stage, it is not possible to even neutralise the rich peasantry, Rich peasantry is our enemy and middle peasants can be neutralised.

2. In the matter of procurement of paddy, the Secretariat believes, that it is possible to neutralise the rich peasantry as the government plan goes against the rich peasantry also. Though the rich peasantry as a class is not standing firmly in the fight, it is parting with paddy, with dissatisfaction. Where we are able to mobilise, they are with the general mass of the peasantry.

Com. P.S. says because it is our enemy, it will not even remain neutral and somehow wriggles out of the forceful procurement by bribes, etc.

3. Regarding the demands of agricultural labour, the Secretariat is of the opinion that it is wrong to import mechanically relations between a capitalist and an industrial worker into the village life where small peasant economy is dominant. It not only disrupts the New Democratic Front, but also does not get the demands of the agricultural labourers satisfied, because this mechanical outlook will drive the poor and the middle peasant also into the fold of the rich peasant. So, the demands of the agricultural labourers are so formulated, that they will not disrupt the New Democratic Front, but gets the poor and middle peasants to the side of the agricultural labourers.

Com. P.S. is of the opinion that as the rich peasant is our enemy, the poor and the middle peasant engage small number of agricultural labour. We can formulate the demands of the agricultural labourer on the same lines as an industrial worker.

I have given above the differences on practical issues in brief, to give you an idea of the background of these drafts. It will greatly help us if you and Comrade Doc. express your opinions on these drafts immediately.

With greetings,

SECRETARY
ANDHRA P.C.

THE PRESENT STAGE AND STRATEGY OF THE INDIAN REVOLUTION

Is it Socialistic or New Democratic.

(Draft submitted by Andhra P.C. Secretariat for discussion amongst Party ranks)

The Political Thesis adopted at the Calcutta Congress has, in the main, succeeded in restoring the general revolutionary perspective which was almost lost in the horrible mess of reformism practised during a lengthy period of 6 years -- '42 to '48. But the stage and strategy of the revolution discussed in this resolution has not been sharp and precise enough as to give a common united and concrete understanding in the Party ranks. In concretising the strategy, i.e., to define exactly who the main enemy is, which are the exact classes and sections that remain in the Democratic Front, which are the classes and sections to neutralised etc. the resolution remain ambiguous and vague. Consequently, varied interpretations and meanings began to emerge from our comrades for all the slogans advanced in the political resolution, which often lead to erroneous and disruptive practices.

The basic cause of this confusion lies in the wrong understanding of the present stage and strategy of the revolution. Hence, the present draft we are submitting is, in the main, an attempt to elaborate, expand and specify the stage and strategy broadly chalked out in the political thesis which was adopted by the Calcutta Congress. That alone gives unified understanding of the entire Party and then alone effective implementation of the policy becomes possible. Sooner we clarify and correct our understanding as to the present stage and strategy of the revolution, the greater our ideological weapon gets sharpened and they can effectively be put forth. As such it needs no further emphasis as to the political importance and urgency of this draft to be put immediately to discussion amongst Party ranks.

Issues Confused

Some comrades including leading section in our Party are not only

confusing this in the Party ranks by often citing a parallel between the present stage and strategy of our revolution to the second stage of the Russian Revolution i.e., Feb., 1917 to Oct., 1917. They also mechanically attempt to and try to borrow the entire strategy and straight apply to our present conditions. They compare the present Nehru Govt. with that of Kerensky Govt. For example, besides a number of leading comrades, Dr. Adhikari himself, in his speech at the Andhra Party Conference, made such a reference and compared the present national government with that of Kerensky Govt. Subsequently, a comrade from the session has sent a question whether it is correct to bring in such a parallel and whether similar objective conditions exist in the present-day India. Comrade Adhikari, without going into the deep implications of it, explained it away by saying that a dual power came into existence in the shape of the Soviets of soldiers and workers' deputies; whereas in India, the revolutionary forces are far from such a stage of organisational strength and advancement. As a matter of fact, the broad fact that of existence of a dual power had little to do in deciding the then stage and strategy of the period. Even supposing such a dual power was absent, could the CPSU(B) then have advanced any other slogan except the "Socialistic dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry?". Our answer is and must be "NO" and "absolutely not". There the fundamental question was the question of political power which was in the hands of the bourgeoisie and it was the task of the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie and take power into the hands of the proletariat in alliance with the poor peasantry. Here, in India, a totally different picture presents before us both as regards the composition of state power and the classes that are bidding for the seizure of political power. Existence of dual power had only helped to shorten the period of that stage but had little or nothing to do in deciding that specific stage and strategy. Our conclusion therefore definitely is that both the drawing of the parallel and clarification given are basically wrong, confusing and misleading.

Another such deviation which is of course an off-shoot of the above said one is also present in the Party today. There are comrades who indiscriminately roll the slogans of people's democracy and the socialistic dictatorship of proletariat into one lump and fail to understand the significance of these two different slogans. These two slogans are in fact two

different theoretical concept adopted in two different stages and different objective conditions. The confusion can best be seen in the discussion of the Second Party Congress on this issue. There arose controversy in the Congress on this issue when the preamble for the constitution was being discussed. It was summed up this: "On behalf of the C.C., it was made clear that the People's democratic State meant the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Review of Second Congress, page 28). Though the subsequent sentences in the same review try to explain it in different and more clear terms, the confusion yet remains to be clarified.

All these formulations cited above as examples for our confusion can not be explained away in simple terms as 'a slip'. They are the outcome of a theoretical confusion, drifting and likely to drift into serious deviations. This is best demonstrated when the Andhra PC Secretariat met to discuss and concretise the slogans of Democratic Revolution. One school of thought began to argue that the middle peasant at this stage is only to be neutralised, whereas the other school of thought argue that middle peasant in this stage can be our ally. Similarly, on number of such vital issues, different interpretations began emerging from the slogans evolved in the Party resolution. Until and unless we put an end to all these, no real progress can be made in this period.

Is the Present Stage and Strategy of our Revolution similar to the Second Stage of the Russian Revolution (Mar. 1917 to Oct. 1917)?

Before we go to exhaustively discuss and critically examine the question let us briefly narrate about the stage and strategy in general defined by Comrade Stalin. This helps our further discussion on the subject; Stalin in his "Leninism" describes thus:

Strategy is the determination of the direction of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposition of the revolutionary forces (the main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan throughout the given strategy of the revolution.

Our Revolution already passed through two stages, and after the Oct. Revolution, it has entered a third stage. Our strategy changed accordingly.

First Stage: 1903 to February 1917. Objective: to overthrow tsarism and completely wipe out the survivals of medievalism. The main force of the revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: the peasantry. Direction of the main blow: the isolation of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which was striving to win over the peasantry and liquidate the revolution by COMPROMISING with tsarism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the working class with the peasantry. "The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie." (Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 110).

Second Stage: March 1917 to October 1917. Objective: to overthrow imperialism in Russia and to withdraw from the imperialist war. The main force of the Revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: the poor peasantry. The proletariat of neighbouring countries as probable reserves. The protracted war and the crisis of imperialism as the favourable factor. Direction of the main blow: isolation of the petty-bourgeois democrats (Mensheviks and social-revolutionaries), who were striving to win over the toiling masses of the peasantry to terminate the revolution by COMPROMISING with imperialism. Plan for the disposition of the forces: alliance of the proletariat with the poor peasantry. "The proletariat must accomplish the Socialist Revolution by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletariat elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. (ibid, III).

Third Stage: Commenced after the Oct. Revolution. Objective: to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, using it as a base for the overthrow of imperialism in all countries. The Revolution is spreading beyond the confines of one country: the epoch of world revolution has commenced. The main forces of the Revolution: the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, the revolutionary movement of the pro-

letariat in all countries. Main reserves: the semi-proletarian and small peasant masses in the developed countries the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries. Direction of the main blow: isolation of the petty bourgeois democrats, isolation of the parties of the Second International, which constitute the main support of the policy of COMPROMISE with imperialism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the proletariat revolution with the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries.

Strategy deals with the main forces of the Revolution and their reserves. It change with the passing of the revolution from one stage of another but remains essentially unchanged through a given stage".

Further, a more concretised discussion on the topic is also found in Comrade Stalin's reply to Comrade Yansky, which immensely helps our discussion on the issue.

"There is only one way to avoid all these 'contradictions', namely to recognise that there is a fundamental difference between the strategic slogan of the first stage of the revolution (the bourgeois-democratic revolution) and the strategic slogan of the second stage of the revolution -- (the proletariat revolution), to recognise that in the period of the first stage of the revolution we marched together with the WHOLE of the peasantry for the bourgeois-democratic revolution and that in the period of the 2nd stage of the revolution we march together with the POOR peasantry against the power of capital and for the proletarian revolution. And this must be recognised because an analysis of the class forces in the first and second stages of revolution obliges us to do so. Otherwise, it would be impossible to explain the fact that until Feb., 1917, we carried on our work under the slogan of revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. While after Feb. 1917, this slogan was superseded by the slogan of the SOCIALIST dictatorship of the proletariat and the POOR peasantry. You will agree, Com. Yansky, that the substitution of the slogan for another in March and April 1917 could not be explained if your scheme were to be accepted. This fundamental difference between the two strategic slogans of the Party was pointed out by Lenin as far back as in his pamphlet Two Tactics. He formulated that

Party's slogan during the period of preparing for the bourgeois-democratic revolution as follows:

"The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie." (Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 110-111).

In other words: together with the whole peasantry against the autocracy, with the bourgeoisie neutralised, for a democratic revolution.

The Party's slogan in the period of preparation for the Socialist Revolution, he formulated as follows: "the proletariat must accomplish the Socialist Revolution by allying to itself the mass of semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie." (ibid, p. 111)

In other words: together with the poor peasantry and the semi-proletarian sections of the population in general, against the bourgeoisie — with the petty bourgeoisie in town and country being neutralised — for the socialist revolution.

That was in 1905.

In April 1917, Lenin, describing the political situation at that time as the interweaving of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry with the actual power of the bourgeoisie, said: 'the specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a Transition from the First stage of the revolution which, owing to the insufficient class consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie — to the Second stage, which must place the power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the Peasantry.' (Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. VI, p.22).

At the end of August 1917, when the preparations for the Oct. Revolution were in full swing, Lenin, in a special article entitled Peasants and

Workers, wrote as follows:

'Only the proletariat and the Peasantry can overthrow the monarchy — that, in those days (i.e. 1905), was the fundamental definition of our class policy. And that definition was a correct one. Feb. and March 1917 proved it once again. Only the proletariat leading the Poor Peasantry (the semi-proletarians, as our programme calls them) can end the war by a democratic peace, heal the wounds it has caused, and begin to take steps towards Socialism which have become absolutely essential and urgent — such is the definition of our class policy now.'

That must not be understood to mean that we NOW have a dictatorship of the proletariat AND the poor peasantry. That, of course, is not so. We marched towards Oct. under the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, and in Oct., we put it into effect formally in as much as we had a bloc with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and shared the leadership with them, although actually the dictatorship of the proletariat already existed, since we Bolsheviks constituted the majority. The dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry ceased to exist formally, however after the Left Socialist Revolutionaries PUTSCH, when after the rupture of the bloc with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, when the leadership passed WHOLLY and ENTIRELY to the hands of one Party, into the hands of our Party, which does not share and cannot share the guidance of the state with any other party. This is what we call the dictatorship of proletariat."

In the three stages defined by Comrade Stalin, the first two stages alone form the important subject matter for our discussion. Here, Stalin enunciates clearly the first stage as the stage of the bourgeois democratic revolution and the second stage as the stage of the proletarian revolution.

He also says the slogan advanced in the first stage was "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" which slogan was changed in the second stage as the "socialistic dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry". With the completion of the second stage, political power has decisively been transferred into the hands of the proletariat, since the Party of the proletariat, that is, the Communist Party, had been the ma-

jointly in the coalition that came into existence along with the left socialist revolutionaries. But, after a short period, i.e., later part of 1918, the left Socialist Revolutionaries attempted disruption and finally got expelled from the share in the government. Then "the leadership passed wholly and entirely into the hands of one Party, which does not share and cannot share guidance of the state with any other party. This is what we call dictatorship of the proletariat." (Leninism, p.184). Thus, the slogan of the socialist dictatorship of proletariat and poor peasantry advanced in this stage ceased formally and the entire power was taken into the hands of the proletariat. The crucial point here is, which most of our comrades either forget or confuse, is the hegemony of the proletariat, with the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian hegemony, that is, the ideological and programmatic leadership was consistent throughout these three stages in the Russian Revolution. But actually, the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was only at the end of the second stage, though it was complete in its entirety after the exclusion of the left Socialist revolutionaries from the Government. Hence it has to be borne in mind that Proletariat is distinctly different from that of the proletarian dictatorship. If hegemony is confused with the dictatorship, we drift into sectarian and disruptive deviations. This must be borne in mind by all our comrades all through the discussion of this draft. Here, it is not necessary to go into a detailed examination of this point. Hence, we leave it at that.

We have in brief discussed above all that explained by Lenin and Stalin about the different stages and strategies adopted in the Russian Revolution. Now, let us compare and contrast to find out what similarities or differences exist between the second stage of the Russian Revolution and the present stage of our Revolution. Then alone, we can find ourselves how far we are right or wrong by bringing in this parallel or trying to verbatim borrow the strategy to apply to our present stage.

Here, the basic objective conditions that prevail during the period of Oct. Revolution and the present stage of our revolution are entirely different.

Firstly, the international background that was present on the eve of Oct. when compared to the present which forms the background of our

revolution is totally a different one. Lenin analysed thus: "monopoly capitalism and imperialism is capitalism in permanent crisis. Imperialism is the dying form of capitalism. This is the feature present in the beginning of the 20th century which forms the background of Russian Revolution. But, today, imperialism from that stage of "beginning its end" has reached a stage which can be characterised as "imperialism on death bed". World imperialism today has been stuck up in a crisis more deep and intense than in the early period of 20th century. It can either today exist in the shape of semi-fascism or fascism or smashed under the advancing tide of the world revolution. Imperialism after the two world wars has been so weakened as we find it today that the feature of its warring camps had been ended. Today, there is only the mighty colossal American imperialism dominant of the world imperialisms. All other capitalist states in one way or other while they are struggling for existence, had gone under the wings of the mighty American imperialism. The crisis of world imperialism can be best seen when we observe the present Truman's American expansionism. American imperialism faced with the unheard of crisis, has bent upon not only keeping colonies and semi-colonies under its domination but steadily advancing step by step to reduce other independent capitalist states as its colonies. This parasitic feature of rapidly devouring the weaker sections of its own species has got tremendous bearing on the course of the present day world. Monopoly capitalism today has been so naked an enemy not only socialistic democracy but also of 'bourgeois democracy', it is out not only to destroy the toiling and working masses but also to devour a section of its own class, the small bourgeoisie. Thus, in the present day international background, we find imperialism in its last stages, caught in the grip of a crisis so deep, so extensively and unheard of.

The second aspect of the special feature of the international situation which forms the background of our present revolution today is coming into existence of Soviet Union, Oct. Revolution and its achievements during the last 30 years, have changed the very course of world developments and influenced the wide strata of people. Before Oct. Revolution the doctrines of Marx and Engels which were considered by many intellectuals as utopian, have not only been demonstrated into practice — the practicability of Marxist-Leninist doctrines; but consolidated socialism

on one-sixth of the surface of the earth. In contrast to decaying capitalism in all its sphere the Soviet world has emerged as the real champion of democracy and an all-round progress. This effective growth and consolidation of the October Revolution has profound influence on sections of the peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals who were previously considered as the reserves of the bourgeoisie. Socialist world not only become the hope of the toiling masses of the world, but of the entire progressive mankind who crave for peace, who strive for national independence and aspire for progress. All genuine scientists, artists, educationalists, look towards Soviet Union for real advance. Peasantry in the world as a whole, which once got land from the feudal landlords with the help of bourgeoisie has been steadily realising that in the present context of the world today, it is the proletariat that can give them land but not the bourgeoisie which is already played out and joined hands with feudalism. The existence of the socialist world forms an effective background for our revolution which makes the vital contribution in deciding different aspects of the revolution.

Secondly, Russia was an independent feudal militant state with the peculiar features of industrial growth. In describing many peculiarities of Russia at that time, Comrade Stalin gives the unprecedented concentration of Russian industry on the eve of the Revolution. It is known for instance that in Russia 54% of workers were employed in enterprises employing over 500 workers whereas in so highly developed a country as USA no more than 33% of workers were employed in such enterprises. It need hardly be proved that this circumstance alone could make the revolutionary party as the Party of the Bolsheviks transform the working class of Russia into an immense force in the political life of the country.

Compared with what is described above, the present day India presents a different picture. India, in its real sense, is not independent and essentially remains a colony, though after August 15, with the bourgeois collaboration, it can be defined as a semi-colony. In a word, Russia is more near to advanced capitalist countries whereas present-day India is a rotten colonial base.

Thirdly, the February Revolution in Russia "has smashed and set aside

the old Czarist power representing a handful of feudal landlords who control the entire machinery of the State (army, police and bureaucracy); but not utterly destroyed." (Lenin).

Whereas in the present day India, by the Mountbatten Award and subsequent so-called national government, nothing has been smashed of the imperialist-feudal state machinery; but simply got political power shared by the dominant bourgeoisie. It is not the entire capitalist class that gets benefited by this compromise but only the big Business houses that have entered into economic deals with British capitalists. Not to speak of the toiling masses, the middle bourgeoisie will also be devoured as the economic crisis unfolds.

Lastly, "the state power in Russia has passed into the hands of the influential class — the bourgeoisie and landlords who had become the bourgeoisie. To that extent, bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia has been completed. (Lenin) Whereas in India, the state power in essence has not passed into the hands of the new class — the class of dominant bourgeoisie. This new class, afraid of the revolution, betrayed it and gone under the wings of imperialism to share power which till now, has been refused. Thus a very minor phase of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed with the sharing of this political power with imperialism.

Thus we see a completely different national and international set-up is present today when compared with the Oct. Revolution warranting us a completely re-orientated approach in defining the present stage and strategy of our Revolution. It is a wonder how comrades can gloss over the difference between independent bourgeois state and a semi-colonial state. Is it not surprising not to find any difference between a 'new class' taking hold of state power after the Feb. Revolution which has smashed and set aside the Tsarist power and a new class sharing power with imperialism smashing nothing but got everything of the old state machine intact? Is it not fantastic to argue that the slogan of Democratic Revolution advanced in our political thesis is nothing different from the slogan of 'socialistic dictatorship of proletariat and poor peasantry' on the eve of Oct. Revolution? So, this comparison of the present stage of our Revolution with stage of Oct. Revolution is not only wrong but misleading in many re-

spects. This deviation must be at once corrected or else we fail to effectively advance towards Democratic Revolution.

New Democracy Confused with the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Marxism is not a dogma. It is a science which provides us with guiding lines of action. Since the Oct. Revolution, in this long period of more than 30 years, mighty revolutionary struggles in different countries, colonies and semi-colonies have been taking place. They present us varied experience and rich armoury of Marxism Leninism in this period. Mao, the leader of the historic Chinese liberation struggle, from his unique rich experience and study, has formulated a theory of New Democracy. This is a new form of revolutionary struggle to advance towards Socialism in colonies and semi-colonies. Mao advanced New Democracy as distinct from the dictatorship of proletariat. Let us quote from Mao, some significant passages which go to clarify New Democracy. In his pamphlet 'New Democracy' he analyses thus:

Two Stages of Revolution

"If the nature of the present Chinese society is semi-colonial and semi-feudal one, then, the progress of the Chinese Revolution is determined by it as a two-step one. The first step, to turn the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society into an independent democratic society; the second step will be to develop the revolution for the building up of the socialist society. The present phase of the Chinese revolution falls obviously within the first step".

"The circumstances of the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution have been changed since the last world war and the establishment of a socialist state on one-sixth of the land surface of the globe, i.e., after October Revolution.

"Before that time, the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution was in the orbit of the world bourgeois-democratic revolution. It was a part of it.

"From then, the old Chinese bourgeois-democratic Revolution comes within the orbit of and in its character, forms a part of the world proletarian socialist revolution.

"The first stage of this revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries - though according to its social nature - it is fundamentally still a bourgeois-democratic one of which the objective requirements still basically call for a clearance of the way of capitalist development -- yet despite this, the revolution is no longer the old wholesale bourgeois revolution for the building up of a capitalist society and a state of bourgeois dictatorship type; but a new type of revolution wholly or partly led by the proletariat, the first stage of which aims at setting up of a New Democratic Society a new state of the combined dictatorship of all revolutionary classes. The fundamental character of this revolution will never vary until the arrival of the stage of socialist revolution though during its progress, it may pass through several minor stages in accordance with the possible changes in the attitude of enemies and alliance.

It is clear to us now that there are two different categories of Revolution. "One is the world revolution of the bourgeois and capitalist category which ceased to prevail after the outbreak of the first imperialist war, or more precisely, after Russian Revolution. Since then, the world revolution of another category was born."

"Chinese revolution, although it is no proletarian socialist revolution of the new type, certainly, it has already formed part and important part of it and has been a great ally of it. The first step, that is, the first stage of the revolution does not and cannot at all build up a capitalist state under the dictatorship of Chinese bourgeoisie: its aim in the very course of the first stage is the setting up of a new democratic society of the united dictatorship of revolutionary classes. The first stage thus accomplished, the development of the Chinese revolution will be carried forward into the second stage that is, the building up of Chinese socialist society."

"The New Democratic Republic differs on the one hand from the old Western bourgeois-democratic Republic which belongs to the old cat-

egory of democracy, is out of date; it differs on the other hand from the newest society democratic Republic which has already been consolidated in USSR and it will be established in the capitalist countries and will unquestionably be a state and governmental form of all advanced countries; but which is not practicable during a certain historical period for the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Therefore, the state form of all revolutionary colonial or semi-colonial countries for a certain historical period can be nothing; but the form of new Democratic Republic.”

New Democratic Republic

What is a New Democratic Republic? “The forms of state in the world can be classified according to their social nature into the following:

- 1) Republic of the bourgeois dictatorship
- 2) Republic of the proletarian dictatorship
- 3) Republic of the united dictatorship of several classes

The first prevails in the old democratic countries; the second: this is the present form of the state of the Soviet Union and has to be adopted in the course of time by advanced capitalist countries. The third: this is the transitional form of state of colonies and semi-colonies.

“There may be some different features among different colonies and semi-colonies; but, the state and governmental forms are basically like this new Democratic Republic of the united dictatorship of all anti-imperialist classes.”

The thesis that state form is the dictatorship of all revolutionary classes and the governmental forms is the system of Democratic centralism is the political foundation of the New Democracy. That is what we call the Republic of New Democracy. This same and in fact, the Republic of China which is our responsibility to build.

“In such a republic, all big banks, big industries, and big commercial establishments must be state-owned. In order to ensure the freedom of people’s livelihood from the influences of private profit, all native-owned

or foreign-owned enterprises, either monopolist or domination of too large for a private effort — for instance banks, railroads, etc. — will be managed by and controlled by state alone. This is the essence and theory of control of capital.

However, in the meantime, the state will not confiscate other forms of private property and will not forbid the development of capitalist production, so long as it is taken for granted that it “does not hit people’s livelihood, the reason for this procedure is that Chinese economy is still in a very backward state.

“The New Democratic republic will adopt certain necessary measures in taking over land previously owned by big landlords and distribute among the peasants without or with very little land. The idea of land to the tiller is to be promoted and feudal relations in the villages to be smashed. But, the ownership of the land is to be readjusted not with a view to building socialist agriculture; but only in order to turn the land into peasants’ own property. The economy of the wealthy peasant will also be allowed.”

The Chinese national economy “should not be built on the lines of those Western Capitalist societies nor should it keep intact same old feudal society.”

“Imperialism is the dying form of capitalism, as Lenin once stated, but because of its approaching end, it is feeding more and more upon colonies and semi-colonies and is nowhere likely to permit the existence of any other capitalist society with a bourgeois dictatorship state.”

Therefore, “it is imperialism that will not allow in China to develop its own capitalism.”

Not yet Time for Socialism

“The question may be asked: “Is it possible for China to follow at this stage the road of socialism of proletarian dictatorship, if she is not to take to capitalism of that of bourgeois dictatorship?”

It is not possible.

Though it goes without saying that the first step of the Revolution which we are contemplating today will, one day, inevitably develop into second step, i.e., socialism and only in the realm of socialism can China become prosperous; yet the present is no time to practise it. Socialism is out of the question before the task of the present revolution, the task of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism, are fulfilled. The Chinese Revolution can only be achieved in two stages: a) New Democracy, b) Socialism. And we should point out that the period over which the first step will expand will be considerably long one. We are not idealists. We cannot place our ideals over and above our present day life.

It is correct then to say that this stage of which, the first should form the ground-work of the second, must not be interrupted by a stage of bourgeois dictatorship. This alone is the proper Marxist method of understanding the course of development of our Revolution. It is to suffer from worst illusions to assent to the suggestion that the Democratic stage of the Revolution has not its own specific task and time-table and it is possible to accomplish in one stage, the task which belong to an entirely different stage — the later stage. For instance, to try to accomplish the task of socialist stage simultaneously with that of the democratic. Such is the face of the thesis 'all in one stroke which is pure idealism. It is not the proper way in which any revolutionary could think. It is known to everybody that both in the field of ultimate forms of social organisation and in the matter of practical working programme, the Communist Party has developed its outlook. That is, it has got the maximum and minimum programme. The New Democracy of the present and Socialism of the future are its two component parts to be carried out under the guidance of the whole ideology of Communism.

In contradistinction to the future or ultimate programme of our Socialist system, this is our minimum programme. The New Democracy carried forward semi-colonial and semi-feudal character of China to a national and social character of a new bourgeois democracy.

The carrying out of this programme cannot advance China to So-

cialism. This is not the question of willingness or unwillingness of certain individuals. But it is due to the fact that objective political and social conditions in China do not permit the advance."

At another place, Mao says: "Without a thorough democratic revolution of new bourgeois nature, to establish socialism over the ruins of semi-colonial and semi-feudal China of today would be an utopian dream.

Some people cannot understand why the Communist Party of China, far from being unsympathetic to capitalism, actually promotes its development. What China does not want is foreign imperialism and native feudalism and not native capitalism which is too weak.

"New Democratic State of Union of Democratic classes is different in principle from a socialist state with the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"China, throughout the period of our New Democratic system, cannot and should not have a system of government of the character of one class of dictatorship of one Party autocracy."

All that quoted above is the essence and the theory of the content and concept of New Democracy.

Keeping in this background, let us analyse the stage and strategy and perspective of our Revolution.

What is the Present Stage, Perspective and Strategy of our Revolution?

The present-day India is not an independent capitalist state, but only correctly be classified as a semi-colonial state. The resolution of the Second Congress of the CPI characterises Mountbatten Award as "British domination has not ended; but the form of domination has changed. The bourgeoisie, so long kept out of power and in opposition to it, is granted a share of state power in order to disrupt and drown the national democratic revolution in blood.

"The Mountbatten Award does not really signify the retreat of imperialism, but it is a cunning counter-offensive against the rising force of Indian people.

"Establishment of Central Government headed by Nehru has not solved a single problem of Democratic Revolution."

"At the same time it has won its dependent on imperialism and it is satellite state. Economically, it is dependent for its future on imperialist help. Its compromise with feudal elements will base it in the same position and the fear of Pakistan getting imperialist favour also ties to imperialism."

Corroborating the same idea, Comrade Zhukov in his article on India says: "... British plan in India, in the opinion of many objective observers a clear proof of the fact that the new British plan of 'quitting India' essentially makes it possible for Britain to preserve her decisive Political economic and military position in India."

The above quotations go to clearly show the nature of the State of our country is a semi-colonial one. Here, a word on the nature and character of the bourgeoisie can be quoted from the resolution of the 6th World Congress of the Communist International which helps us to understand the tasks of our revolution more clearly.

"The bourgeoisie of China, India and Egypt is by its immediate interests, so closely bound up with exploitation of peasant masses that it takes its stand not only against agrarian revolution, but also against every decisive agrarian reform."

This is the picture present before us which says that India is essentially a colonial country in all its social, political and economic aspects. Hence the stage of our revolution is also essentially a bourgeois-democratic; but it is not a bourgeois-democratic revolution of the old type; but a new type led by proletariat and correctly called New Democratic Revolution. This is also expressed in the terms of people's Democratic Revolution. The present stage of our revolution essentially, though not exactly,

is similar to that of the present stage of Chinese revolution, the stage that is opened since 1927 bourgeois offensive against Communists and the working class. Though Chinese comrades have fought for more than 20 years and grown in quality and quantity, the stage yet remains the same to be fulfilled further. We in India have almost like that of Chinese Democratic forces in the post-1927, have entered into a definite stage. Of course, the present radically changed international background will greatly help us and ease our task when compared to Chinese brethren who had a prolonged period of 20 years and more of torturous civil war and yet have to complete it victoriously.

India like China is a semi-colonial and semi-feudal in character. Like that of Chinese feudal warlords, our states and feudal princes remain to be liquidated as sores on the face of the country. Like that of Chinese bourgeoisie of 1927, Indian bourgeoisie, has at the present time, almost started a civil war by its cruel attack on all democratic forces of the country, headed by the working class and Communist Party. The Indian bourgeoisie, afraid of the growing revolutionary forces, went under the wings of foreign imperialism to obey its dictates. There in China, the fruits of Revolution are harvested by national bourgeoisie whereas in India, the fruits of 60 years of national movement have been harvested by the Indian bourgeoisie, by sharing political power with imperialism. Here, like that of China, the bourgeoisie has kept intact, the feudal allies which it wants to utilise in the course of its counter revolution.

The offensive launched by Nehru Government against CPI is a part of the international offensive started by world imperialism. It is an offensive of which it ranges itself against all progressive and democratic forces of the world. To put it bluntly, this offensive is practically nothing but a crude civil war, let loosed by the imperial-bourgeois-feudal combine against working class, peasants and other toiling masses. The stage has come wherein even day-to-day partial struggles have to be fought armed or semi-armed. Armed resistance has been forced other on the agenda of Revolution by this offensive of bourgeoisie. Either we resist inch by inch the civil war and offensive let loose against us by all means at the disposal of the people or allow the bourgeoisie a free hand to crush the forces of revolution and end in the victory of counter-revolution.

Keeping all this in view, in areas where we are a good proportion in the masses like certain parts of Andhra, Kerala, Bengal, etc., the time has come to think in terms of guerrilla warfare (Chinese way) against military onslaughts of Nehru Government which is bent upon mercilessly liquidating us. Unless with a clear perspective we plan methods of resistance, and if we leave it to spontaneity, the future history will charge us with the gross betrayal of the Revolution.

The liberation struggle in the form of Telangana is almost a pointer in the possible direction of forming two governments, which in process, must lead to general uprising and capture of power by the people. There are many more territories such as Telangana with a similar socio-political, economic and terrain and must be utilised as guerrilla districts to begin with; which afford ample scope to develop them as resistance bases. For example in Andhra alone, areas like Rayalaseema, Telangana border areas like Munagala, Nuzvid, Chintalapudi agency belt, where agriculture is primitive, and undeveloped, where landlordism is dominant, with poor peasant and wage labour forming overwhelming majority of population, where already there is sufficient stir in the direction of agrarian revolt, present before us huge reserves of revolutionary potentialities. Backward communication system, topographic and terrain conditions are exceptionally suited for prolonged guerrilla battles (Chinese way) which led to establishment of resistance bases. It is with such a perspective we have to successfully plan out the future course of our revolution. Not to have such clear perspective and allowing ourselves to drift into spontaneity is a crime against revolution. "The era of contempt for perspective must end along with the era of reformism" and a clear-cut perspective and well-defined strategy must open along with the revolutionary reorientation. The Chinese strategy offers us a living example from which we have to adopt many invaluable lessons.

Our Strategy: Since the stage of the revolution is the New Democratic stage, the strategy must also correspond to it; but some comrades wonderfully argue that the New Democratic stage is nothing different from the dictatorship of the proletariat; i.e., socialist stage. Such formulations and strategies, which are disruptive and so not helpful to build a Democratic Front for the Democratic Revolution. The lumping of the rich peas-

antry into a single category without any discrimination between the section which is "able to shake off the tails of feudalism" and those who are "not able to" do so — proceeding on this basis, those comrades characterise the entire rich peasantry as counter-revolutionaries, they even do not concede the idea that a section of them can be neutralised in this Democratic Revolution. They do not at least concede that in feudal areas like Telangana, the rich peasant can be taken along with liberation struggle in this stage. Today, the reality that is demonstrated on this front is a concrete proof against this formulation and a good section of it is coming with us in the liberation struggle. They also argue that the entire middle peasant class cannot be our ally in this revolution, but only must be neutralised. In a word, the strategy they suggest is not for the New Democratic stage but only to a socialist stage. But they do not have the courage to define this as socialist stage; but go on suggesting by backdoor methods the socialist strategy. Hence, we need an unambiguous, clear-cut definition and specification of our strategy.

Objective: to overthrow the imperialist-big-business-feudal combine and completely wipe out all the features of feudalism, medievalism and colonial impress. Main force of the Revolution: Workers both rural and industrial. Immediate reserves: peasantry in general with exception of those rich farmers who are unable to shake off their tails of feudalism and poor and middle peasants in particular remains immediate reserves throughout this stage of New Democratic Revolution. Direction of the main blow: against the collaborationist bourgeoisie and its henchmen, who have been duping the peasantry and still trying to keep their grip on them, to betray the revolution. The proletariat must carry to completion the New Democratic Revolution by allying itself with the mass of peasants in general and poor and middle peasant in particular in order to crush by force, the power of resistance of the imperialist-bourgeois feudal combine and paralyse the instability of the middle bourgeoisie, upper middle class and a section of the rich peasantry.

To put it more concretely, let us quote Comrade Mao's analysis where, he discusses about the classes in the Democratic front.

"Who form the revolutionary groups?"

"The workers are of course the most thorough revolutionary democrats. Besides the workers, the peasants form the largest revolutionary democratic group.

"All peasants with the exception of those rich farmers unable to shake off their tails of feudalism, are taken by the slogan of 'land to the tiller'.

"The lower middle classes in cities and towns is another revolutionary democratic group because the development of agricultural productivity made possible by the policy of land to the tiller, benefits them.

"The upper middle class forms a vacillating group. It favours land to the tiller, because it too wants a market. But, at the same time, they fear the policy because they own land.

"Who are the sworn enemies of Revolution?"

"Those who are resolutely opposed to the policy are the only groups within Kuomintang who represent the class of big landlords and Big business and compradores."

Comrade Mao further elaborating on this issue in his latest report to the CC of the CCP has formulated clearly in describing the enemies of the Chinese revolution, says:

"This monopoly capital merged with state capital becomes state-monopoly-capitalism. This monopoly capitalism intimately merged with foreign imperialism and domestic landlord class and old type rich peasant becomes compradore feudal state monopoly capitalism. This is the economic foundation of Chiang's reactionary regime. This state monopoly capitalism not only oppresses the workers and peasants but also oppresses the petty-bourgeoisie and injures the middle-bourgeoisie.

"The petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie oppressed and injured by this class and its state power although they too are bourgeoisie, may however participate in the New Democratic Revolution or maintain neutrality. They have no connections or comparatively fewer connections

with imperialism. They are real national bourgeoisie. Wherever the state power of New Democracy exists, these classes must firmly and unhesitatingly be protected.

"Petty bourgeoisie mentioned here refers to the small-scale industrial and commercial capitalists who hire workers and shop employees.

"The existence and development of middle capitalist elements are, under these conditions, not all dangerous. The same applies to the new rich peasant economy which will necessarily come into being in the rural area after the agrarian revolution.

"The new democratic revolution is to eliminate only feudalism and monopoly capitalism, only the landlord class and bureaucratic bourgeoisie (big bourgeoisie), not capitalism in general and not middle bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie."

Again Comrade Mao in the same report positively asserts the strategy of new Democratic Revolution in more definite and more concrete terms.

"Our line is to rely on poor peasants and solidly unite with the middle peasants (not as some of our comrades say 'neutralise them!') to destroy the feudal and semi-feudal exploitation system of the landlord class and the old type rich peasants.

"In the demarcation of class composition, care must be taken not to commit the mistake of assigning those who are really middle peasants to the rich peasants category.

"All these are concrete policies that must be adopted by our Party in carrying out the strategic task of solidly uniting middle peasants."

In other passage, the same is further elaborated thus:

"The basic principles must be noted here. Firstly, it is necessary to satisfy the demands of the poor peasants and farm labourers. This is the important task of our agrarian reform. Secondly, it is necessary to reso-

lutely unite middle peasants and not injure the basic principles and the task of our agrarian reform will surely triumphantly be completed. In accordance with the principle of equal distribution, the surplus land and the portion of the properties of the old type rich peasants should be taken over for distribution. Because, Chinese rich peasants in general are of heavy feudal and semi-feudal exploiting nature — rich peasants at the same time collect rents and engage in usury and their conditions of hiring labour are semi-feudal.

“... There should in general be differentiation between the rich peasants and the landlords.”

The passage quoted from Mao are self-explanatory and need no further comment. (See appendix 4).

Concretisation of the Strategy

Here, before we proceed to discuss the question of concretisation of the first stage of the Revolution a word on the very nature of New Democratic Revolution (NDR) and the role of the Peasantry in it, as stated by Mao, is of utmost significance. He says: “Stalin once said the problem of colonies and semi-colonies is in essence the peasant problem.” That is to say that the problem of the Chinese revolution is in essence a problem of the peasantry; that the peasant resistance against Japan is in its essence a peasant war against Japan. The politics of New Democracy is in essence the political transfer of power to the peasantry. The three principles are in essence the peasant revolution. The idea of popular culture is in essence the question of rising culture of peasantry to higher level. The anti-Japanese war is in essence the peasant revolution.

“Therefore, the peasant problem becomes the fundamental problem of the Chinese Revolution and the peasantry becomes the main force of the revolution. Besides the peasantry, a section which was a section of the Chinese population consists of workers among whom several millions are industrial workers, Handicraft workers and agricultural labourers number tens of millions.”

“... here, the phrase ‘in essence’ means as explained by Stalin himself ‘fundamental’.” It certainly does not overlook the other problems and other forces.

Some comrades have erroneous conceptions of characterising the role of respective classes and sections of the people in the Democratic Revolution. The basic confusion underlying all these is undoubtedly theoretical confusion. The errors in concretisation mainly consist of the following:

a) They began to judge the role of classes and different sections of people from the standpoint of their present-day political loyalties. Sections of different revolutionary classes who today are unfortunately under the illusion and influence of the national bourgeoisie are taken for granted as reserves of the bourgeoisie.

b) Secondly, some comrades have a peculiar notion of judging the role of the classes or sections basing on the apparent and outwardly existing things of the day. They fail to study them in the background of daily deepening crisis of the world imperialism and its possible devastating effects on different sections of society. As such, this outlook becomes static instead of dynamic.

c) Lastly, still some other comrades who are really diehard sectarians at heart conceal their sectarianism by overtly agreeing to all the strategy and general slogans of the Party. But they distort and misquote from the classics of Lenin and Stalin and attempt at classifying the peasantry with their sectarian and vanguardistic barometer.

As has been previously stated, we are passing through a period of untold world imperialist crisis which has brought world capitalism almost on the verge of its final collapse. As a result of the second war, the general crisis of capitalism has sharpened. Whatever the attempts of the world imperialism to escape from the clutches of this impending crisis, it is sure to land itself in a crisis unprecedented in its nature.

Effects will be devastating not only to the entire rural folk depending

upon economy including the rich peasants without feudal tails, but also different sections of lower and middle bourgeoisie get badly affected. The Indian finance capitalists do not hesitate in lining up with world imperialism and devour its own weaker species at home and try to keep their margin of profits intact.

The policies of the national Government are already indicating a line they choose in future. They have mortgaged the future of Indian life to Anglo-American imperialism. They risk industrialising India by relying on imperialism for it. They are least bothered about the growth of national income and expansion of internal home market for India; they are running with the slogan of asiatic leadership only as a smokescreen to plunder the other ill developed asiatic countries in league with imperialism. They resist any radical agrarian reform, leave aside carrying forward of the revolution. If this is further pursued, it is common knowledge for us what is in store for India's future. The present policies pursued are only in the interests of monopoly bourgeoisie and its imperialist-feudal combine. The pro-imperialist, anti-national, anti-Soviet, semi-fascist, counter-revolutionary policy and programme of the collaborationist bourgeoisie have nothing in common with the betterment or advancement of the nation. (Appendix 1, 2, & 3.)

Keeping this present background in view, we have to evaluate and understand the role of different sections and classes in the objective set up. We have elsewhere laid down in general, the principles, the stage and strategy of our revolution. Here it needs further concretisation and application to the classes and sections in the rural side. A tendency is expressed by certain comrades while even agreeing with general strategy given here, try to interpret events in the subjective manner they like by giving false definitions and classifications of the rural life. For example, an attempt at classifying the peasantry mainly basing on the extent of land one possesses and not on the income one gets, is an example of the type described above. Some others argue that the number of labourers and farm servants that a peasant engages forms the main basis on which the class character of the peasantry in question has to be defined. Still some others loosely define the rich peasant whereby they throw the land monopolist in the category of the rich peasant. For example, a landholder

in the deltaic areas who possesses some 100 acres of wet land is also considered a rich peasant. What they have not understood is that here, the above described one is a landlord but not a rich peasant. The important thing is his income. Second thing is the volume of exploitation of labour. The third thing is the extent of land he possesses in the particular area concerned, i.e., where the land pressure is greater and agricultural productivity is considerably higher. Though the one in discussion is not of the type of feudal exploiter in the sense of usurer or rack-renter, he is to be considered as a land monopolist or landlord, but no more a rich peasant.

To clear all such confusion and leave no loophole for erroneous definitions and interpretations, let us take from Lenin, the classical definitions of all these classes and apply it to our own specific conditions here. In his draft thesis, on the agrarian question for the 2nd Congress of the Communist International Lenin defines as follows:

1) The first class is the agricultural proletariat, wage labourers (by the year, season or day) who obtain their livelihood by working for hire in capitalist agricultural enterprise.

2) Second semi-proletarians or dwarf-peasants, that is, those who obtain their livelihood partly as wage labourers in agricultural and industrial enterprises and partly by working their own or rented plots of land which provide only a part of the means of subsistence for their families.

3) Third, the small peasantry, i.e., small tillers who hold either as own or tenants, small plots of land which enable them to meet the requirements of their families and farms, without hiring outside labour.

4) Middle peasants in the economic sense are mainly small tillers holding either as owners or tenants small plots of land but such as under capitalism provides them, as a general rule, not only with a meagre subsistence for their families and their farms but also with the possibility of certain surplus which at least in good years, may be converted into capital. Secondly, fairly frequently resort to the hire of outside labour.

5) Big peasants or capitalist entrepreneurs in agriculture who, as a

rule, employ several hired labourers and are kept with the peasantry only by their low cultural level, habits of life, manual labour they themselves perform on their farms.

6) The revolutionary proletariat must immediately and unreservedly confiscate all the land of the landlords, the big landowners, i.e., those who in capitalist countries directly or through their tenant farmers, systematically exploit wage labour and the surrounding small (and, not infrequently, part of the middle), peasantry, perform no manual labour themselves, and are largely the dependents of the feudal lords. (The nobles in Russia, Germany and Hungary, the restored Seigneurs in France, the Lords in England, the ex-slave categories of exploiters and parasites).

Here, we find from Lenin that in his definition and classification of the peasantry, the main running thread throughout is seen as the basis of income one gets or in other words its sufficiency or insufficiency to his family and farm. But Lenin was undoubtedly attaching sufficient importance to other significant factors such as the method of production (whether one engages hired labour or not) the history of the farm, the links of the peasant with the respective sections of the peasantry also determine the class nature of the individual peasant. If we have to concede the argument of comrades who insist that the number of labourers and farm servants one engages on his fields is the criteria in deciding and classifying him whether he is a rich, middle or poor peasant, we are sure to land in a typical and mysterious conclusions. Let us concretely take some examples here. In some areas like Rayalaseema and Telangana where rice cultivation is done under well, a middle peasant engages more number of farm servants than a rich peasant in a deltaic area. Even the poor peasants there, under these circumstances, has to engage one or two farm servants. Without the assistance of whom the maintenance of his farm becomes impossible. It is reported that in Rayalaseema, one requires two farm servants to cultivate a two-acre piece of land under cultivation of well water, besides a number of coolies. Another such report from Bhuvanagiri taluk (Telangana) enlightens us on the issue in discussion. It is reported that a peasant farm with 6 acres of wet land (under well cultivation) and 30 acres of dry land the farmer has to maintain minimum three pairs of bullocks and engage 3 to 4 farm servants besides himself

and a number of day labourers. It should be taken note of that he too is a participant of manual labour on the farm. On enquiry into details, we came to know that little surplus remains to him and he more than often depends upon the local money-lender for initial investments on the farm in the beginning of every year. If the criteria taken here is to classify him according to the number of farm servants etc., the above-described peasant comes in rich category, which is practically foolish and absurd. From our own experience, even from the deltaic areas, we can show a number of instances where farm servants are engaged even by middle and poor peasantry. It will be wrong to resort to define classes primarily basing on the farm servants or wage-labour he engaged rather than the income that one gets and the surplus that remains to him. It is equally wrong to define the class character of the peasant according to the extent of the land that one possesses. In some areas where the productive forces have not developed, even a 100-acres peasants get nothing as surplus and he will thank god if he able to meet both ends. Leave aside some exceptional and individual cases, we can broadly classify the peasantry on the basis of income each type of peasant gets besides other considerations such as method of production, history of the farm and his links with other rural classes in rural life. From our own experience in Andhra rural life, the following method can be adopted and classification be made to avoid most part of confusion.

Agricultural labourer is one who has nothing of his own to depend upon except to sell his labour power on the farm of others to eke out his livelihood.

Small or poor peasant is one whether as a tenant or owner of his own piece of land (besides himself performing manual labour in certain cases also hires labour), who gets an annual gross income of his farm between 300 and 500 rupees. This will be hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of his family and he often gets into debts.

Middle peasant is one, as described by Lenin, but for our clear understanding and characterisation of him, he can be one who gets a gross income of Rs 500 to 1000. This will be not only sufficient in normal years but also gives him a small surplus in good years to maintain his

family and farm.

Rich peasants are those whose gross annual income will be somewhere between Rs 1000 and 2000 besides possessing the characteristic features, as described by Lenin. This rich peasant class is not a homogenous one and can be divided into two sections with their special characteristic features:

a) A section of the rich peasantry will be mainly dependent on their income on the land. These people have no feudal tails. They have comparatively little or no political social links with the financial bourgeoisie or feudal landlords.

b) Second section is such though their income may be somewhere near above fixed amount, is by its habits feudal, engages in money-lending and rack-renting etc. Besides, it has got more social, political, and economic links with the landlords bourgeoisie going into power.

Rest of those whose annual income exceeds Rs 2000 generally under the category of landlords, with varying degrees of difference, no matter whether they are feudal exploiters or modern entrepreneurs on capitalist lines.

And to this above clarification, a word further on different categories of land tenure that is prevailing in Andhra is of immense help to guide us in concretising our strategy and correctly applying it. We can divide the rural Andhra into 3 categories with distinct socio-economic features, each having its own pre-dominant common peculiar features.

1) Areas like Telangana where more or less feudalism in its complete naked form is in existence. Serfdom and slavery in the form of vetti etc., remain even today. Landlordism here in the form of zamindari and deshmukh is predominant. Poor peasant and landless labour forms overwhelming majority; The middle peasant is too weak numerically. Rich peasant section is still more weaker both numerically and in its social-economic status.

2) Areas, no matter whether zamindari or ryotwari tenure, where agriculture is not developed (where projects, modern irrigation etc., are not introduced and productivity of land is comparatively on a very lower level) forms another category. Here too, land concentration is now existing and increasing at a rapid speed. Here too rich peasant is both numerically and socially too weak to count with. Middle peasant almost as in the completely feudal areas is negligent. Poor and agricultural labour population forms overwhelming majority of the rural population. This area is somewhat similar, except in practice of vetti and certain feudal business, to that of the first area where feudalism is intact.

3) Deltaic areas or agriculturally developed areas. In these areas, middle peasant economy is dominant in the life of the village. Agricultural labour forms 40 to 50 p.c. of the local population. Kulak or rich peasant, though numerically weak, that is 4 to 5 p.c. politically sufficiently strong in the life of the village. Hence, the landlordism of the old feudal type is either completely absent or very feeble.

Comrades in implementing our policy, that is, applying our strategy, you must bear in mind all the facts and peculiarities enumerated above to successfully advance to Democratic Revolution. In the first two areas described above, as areas of feudalism, the task of the agrarian revolution becomes primarily in liquidating feudalism in all its forms, social, economical and political. In the third area, where feudalism as such, as in its undiluted form does not exist where land distribution is more even, there, our job will be mainly to fight, isolating the kulak element and its political influence. Here, the fact that political isolation is entirely different from economic extermination has to be borne in mind in order to guard ourselves from the sectarian and disruptive tactics. In these areas, it can be said that a part of the agrarian revolution in form of agrarian reform has already taken place. These are certain general guiding lines, rather than specific dictums. Any such deviation on the part of our comrades by which they take to the slogan of indiscriminate extermination of the rich peasantry or clubbing of the middle peasantry with the rich peasantry and the rich peasantry with the landlords or belittle the positive role of the middle peasantry in the NDR is fraught with sectarian dangers. It is disruptive and harms the cause of the NDR, rather than helps advanc-

ing it. Certain of these erroneous tendencies which were almost attempted to be put into practice in Telangana area, where the liberation struggle in its intense form is proceeding, has already been threatening with the disruption of the toilers' front. This is a very serious mistake in a New Democratic stage. The Secretariat has discussed those reports from Telangana and instructed the comrades in charge to rectify them urgently or else, the front is in danger of disruption.

Conclusion:

The purpose of the draft can be understood as achieved if the following fundamental slogans are deduced from it.

1) The national and international background for October Revolution is totally and radically different from that of our present revolution. Hence, the drawing of parallel or attempts to borrowing the strategy verbatim, is wrong and misleading and disruptive.

2) The present stage of our revolution is not socialistic but only New Democratic. Here, it is not a question of liquidating capitalism as such but only monopoly capitalism with its imperial-feudal collaboration. It is not a question of establishment of dictatorship of proletariat immediately; it is to strive for the establishment of the democratic dictatorship of several classes under the hegemony of the proletariat. Ideological and programmatic hegemony should not be confused with the dictatorship of the proletariat. The bourgeois democratic revolution is in the main yet to be completed. Our country is not yet an independent capitalist state but only a semi-colony. Hence, our revolution is in the main an agrarian revolution, not the agrarian revolution of the old type under the bourgeois leadership; but agrarian revolution of a new type under the proletarian leadership. Hence correctly classified as NDR.

3) The middle peasant in this NDR is to be our ally. And it is our task to solidly unite with the middle peasant. It is wrong to think of neutralising him as in the stage of socialist revolution.

4) Our revolution in many respects differs from the classical Russian

Revolution; but to a great extent similar to that of Chinese revolution. The perspective is likely not that of general strike and armed uprising, leading to the liberation of the rural side; but the dogged resistance and prolonged civil war in the form of agrarian revolution, culminating in the capture of political power by Democratic front establishment in the process of a bitter struggle for the New Democracy.

5) The stage has come wherein even day-to-day partial struggles of the toilers has to be contemplated and planned in the form of armed or partially armed Chinese way of resistance.

This is the perspective open before us. Either we understand the perspective clearly and plan out our work in future or we drift into spontaneity and all sorts of deviation and disruption. The revolutionary history and its richest lessons demonstrate before us the path we have to choose. The path is that of Chinese liberation struggle under the leadership of Comrade Mao, the practical, political and theoretical leader of the mighty colonial semi-colonial revolution.

APPENDIX

1. By the compromise with imperialism, it is not the entire capitalist class which gets benefitted, but only the few big businesses which have got into economic deals with British financiers. Let alone the toiling masses, the middle bourgeoisie and the rich peasantry who have no feudal tails will also be ground down, by the imperialist-feudal-big-business combine.

2. This is the basis for the widest possible front against the above anti-national and anti-people combine. The front must be based firmly on the workers, poor peasants and agricultural labourers with middle peasants and town petty bourgeoisie as allies. The middle bourgeoisie and rich peasants (without feudal ties) who vacillate between the people and the anti-national combine, have to be neutralised as a class. However, certain sections of the rich peasantry may participate in the revolution, though vacillating, in the areas where feudal landlords are all-powerful, dominating over rich peasants also for example Telangana and Rayalaseema.

Whatever they may think of the compromise, as the vicious effects of the compromise and the economic crisis unfolds, their illusions will get burnt.

4. Now, let us proceed to the question of the state form of New Democratic Government. Some comrades confuse the Soviet form of Government with the Socialist stage of the revolution and say that a variation of bourgeois parliamentary form of Government is suited to New Democratic state. This conception is entirely wrong. Let any change be made, a bourgeois-parliamentary form of Government is fundamentally a bourgeois Government which does not help the toiling masses to consolidate its power. But, only helps the bourgeoisie to restore its power. So any Government of the toilers under the hegemony of the proletariat, must fundamentally adopt the Soviet form.

The essential difference between the two forms is that, in the bourgeoisie parliamentary form, the executive functions are divorced from Legislative functions. The people's representative assemblies have no direct control over the executive. Hence the assemblies act as a veil to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, in the Soviet form, the executive and legislative functions are combined, and at every stage, the executive i.e., the Government officials are directly controlled by the respective elected peoples' bodies. The Soviet form is necessary for another reason too. No Chinese wall can be erected between the New Democratic and the socialist stages of the revolution. The toilers having once achieved power under the leadership of the proletariat, will proceed to socialism peacefully and without the necessity of another insurrection. The only change is in the class alignment, but not in the form of Government. The form of Government basically has to be the same Soviet form. This Soviet form helps this peaceful transition to the second stage.

In the second stage i.e., the socialist stage, the middle bourgeoisie and rich peasants will have to be eliminated, while building socialism. Then, the political power will vest in the proletariat and poor peasants, with the middle peasants as an ally. This can be called dictatorship of the proletariat in its aspect of building socialism. It is not necessary just as in the Soviet Union to stress on the destructive aspect of annihilating the capitalist opposition here in our country, because most of it is finished in the first stage itself and what remains is the squeezing of the remaining capitalist elements. This is amply proved by the New Democracies of Europe.

Implications of CPI(ML) Red Flag's Stand on Kargil

During the past several years, those in the communist revolutionary camp will have watched with increasing concern the political trajectory of the CPI(ML) Red Flag, as it has step by step adopted open party functioning; espoused ambiguous and open-ended positions regarding the nature of Indian society and the production relations in it, and therefore regarding the path of Indian revolution; joined hands with out-and-out revisionist formations such as CPI(ML) Liberation and MCPI; and embraced participation in elections with a non-revolutionary perspective.

However, two of Red Flag's recent statements go even further: they imply that communist revolutionaries *can share* certain concerns of the Indian ruling classes, and *even support* certain "progressive aspects" of their policies. This was first to be seen in Red Flag's criticism of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, where the Vajpayee government was compared unfavourably to previous governments:

"From 1947 the Indian government had called for total world disarmament including nuclear disarmament. Even while opposing its basic reactionary policies, the *progressive forces have supported this aspect of its foreign policy*. The stand of the Indian government with regard to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) so far at least partially reflected this *progressive aspect of its foreign policy*. Though the 'discriminatory' aspect was prominently there which stressed on the nuclear club members' (US, Russia, Britain, France and China) discrimination against others and their efforts to perpetuate nuclear monopoly, and the governments run by the comprador classes in the neocolonies including India stressed on it, and in the case of India it wanted to keep the options open to make a 'bomb' whenever needed to threaten or to meet the threat from Pakistan, its 'declared enemy', the *progressive forces supported*

the view that CTBT should be based on total nuclear disarmament by the nuclear haves....

"[The Vajpayee government's policy] is a basic deviation even from the policies pursued by the erstwhile governments....

"BJP government's policies are a total reversal of the so far *accepted policies* on CTBT and nuclear disarmament...." ("We Want Bread, Peace and Democracy, Not Bombs and Wars", Red Flag Publication, June 1998; emphasis added).

Similar statements were to be found in an article by the Secretary of CPI(ML.) Red Flag, K.N. Ramachandran, "Why India Should Not Sign CTBT" (*Red Star*, November 1998):

"The *progressive aspect of Indian foreign policy* in the post-1947 years, even while it essentially reflected the comprador character of the ruling classes, was that it called for world disarmament including total global nuclear disarmament. In the 1960s, though India played a major role in pushing for and drafting the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), it did not sign it as the final draft represented the interests of US and UK on the one hand and the then Soviet Union on the other...."

No doubt the article ascribes the Indian comprador State's refusal to sign the CTBT to "its own regional hegemonic ambitions". Yet, it says that, because the NPT was an unequal treaty, "the progressive forces, while opposing all attempts by the Indian State to develop capability of nuclear weaponisation and to conduct nuclear tests for it, *supported its refusal to sign the NPT.*" (emphasis added)

How could the Red Flag comrades confuse the *independent, anti-imperialist* opposition by the revolutionaries to the CTBT with "supporting" the Indian comprador State's policy? For the revolutionaries, the fake opposition to CTBT by the Indian State was an opportunity to explain the real situation to the people and to dispel any illusions regarding the Indian ruling classes' claims to "opposing" any such imperialist measures like the CTBT; this approach of the communist revolutionaries has in fact been proved correct by later events. What Red Flag calls the BJP government's 'reversal' of the Indian State's earlier ~~stand~~ stand regarding CTBT (and indeed of the BJP's own stated stand on the question) was not a reversal at all; it merely shows the hollowness of the Indian ruling classes' earlier stated "opposition to CTBT".

Normally, the *basis* for any stand of the comprador-feudal ruling classes is directly opposed to that of the revolutionaries. Far from enlightening the peo-

ple about this class political reality as applicable to the question of CTBT too, the Red Flag wrongly affirms a certain *common progressive* basis for the respective stands of the communist revolutionaries and the ruling classes on CTBT.

While "...the view that CTBT should be based on total nuclear disarmament by the nuclear haves..." has been the actual basis for the anti-CTBT stand of the progressive and peace-loving forces, it was not the basis for the Indian State's refusal to sign the CTBT. The above mentioned "view" was merely *utilised* by the Indian State only as an argument, as a pretext, for its stand on CTBT to conceal its actual reactionary basis, i.e. "its regional hegemonic ambitions". The Red Flag, wrongly treats that *pretext* of the Indian State as the "view" of the Indian State. By doing so it transfers the progressive character of that "view" to the stand at that time of the Indian State on CTBT.

The above instance could have been seen as merely an isolated mistake, had it not been for an article by the Secretary of CPI(ML.) Red Flag in the August 1999 issue of *Red Star*, "Vajpayee Government and the Kargil War". While condemning the whipping up of chauvinistic sentiments by the Sangh Parivar, the article makes the following statement:

"Meanwhile Indian Air Force and Indian Army are engaged in a very difficult task of pushing back the Pakistan intruders who have crossed the Line of Control in Kashmir from the strategic positions they have occupied and fortified at very high altitudes. Because of the advantageous positions occupied by the intruders, Indian Army is losing many men.... When the Indian Army is losing so many men in pushing back the intruders and when we *support these action(s) to defend the LoC*, the question how these well equipped intruders could occupy such strategic heights on Indian side of LoC calls for correct analysis." (emphasis added)

The article indeed charges the Vajpayee government with being "irresponsible" in failing to defend the LoC.

"There were reports last year itself that Pakistan may try for large-scale intrusion to Kashmir to internationalise these issues. When the Sangh Parivarists are ideologically and politically against even in accepting the reality of Pakistan, how can Vajpayee's bus trip alone reverse the situation. If Vajpayee government thought so, then *it is the most irresponsible government this country has seen*. Relation between countries cannot be developed based on platitudes, they get developed based on hard political solutions to bilateral issues.

"The development leading to Kargil war show that *Vajpayee government dangerously compromised on questions of defending the LoC in Kashmir*. All military experts are unanimous that the Pakistan intruders could occupy such strategic position on Indian side of LoC only after months of advancing and at least through a year of preparation. It shows that Vajpayee government was sleeping during this entire period. The reports that it was the shepherds in Kargil who reported Pakistani occupation of Indian bunkers show the real 'efficiency' of this government. Through its communalisation moves it had already created a situation in the government machinery had failed to collect vital intelligence. So Vajpayee government is wholly and fully responsible for Kargil War and all its grave consequences on our country and people." (emphasis added)

The article ends:

"It is government which is fully responsible for further worsening of India's relation with Pakistan, for sleeping while Pakistani intruders were crossing the LoC in large numbers, and for *compromising the national security*. It should be exposed uncompromisingly."

There is no scope for misunderstanding the article. The stand is almost identical to that taken on this issue by the CPI(M). The writer of the above quoted article clearly believes Kargil to be the legitimate property of the Indian State; he supports the action of the Indian armed forces to snatch Kargil back from the Pakistani intruders; he believes the Vajpayee government's slackness in defending the LoC to have "compromised national security".

Whereas in fact Kargil belongs to the Kashmiri people, not the Indian State; the Indian armed forces are just as much intruders in Kargil as are Pakistani troops. Further, the *real* national security of the Indian *people* has nothing to do with, *indeed is directly opposed to*, the reactionary "national security" of the Indian State.

The writer appears to have entirely forgotten that communists are internationalists. They characterise wars as just or unjust by determining the nature of the forces fighting, and what is being fought over. Instead the writer opposes the Vajpayee regime merely from the standpoint of *competitive national chauvinism*. The "irresponsibility" of which he accuses the Vajpayee government is that government's irresponsibility towards the interests and security of the Indian ruling classes.

Communist revolutionaries sincerely hope that Red Flag comrades not only check these errors but locate the political-ideological roots of them in the line they have adopted.