

DOCUMENTS OF
THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT
IN INDIA

VOL. XV
(1971-1972)



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NATIONAL BOOK AGENCY PRIVATE LIMITED
CALCUTTA 700 073

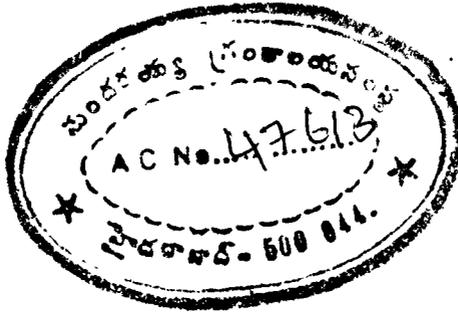
First Published : January 1998

C-89368

National Book Agency Private Limited
12 Bankim Chatterjee Street
Calcutta 700 073

324254075
B. J. - DOC
X

ISBN : 81—7626-000-2 (set)
ISBN : 81—7626-019-3 (Vol. XV)



Price : Rs. 1000 U.S. : \$ 50 £ 30

Published by Salilkumar Ganguli on behalf of National Book Agency Private Limited, 12 Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta 700 073 and printed by Samir Das Gupta on behalf of Ganashakti Printers Private Limited, 33 Alimuddin Street, Calcutta 700 016.

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List of Abbreviations used

CI	—The Communist International
ECCI	—The Executive Committee of the Communist International
CPI	—Communist Party of India
CPI(M)	—Communist Party of India (Marxist)
LM	—The Labour Monthly, Published from London
CPGB	—Communist Party of Great Britain
CPSU	—Communist Party of Soviet Union
CPC	—Communist Party of China
INPRECOR	—International Press Correspondence of the Communist International
BCI	—Bulletin of the Communist International
CC	—Central Committee
PB	—Political Bureau
Polit Bureau	—Political Bureau
INC	—Indian National Congress
Congress (R)	—Ruling Congress
AITUC	—All India Trade Union Congress
INTUC	—Indian National Trade Union Congress
CITU	—Centre of Indian Trade Unions
AIKS	—All India Kisan Sabha
CKC	—Central Kisan Council of All India Kisan Sabha
WFTU	—World Federation of Trade Unions
AISF	—All India Students' Federation
SFI	—Student Federation of India
DYFI	—Democratic Youth Federation of India
UF	—United Front

Introductory Note

The documents of the Communist Movement in India contained in this Volume (i.e., Volume No. XV) relate to the years 1971 and 1972.

The major political events and developments covered by the documents of this Volume will indicate: (i) the nature and extent of the struggle relentlessly carried on by the workers, peasants and the democratic people of West Bengal against the semi-fascistic terror created in this state by the Union Government run by Indira Gandhi's Congress (R) directed to crush the mass base of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), (ii) how the Communist Party of India (Marxist) organised mass support in India in favour of the liberation struggle in Bangladesh and how this Party assessed the implications of this liberation struggle in the international arena, particularly in the context of India-Pakistan relations, (iii) the mid-term Lok Sabha elections of 1971 which gave an absolute majority to Indira Gandhi's Congress (R) with virtual elimination of Syndicate Congress i.e., Congress (O), though in West Bengal CPI(M) retained its political hold winning a sizable number of seats in this election, (iv) the depth and dimension of the struggle of the people in Kerala against the anti-people and pro-Congress policies of Achutha Menon Ministry in this state, (v) complete rigging of the mid-term Assembly elections in West Bengal on March 11, 1972 by Indira Gandhi's Government to crush the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in this state which was all set to secure a total victory in this mid-term Assembly elections had it been held in a fair way conforming to the principles of Parliamentary democracy, and (vi) the importance and political significance of the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) held in Madurai on June 27-July 2, 1972.

After winning the massive victory in the Lok Sabha elections of 1971 Indira Gandhi's Government continued the same old anti-people and pro-capitalist and pro-landlord policies of the previous Congress Government and after subverting the Parliamentary democracy by rigging the mid-term Assembly elections in West Bengal in 1972 plunged the whole state of West Bengal in a semi-fascistic terror, the extent and dimension of which surpassed all past records of repression since independence. In Kerala also anti-people and pro-Congress policies were pursued by Achutha Menon Ministry at the dictates of

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Indira Gandhi's Government and it created a new precedence. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) maintained close link with the people and built up united action against these offensives giving maximum emphasis on Left-Democratic unity. Important documents on these developments are included in this Volume.

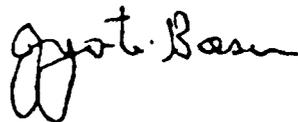
The political developments in India as well as in the international arena since the 8th Congress of CPI(M) held in Cochin in 1968 (the documents of which are given in Volume No. 12 of this series) were analysed in the Political Resolution adopted by the 9th Congress of CPI(M) held in Madurai on June 27–July 2, 1972 and it outlined the future movement of the Communist Movement in India. This document is included in this Volume.

Other important documents, adopted by the 9th Congress of CPI(M) and included in this Volume, are: Work Report (Political) of the Central Committee of CPI(M), Statement of Policy of CPI(M), Amendment to the Programme of CPI(M), Note on the National Question in India and the Report of Discussion on the National Question. These documents have enhanced the importance of this Volume.

This Volume also includes documents covering the views and reactions of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee of the CPI(M) on various international developments—like U.S. aggression in Vietnam, Chou-en-lai-Nixon Communique, Soviet-U.S. Joint Communique, Sino-Japanese Agreement, Chinese Veto in the Security Council on admission of Bangladesh as a member of United Nations Organisation and recognition of Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

The subversion of Parliamentary Democracy and initiation of 'one Party rule' by Indira Gandhi's Government was a major political development in India in 1971-1972 period and documents on it are included in this Volume, a close study of which will indicate how the leadership of CPI(M) directed the struggling people to take cognizance of these portentous developments and the steps taken to educate the mass of the people in preparation for defence of democracy.

We have presented these documents in this Volume for the readers to make their own assessments about the political developments in India during 1971 and 1972 and to take note of the approach and evaluation of CPI(M) about these developments.



(JYOTI BASU)
Chief Editor

January 8, 1998

Foreword

It was in the early seventies that the successes being achieved by the Vietnamese people in the anti-imperialist liberation struggle drew the attention of the whole world. The movement of the Vietnamese people to overthrow the imperialist yoke had reached a decisive stage. In this glorious struggle, the people of Vietnam received the ardent support of the Indian people. Solidarity actions were witnessed throughout the country and the slogan of “Amar Nam Tomar Nam — Vietnam Vietnam” symbolised the intensity of the feelings of the Indian people.

The people of India also stood firmly behind the freedom struggle of the 75 million people of former East Pakistan who were waging a war for liberation.

After years of enduring military dictatorship the people of Pakistan forced their rulers to hold elections. In East Pakistan, the Awami League secured over 98 per cent of the vote and got all but one seat in the Assembly. Instead of honouring the verdict of the people the military junta resorted to genocide to perpetuate itself in power. The powerful movement against imposition of Urdu and suppression of Bengali language in the face of military bayonets when a number of people sacrificed their lives, electrified the entire population and aroused genuine national feeling. Thanks to the American pressure, the Government of India was hesitant to respond to the call of the fighting people of former East Pakistan. However, later it intervened in favour of the freedom struggle. The popular perception in India also pressurised the government in this regard. Massive protest-demonstrations were witnessed in various parts of the country against US imperialism specially directed against its action of sending the Seventh Fleet to the

Bay of Bengal. It was the challenge posed by the USSR which forced the US to send back the fleet. It was the firm warning sounded by the USSR to US imperialism that proved the real worthiness of the Indo-Soviet Treaty. Our Party did its utmost to help the people of Bangladesh.

The general elections held in 1971 ahead of a year was a turning point in that situation which had given Indira Congress two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha. It had also seen the rout of the extreme right reactionary alliance of Jan Sangh, Syndicate and Swatantra Party. In reviewing the election results we had said at that time that, the "Election results show that the main party of the bourgeoisie has manoeuvred in a way in which while carrying on its electoral conflict with rightist elements from its own class, it has dealt blows against the rising democratic movement".

As against the reduced strength of the democratic opposition, which had come down by one-third, the strength of CPI(M) increased from 19 to 25. For the first time, despite the heavy odds against which it had to fight, it had emerged as the biggest group among the opposition parties in Parliament. It alone among the opposition fought both alliances of the representatives of the ruling classes. The election review further said that "the masses will lose heavily, the democratic movement will be curbed, if the democratic parties allow the present situation to continue, leaves the democratic forces disunited and allow all the initiatives into the hands of the Indira Congress". We called upon all of them for united struggle to forge political unity of all toiling masses so that it would become an irresistible force capable of challenging all manoeuvres and attacks of the ruling classes.

The results of the election had to be seen in the background of the Congress party seeking to take full credit for the whole-hearted assistance that the people of India had rendered to the liberation struggle of Bangladesh, the radical postures and delusive slogans that it had advanced, the disunity within the ranks of the Left etc.

In West Bengal a systematic reign of terror was unleashed. The state police force, the CRP and the army aided the Congress hoodlums in their nefarious activities directed against the CPI(M). Murderous attacks and repressive measures were launched. Side by side the naxalites also began murderous attacks against CPI(M)

cadres. Thousands of CRPF were deployed for regular combing operation throughout the state with the help of the army. More than 20,000 people were arrested, warrants of arrest were served against one lakh people on framed up charges. The scale of the terror campaign can be gauged from the fact that 219 CPI(M) leaders and cadres were murdered since the fall of the second United Front Government. Failing to frighten the people with such a terror tactics, the ruling Congress and their accomplices planned to murder a veteran freedom fighter and Forward Bloc leader Hemanta Basu just a few days before the election aimed at intensifying the hate campaign against the CPI(M). The conspiracy was later exposed which was why no probe was ordered. Later on it was admitted by the American ruling circles that they aided the Congress with huge funds to defeat the CPI(M) in West Bengal and Kerala. Never in our country were elections held in such conditions of semi-fascist terror.

Thus the CPI(M) was sought to be suppressed by the inhuman terror tactics, unfortunately, with the support of the CPI etc on the one hand and attack of naxalites on the other. Many areas were inaccessible for CPI(M) leaders and cadres for free election campaigning. Much to the surprise of the ruling classes our Party captured 20 seats in the Parliament from West Bengal and came out as the single biggest bloc in the Assembly for the first time. The tally of the six-party Left Front was 123, of which the CPI(M)'s share was 111. The Indira Congress trailed behind with 105. The results of West Bengal poll gave a fitting rebuff to the parties who had disrupted the United Front. The Bangla Congress could get only 5 assembly seats against 33 in 1969 while the CPI, with the support of the Congress could manage to win only 13 seats against 30 it held earlier. The Forward Bloc was reduced to a mere 3 as against 20 in 1969.

This spectacular performance of the CPI(M) failed to open the eyes of the CPI and other Left and democratic parties, as a result of which a coalition of Congress-Muslim League-Bangla Congress-Syndicate was forced upon the people of West Bengal with the CPI and Forward Bloc resolving to stand by the government. The ministry, however, could survive for 88 days only. But during this

short tenure also it perpetuated further atrocities on our Party in particular and the people in general. It collapsed owing to the cracks which developed within the alliance due to the pressure of the democratic movement. However, the anti-CPI(M) sentiment saw them dissolve the assembly denying the CPI(M) the opportunity to form a government. In the elections elsewhere in the country, in Kerala also, the so-called Indira Congress-wave was reversed. In Tripura, too, Congress managed to secure majority by creating conditions of terror and manipulating elections.

The year 1972 witnessed huge majorities being mustered by the Indira Congress in almost all States to which elections were held. What happened in the elections to the West Bengal Assembly was unheard of anywhere else in the country. It was a totally rigged election. Apart from worst semi-fascist terror, armed Congress gangsters in collusion with the police captured polling booths, drove out polling agents of the Left parties and voters and indiscriminately stamped ballot papers. The rigging was extended even after this sort of polling in the way of tampering with the ballot papers and ballot boxes. Hardly a few constituencies had been spared from this. In the counting centres, armed gangsters had been mobilised and large-scale intimidation and armed attacks on people occurred in various localities. People were driven out of their residences in the localities in hundreds which were taking place in the presence of the police and the army even in areas bound by curfew and prohibitive measures. Thus was completed the subversion of parliamentary democracy in West Bengal.

It was against this background that the 9th Congress of our Party met in Madurai from June 27 to July 2, 1972. In the political resolution, the Party Congress foresaw the impending danger of one-party dictatorship and authoritarianism. It called for creation of the widest possible front of all Left and democratic parties, groups and individuals to meet this challenge. The Resolution states, "The danger arises from the fact that the people in other states are ignorant of the meaning of West Bengal events, thanks to the monopolist Press which covers the misdeeds of the ruling party and slanders the democratic movement, that they still put their trust in the Congress party which has secured their vote in

the recent elections. The danger arises from the fact that the Left stands disunited in the country, except in West Bengal.

“The victory of the Congress in recent elections, the weakness of the Left and democratic opposition, the context in which the victory has been achieved and the anti-democratic methods used to secure it not only in West Bengal but also in Bihar underline a trend towards one-party dictatorship in which democratic opposition parties will have no role to play.

“This also creates the danger of further attacks on the autonomy of the States with the ruling party having its Governments in all the States, the process of eroding the powers of the States and augmenting those of the Centre is likely to be accelerated.

“The centralisation of all authority in the hands of one person in the ruling party leads to authoritarian tendencies which directly helps the one-party trend.

“The existence of all democratic parties is being threatened. Those who swear by the Constitution, who stand by the parliamentary path as well as others all realise that the constitutional liberties, including the right to vote, are no longer secure under the Congress rule. This calls for the widest possible front of all democratic parties, groups and individuals to resist the march to one-party dictatorship. Our Party has been consistently endeavoring to convince others that the attack on us constitutes a prelude to attack on the democratic movement. This is now being seen by others.”

This warning of the CPI(M) Congress, was vindicated, after the imposition of internal Emergency in June 1975.

The Ninth Congress of the Party was able to clinch the issue of the Party's stand on the national question, which we had been debating since the adoption of the Party Programme in 1951. While adopting the new Party Programme, the Seventh Congress of our Party had decided to delete the clause, “the right of all nationalities to self-determination” from the earlier programme, deferring the problem for more elaborate discussion and study. The note adopted on “The National Question In India” states: “The inclusion of the demand for right of self-determination and secession might carry with it the danger of different linguistic contingents of the Indian

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proletariat acquiescing in the secessionist agitations, instead of opposing them, and unitedly fighting for real autonomy of States and against any traces of inequality.

“Our Party takes due note of the attempts by the bourgeois-landlord Government to impose one language, Hindi, as the sole official language of the Indian Union, and the inequality such a course engenders between the Hindi-speaking and non-Hindi-speaking nationalities. Hence it is opposed to it and advocates equal status for all the languages.”

“The State Structure of People’s Democracy” as stated in the present programme defines clearly our stand on the national question and language question, apart from other fundamental issues. In this sense, the contribution of the Ninth Congress of the Party remains as a landmark in the history of the communist movement. All this add profound significance to this Volume.

January 22, 1998



(Harkishan Singh Surjeet)
General Secretary
Communist Party of India
(Marxist)

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CPI(M) West Bengal State Committee Reviews Struggles, Political Situation*

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met from December 31, 1970 to January 2, 1971.

The Committee heard reports from the districts about the heroic struggles of millions of peasants and agricultural labourers for successfully defending and harvesting the crops on four lakh acres of khas and benami lands in face of ferocious attacks of the whole administrative machinery, the CRP, and the police in collusion with the hired gangsters of the jotdars. Blanket imposition of Section 144 and even curfew in some places, establishment of innumerable police camps in support of the vested interests, manufacture of false cases implicating tens of thousands of peasants as directed by the jotdars, repeated police raids on villages, indiscriminate arrests, beatings, tortures, molestation of women, looting and firings—all these took a notorious and methodical character.

Harvest Battle Won

Twentythree peasants and Kisan Sabha workers were murdered by the police and the jotdars' goondas during this short period of harvest. The Congress and Bangla Congress encouraged and organised these attacks. The political motive was clear. It was not only to help the jotdars to loot the crops, but also to crush the organised strength of the rural poor. But the peasants have defeated all these attacks, harvested the crops on all the lands except those that were destroyed by floods, and have thus won the battle of the harvest.

This was made possible by the peasants through greater mobilisation, organised resistance, collective work and concrete

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 10, 1971

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planning, and, because they were backed by powerful democratic support and concrete manifestation of worker-peasant alliance. As decided by the Party earlier, the struggle for harvest was raised to the plane of an all people democratic struggle. The powerful mass campaign, particularly the December 8 general strike and hartal and the jute workers' continuous strike tremendously helped the peasants in their struggle. The peasants have shown exemplary courage and organisational ability.

The conspiracy of the ruling classes to crush the peasants has miserably failed; on the other hand, their fighting morale has further strengthened. The State Committee congratulated the rural poor for this significant victory and congratulated the people in general and the working class in particular for their powerful support and great sense of solidarity.

The Committee noted that the police authorities have become desperate after this defeat and have started a reign of terror by arresting, shooting and killing peasants even after the harvest. It has called upon the peasants to stand firm and carry forward their struggle. The Committee has directed its Kisan Sub-Committee and all its workers to help the fighting peasants to consolidate their victory, to strengthen the Kisan Sabha organisation, organise the innumerable new cadres thrown up during the struggle and work out concrete programmes for further advance.

Jute Workers' Victory

The State Committee took special note of the glorious strike struggle conducted by the 230,000 jute workers. The powerful jute mill magnates backed by the Congress rulers vainly hoped that since there was no U.F. Government now, they would be able to defeat the workers. But the fighting spirit, organisational strength and militant unity that were created among the workers in the favourable condition of the U.F. Government period, were successfully carried forward by the heroic jute workers in the subsequent period.

The powerful democratic struggles of the people of West Bengal in the last nine months in which the jute workers played an active role, have enhanced their fighting capacity, enriched their experience and raised their consciousness.

Standing on this firm ground, the jute workers have waged a prolonged struggle and have forced the owners to retreat and accept defeat. They have won important demands. A new breakthrough has been achieved by the jute workers by overcoming the statutory four per cent minimum bonus and by forcing the employers to introduce a system of gratuity for the entire industry and to recognise the principle of retaining allowance for badli workers. This victory will have an important impact on the working class movement as a whole.

The Committee noted that no disruptive force could break the united struggle conducted by the jute workers with determination. This heritage of united movement should be safeguarded. The successful strike struggle of the jute workers has not only strengthened the organised working class movement, but has also added strength to the democratic forces as a whole. The State Committee has congratulated the jute workers for it.

Hold Elections in West Bengal

The State Committee discussed the present political situation. It noted with deep indignation and hatred that the reactionary Congress leaders of the Central Government are still engaged in a sinister conspiracy to deny the elementary democratic right of elections to the people of West Bengal even when the Parliament has been dissolved and a mid-term election has been decided upon. For the last nine months West Bengal is without an elected assembly and the Congress rulers who were discarded by the people of West Bengal, are trying to keep them under subjugation with the help of CRP bayonets, as if West Bengal is their colony. But the heroic people of West Bengal have defeated all the attacks of the Congress and Right Communist servitors.

It is preposterous for anybody to even think of holding no election to West Bengal Assembly when election to Parliament is going to be held in India. To toy with the idea of delinking Parliament and Assembly elections in West Bengal and of holding the latter after some time of the former is nothing but a mischievous brainwave of a panicky ruling class to try to save themselves from the wrath of the people like a drowning man catching at a straw. But the people will not tolerate such mean tactics.

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This conspiracy further exposes the low depth to which the ruling Congress leaders have sunk and the utter contempt with which they look down upon the people. After nine months of brutal terror they have failed to break the morale of the people of West Bengal. All the services rendered to them by the Bangla Congress and the Right Communist-led combination have been of no avail. It demonstrated clearly that they have no hope of winning an election in West Bengal by forging any sort of combination. It is for this reason that they are conspiring not to hold elections and at the same time intensifying police attacks and helping all anti-social elements in gangsterism.

The State Committee condemns this conspiracy and warns the Central Government that the people of this State shall not allow themselves to be treated as dumb subjects of a colonial country to be ruled by an army of occupation. The people of West Bengal are a proud people with self-respect.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) demands immediate declaration of elections to the West Bengal Assembly simultaneously with all India parliamentary elections. If it is not declared before January 7, the Party in consultation with allied parties and organisations, will be compelled to start a more powerful struggle. As a part of it the Committee proposes to hold a massive protest demonstration in Calcutta and demonstrations at district headquarters in far off districts someday within a week, after January 7, followed by general strikes and hartals later on. It calls upon the people to be prepared for such struggles. It is confident that the people of other States will stand by the people of West Bengal and not allow the sinister conspiracy to establish an autocratic police State in our country to succeed.

All Seats Will be Fought

The State Committee heard reports from all the districts and discussed the organisational position and influence of the Party and other parties in different electoral constituencies of the State. The Committee came to the conclusion that the Party and the United Left Front should set up candidates in all the 40 Parliamentary and 280 Assembly constituencies and is confident of winning a comfortable majority. Some Independents sympathetic to the ULF may be

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accommodated. The Party will announce the names of candidates soon after declaration of elections.

The State Committee discussed the gangsterism of the Naxalite degenerates, Congress goondas and other anti-social elements in collusion with some high-ups in the administration and has called upon the Party units, all allied organisations and all people to be more vigilant and take effective measures to frustrate their designs.

Vote CPI(M), Vote Democracy*

Editorial of “PEOPLE’S DEMOCRACY”,
January 17, 1971.

The Election Manifesto of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), released in Calcutta last Sunday, is a call to the people of India to cast their votes against the two reactionary combines which are trying to project themselves before them as the only real alternatives in the present situation—one combine led by the Indira Gandhi Congress and the other the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine.

The Manifesto is a call to the people to cast their votes for the CPI (M) and all those who, like the CPI(M), take a stand against both the combinations and are determined to save the democratic movement from onslaughts from both of them.

The Manifesto makes a masterly exposure of the Congress rulers—the policy of building capitalism in collaboration with imperialism and in alliance with feudalism which has brought the country to rack and ruin, its people to misery and degradation.

The Manifesto, in an equally masterful fashion, reveals how in the last four years of Smt. Indira Gandhi's rule, too, the same basic policies have been pursued, policies of ever increasing concessions to the monopolists, Indian and foreign, of protecting all the vested interests, of fleecing the common people—a record which exposes all Smt. Gandhi's talk of fighting the monopolists as sheer humbug and the Socialist slogans she mouths as a hoax. The veneer of democracy is wearing thin as Smt. Gandhi's party and Government take one step after another to set up a bureaucratic police State in the country.

*The Election Manifesto—1971 of CPI(M) is given in Volume No. 14 of this publication.

The Constitution framed by the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes has proved more and more, as it was bound to, to be the instrument for safeguarding the vested interests and reducing the common masses of the people to slavery. With the judiciary, from the Supreme Court down, functioning as it has been in interpreting the Constitution and the laws, this Constitution stands in the way of all social progress. The CPI(M) has always demanded, and again demands that this Constitution should go lock, stock and barrel, a demand for which it has been attacked not only by the ruling classes and their parties but also by the Right Communists who in their servitude to the ruling classes have been shouting from the housetops; that even under this present bourgeois-landlord Constitution structural reforms are possible, radical land reforms can be completed, etc.

The other combine, the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine is one which has declared itself unashamedly to be an instrument of Big Business, big landlords, monopolists, they are the shameless agents of the foreign imperialists and deeply hostile to the Socialist countries, they are anti-communist, anti-working class, anti-democratic and demand more and more attacks on the people. In addition, the Jana Sangh, the strongest partner of this combine, is an avowed enemy of the Muslim minority and takes every opportunity to organise communal massacres, disrupting national unity of the democratic masses.

Thus the two combinations which are coming before the people asking for their votes are both equally hostile to the masses of the people, are equally determined to maintain the rule of the monopolists and the landlords. One lot openly declare itself to be the representatives of the capitalists, landlords and princes, while the other is discreet enough to conceal its affiliations while serving the same masters.

The exploited common people, the people crushed by growing unemployment, rising prices and monstrous taxation increases, the people who are shot and killed by the police, beaten and tortured by goonda armies of the vested interests, the women who are assaulted and raped by the CRP and other police forces, have only one answer to both : no votes for you, our salvation lies in defeating both of you.

Releasing the Election Manifesto to the Press, Comrade P. Sundarayya said that the Indicate combine had been joined by the Right Communists, PSP, DMK, etc., while the Syndicate-Jana Sangha-Swatantra combine had been joined by the SSP. 'The CPI(M) will have no alliance or adjustments with either of the combinations or their constituent parties.'

These parties, the Right Communists, DMK, SSP, etc., were parties which had joined the anti-Congress democratic forces which routed the then united Congress in the general elections in 1967 and gave the people the hope of a democratic alternative to Congress misrule.

Since then the Right Communists have betrayed the United Fronts and Governments in Kerala and West Bengal declared that the CPI(M) is their main enemy and openly joined hands with the Indicate Congress and become its willing servitors and today stand as betrayers and enemies of the toiling people and the democratic movement.

The DMK leadership after getting into office, on the crest of the anti-Congress wave of struggles, has been pursuing policies which are as anti-people as those of the Congress, and has finally joined hands with the anti-people Indicate Congress.

The SSP, on the other side, has joined the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine. This is total betrayal of the fighting masses of our country, for no party in alliance with the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Swatantra can fight for democracy and socialism. All the SSP leaders' talk about fighting the monopolists and the Indira Gandhi Government becomes a sham and a deception of the people when it joins hands with another section of the same reactionary ruling classes and strengthens them as against the people.

In their opportunistic quest for the loaves and fishes of office, the Right Communist leaders and the SSP leadership have, instead of rousing the masses to the danger posed by the reactionary ruling classes arrayed in the two combinations, instead of unmasking their Socialist and democratic pretensions, joined one or the other groups, giving a democratic facade to the anti-people designs of the two groups. The leaderships of the two parties have become willing instruments in the hands of the ruling classes to cheat the people.

The voters of this country will not be deceived either by the Indicate which comes with a Right Communist face or the Syndicate alliance which dons the SSP face.

Whatever the leaders of the two parties do, the masses following them, the masses who constitute the suffering people of this country, the masses who have been fighting to defend themselves and their living standard against the ruling classes, will see their treachery to the democratic movement and the democratic struggles of the people. The Election Manifesto of the CPI(M) "appeals to the people, to the rank and file of the parties like the SSP, Right C.P., to realise that joining hands with either combination is joining hands with the enemy class and betraying the people."

It is in such a situation—where the policies of the ruling classes, whether the Government is headed by the Indira Gandhi Congress or the Syndicate Congress, mean unending misery, unending slavery and unending sufferings and repression for the people under a police State, that the CPI(M) is appealing to the people that "only the united strength of the democratic people will defeat the policies of the Indira Congress and defeat the conspiracy of the Syndicate to steal into power."

A voter for the CPI(M) and all those who like it are pledged to fight both the reactionary combines of the ruling classes is a vote for democracy, a vote for defeating the ruling class conspiracies against the people.

VOTE CPI(M), VOTE DEMOCRACY !

In West Bengal, the fighting people have defeated all the conspiracies of Indira Gandhi & Co. to postpone the elections to the State Assembly. For over nine months West Bengal has been under President's rule, the people of the State have been deprived of all democratic rights and made the victims of an inhuman police raj, the like of which has hardly been seen before. If any evidence were necessary to show how the Congress rulers have reduced the rights guaranteed to States even by the present Constitution to a farce, West Bengal provides it. The CPI(M) is confident that the people of West Bengal will give a fitting answer to the Indicate and Syndicate combinations and to the traitors of the Bangla Congress and the Eight-Party Combination responsible for the miseries heaped on them during the last nine months.

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Denounces Massacre of Students in Varanasi*

**Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on
January 13, 1971**

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) has issued the following statement to the Press on January 13, 1971:

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) denounces the dastardly cold-blooded shooting down of more than twenty students in the police firing and severely injuring scores of students and people in Varanasi, the calling of Army in most of the cities in eastern U.P. and virtual setting up of a police-military rule there. This situation is brought about by the police, trigger happy, shooting down one student in Aurai, near Varanasi while they were demonstrating for the withdrawal of the U.P. Government University Ordinance. The Polit Bureau denounces the Syndicate Congress-Jana Sangh-BKD State Government which defends this police brutality instead of dismissing the guilty police officials and meeting the just demands of the students. The Polit Bureau congratulates the students and democratic people who are indignantly demonstrating against this brutality by hartals and demonstrations in all the important cities and universities in U.P.

The Polit Bureau hopes that the SSP which unfortunately is part of the Syndicate-Jana Singh State Government will at least now assert itself and insist that the State Government should at once implement the SSP's own precondition of withdrawing the University Ordinance and Preventive Detention Act and also force it to punish the guilty officials and pay compensation to families of all those who have been shot dead and injured.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) conveys its condolences to the bereaved families of all those student martyrs and others who fell under the bullets of the police and of the military.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 17, 1971.

Jyoti Basu Pillories Chief Electoral Officer, Chief Secretary of West Bengal

Comrade Jyoti Basu, in a letter dated February 20, 1971 to the Chief Electoral Officer, Sri Raghavan, has dealt a crushing blow to the canard that was being given interested currency for the last few days in the bourgeois Press through out the country maligning the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Comrade Jyoti Basu himself.

Following is the text of the letter:

I was shocked beyond measure to read in the Press the contents of your letter dated February 15, 1971 which you had written to me whilst I was away from Calcutta. I also read whilst on election tour, the mischievous, malicious and motivated Press Note on an alleged speech of mine.

There should be some decorum and decency in dealing with people in public life. For the last few days a storm has been raging over an alleged speech which I did not make. I am constrained to state that both the Press Note and your letter to me with the Press properly briefed are meant to denigrate me and my Party on the eve of the elections. Perhaps you forgot for the time being that you are the Chief Electoral Officer of the State.

But all these attempts will be of no avail as the people are a little more politically conscious than you imagine. In the circumstances, I need not explain the distortions of my speech to you as the Chief Electoral Officer. But as a voter you should know what I am stating at every public meeting and I am addressing scores of them.

The said report in English in the *Hindusthan Standard* is not only highly distorted but extremely badly written, and not a

summary of the speech which I delivered for about 45 minutes. On the points you are interested in, I stated in Bengali that during President's Rule about 190 members and supporters of our Party have been killed and many others wounded by the police, Naxalites and other anti-social elements with the support of some political parties and a section of the Police. Since the election campaign started I said about eight young people have been killed whilst pasting posters and doing election work. The Police on many occasions did not pursue the killers and have even fired upon the people who tried to defend themselves.

I stated that we are aware of some Police officers and men who are helping such hoodlums by their acts of omission and commission and an enquiry into such activities will surely be made if we are able to form a government. I wanted our youth not to reply to goondaism by goondaism as we have serious objectives to realise for the people. But I asked them to defend themselves to the best of their ability so that the killers realise that they too run the risk of losing their lives.

This is a sacred right and nobody can take it away from us. I wonder what we are supposed to do when bombs, pistols and knives are used against us by the cowardly gangsters. I further stated in the said meeting on February 14 that a false report has appeared in a newspaper that our Party has formed a 'mobile armed squad'. Later on February 15 a Press statement was given to the same effect by Sri Promod Das Gupta, Secretary of our Party, and which was published on February 16.

But the Chief Secretary, despite all this, had the temerity to send a peremptory letter to Sri Promod Das Gupta on February 16 asking him to comment on this report within a specified time. This is a part of the conspiracy against us. Is this attitude conducive to free and fair election? I hope you will call to order the Chief Secretary who dares to send such a letter to us but is unable to stop the daily killings, burning of schools and colleges, closing down of educational institutions, disruption of examinations by a few rowdies. He has not been able to save even the ordinary policemen, over 60 of whom have been killed during President's Rule.

Jyoti Basu Pillories Chief Electoral Officer... 13

Is it a crime for a government to enquire into corruption and nepotism indulged in by government servants or atrocities perpetrated by the Police or the encouragement given by them to anti-social elements? I know the Police are performing an arduous and dangerous task and honest government servants including the Police who do their duty need have no fear.

I am curious to know whether you thought it your duty to write a letter to Sri Ajoy Mukherjee when he exhorted the voters to go to the polling booths with spears, lathis etc. (at Burdwan on January 16, 1971) or when he exhorted his audience to gorge out the eyes of the Naxals, cut their ears etc.?

As the contents of your letter have already appeared in the Press, I am releasing this letter for publication and sending copies to all concerned.

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on Lok Sabha Election Results - 1971*

Statement Issued on March 18, 1971.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from March 15 to 17, 1971 has issued the following statement:

The Parliamentary elections have given an unprecedented victory to the Indira Congress which has secured more than two-thirds of the total number of seats in Lok Sabha and restored it to the position it occupied in Parliament in the first three general elections.

The elections have seen the debacle of the parties of extreme Right—the Jana Sangh, Syndicate and Swatantra having been humbled in the contest. The tall claims made by these parties—the claim of Vajpayee, Nijalingappa and others that their grand alliance will secure at least 300 seats—have been revealed to be an opium dream. The Swatantra has been reduced to the shadow of its former self; the Syndicate can boast only of ten members; the boastings of the Jana Sangh have been reduced to dust. Among its 22 members, it counts not less than five or six members from the princely families.

The people have virtually routed the direct representatives of monopolist houses. Naval Tata, who stood as an Independent, who was supported by the cautious House of Tatas, was defeated in Bombay. The son of G.D. Birla who stood on Swatantra ticket was routed in Rajasthan, many other representatives of big houses who stood with the support of the Grand Alliance met with a similar fate.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, March 21, 1971. Also published in the compilation of C.P.I.(M) Documents from February 1969 to April 1971.

But the rout of the reactionary alliance has not meant a victory of the democratic forces and the people struggling against poverty and unemployment.

In its Election Manifesto, the CPI(M) had sharply pointed out that “The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine represents a reactionary combination which openly announces its reactionary aims to defend the vested interests. It is a combine which has declared itself unashamedly to be an instrument of Big Business and big landlords-monopolists, all of whom demand a growing attack on the standards of living of the people and a further shift to the Right in the domestic and foreign policies of the country,” and hence its rout in the elections is a welcome thing. At the same time, this rout glaringly brings out the fact that this combine has no real roots among the masses and its danger was exaggerated by the Right C.P. to justify its policy of lining up behind the Indira Congress.

In their just and legitimate desire to reject the reactionary Alliance, and allured by the Indira Congress cry of fight against Right reaction, the people have voted for another party of the same capitalist-landlord classes, which is not bound to use this mandate for launching further attacks on the people themselves. Indira Gandhi also concentrated on the communal outlook of the RSS and Jana Sangh, presented herself as the champion of the Muslim minorities and earned big dividends. The total sweep in U.P. has partly to do with this attack on the communalism of the Jana Sangh.

Indira Gandhi, by her wordy talk of Socialism, her pretensions to fight Right reaction, has not only defeated her electoral rivals from the Right, she has also undermined and dispersed to some extent the strength of the democratic opposition in the House of the People.

The total strength of the democratic opposition has been reduced by one-third. Only our Party has managed to increase its strength from 19 to 25. It has emerged as the biggest group among the Opposition parties despite the heavy odds against which it had to fight. It along among the Opposition parties fought both alliances. The Right C.P. has maintained its strength but only on the support of the Congress. It has clearly become an appendage of the Congress—it won only two seats in opposition to the Congress.

The SSP which joined hands with the Syndicate has secured only three seats whereas in the 1967 general elections, it had won 23 seats. The PSP which toed the line of the Indira Congress, and excelled all others in its election acrobatics, has secured only two seats, in place of its former 13 seats.

Thus the election results show that the main party of the bourgeoisie has manoeuvred in a way in which while carrying on its electoral conflict with the Rightist elements from its own class, it has dealt blows against the rising democratic movement.

The victory of Indira Gandhi cannot be considered to be a victory of the people, of the democratic and toiling masses.

The reins of power have been handed over to a party whose record in accentuating the poverty and unemployment of the Indian masses, as well as dependence on foreign loans is unexcelled.

The reins of power have been handed over to a party which has done its best to suppress the peasants' and agricultural workers' movement for land; whose Chief Ministers only a couple of months before the election blandly declared that the land ceilings would not be lowered and that no radical land legislations would be passed.

The elections have returned to power the same party whose last act in the dissolved Parliament was to pass the Preventive Detention Act for West Bengal and the Unlawful Activities Act giving unprecedented powers to the Police to shoot down people, with the active support of the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and the Syndicate. Under the aegis of President's rule and armed with new police power, both police and assassins have been let loose on the democratic movement in West Bengal, two hundred and twentynine of our comrades falling victims to police bullets and the murderers' stabbings.

The same party, in collaboration with the Right C.P. has been repressing the people of Kerala. The lathi-charges against the students, the repression on agricultural workers, the intimidation of striking State employees in Kerala—these are the doings of the same party which boasts of a big majority in the House of the People. Lest the people might forget its performance it enacted a massacre of workers in Kotah, Rajasthan, on the eve of the poll, by shooting more than ten striking workers.

Thus, curfew, CRP raids and combing, merciless police shootings and letting loose assassins on militant democrats—these have been Indira Gandhi's actual practice wherever the democratic movement had attained militancy as seen in West Bengal, Kerala, Srikakulam, Ganganagar, Bihar and Tripura, notwithstanding her talk to fight for Socialism.

Only the hired drumbeaters like the Right C.P. leaders can acclaim Indira's victory as the victory of the people. On the other hand, all democratic parties must realise that the strength acquired by the Congress party will now be ruthlessly used to attack the masses, in the background of the growing deterioration in the economic conditions of the people and the inability of the Congress Government to solve any problems.

How is it that a party which has been responsible for such misery, for so much repression, should secure such a thumping victory except in West Bengal and Tripura? How is it that instead of the people utilising the split in the Congress for their own advance, Indira has used it for the advance of her own party at the expense of the people?

By appearing to open a frontal attack against the Right reactionary forces, Indira Gandhi succeeded in sidetracking the attention of the people from her responsibility in aggravating the problems of unemployment and poverty, in attacking democracy and launching repression. The Right reactionary opposition which opposed even such measures as nationalisation of banks and abolition of privy purses with huge compensation, which raised the false cry that Indira was going to abolish the right to private property, enabled Indira Gandhi to make them the main target and evade answers to basic questions. She succeeded in presenting to the electorate that the main fight was between the Indira Congress and the Grand Alliance instead of between her class policies and those advocated by the democratic forces led by our Party. In contrast to the Alliance she appeared to champion progressive measures and the masses finding no other viable alternative before them voted *en masse* for the Congress(J). The electorate, no doubt, showed their revulsion for the Grand Alliance and showed unerring democratic instinct in routing it; but it was beguiled into accepting

Indira's pretensions and gave an overwhelming victory to the representatives of its class enemies.

This became possible only because the democratic forces facing the ruling classes were divided and disrupted. Except in West Bengal and Kerala, nowhere else could they be considered as a viable force which could replace the Congress policies. In contrast to 1967, the United Front of the main democratic parties hardly existed anywhere. In its absence, in States where our Party on its own strength and with the aid of a few allies was not strong enough to be considered as an alternative to the Congress, the field was all open to the Congress(J) to do what it liked with the electorate.

In the absence of such a United Front our Party in the weaker areas suffered reverses. In Tamil Nadu, especially, opposing both the reactionary combinations, our Party failed to secure a single seat either in Parliament or the Assembly. The fight appeared to be only between the Syndicate and the Indira-DMK combination with the result that polarisation took place on this basis and we lost in our constituencies.

The former partners in the U.F. not only did not remain with the front, they betrayed it and joined hands with one or the other class alliances. The SSP leadership deserting the U.F. made common cause with the Jana Sangh-Syndicate alliance with disastrous results for itself: it has now been driven out from its strong citadels and States and reduced to virtually nothing in Parliament. The masses have turned away in revulsion with this opportunism.

How can they vote for a party which joins hands with the Syndicate and Jana Sangh not only in the elections but also in SVD Governments and crushes the people? The betrayed ranks are justified in their anger with the policies pursued by the leaders, in demanding a reversal of the policies. A section of the leadership also seems to realise that its policy was opportunist and is calling for a break with the SVD Ministries in Bihar and U.P.

The most treacherous role in undermining the growing alternative of a United Front was played by the leaders of the Right

C.P. whose bankrupt anti-people line gets sustenance even from the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In 1967, also, the Right C.P. in West Bengal broke the U.F. and helped the Congress with the result that the parties opposed to the Congress got only a narrow majority in West Bengal. In Kerala, they became wise after the results of their betrayal in 1965, joined the U.F. and helped in routing the Congress.

By 1969, they undermined the U.F. Ministry in Kerala and in 1970, finally, betrayed the U.F. in West Bengal. Later on, in Kerala, they forged an open election alliance with the Congress. It was followed by tacit understanding in many constituencies with the Indira Congress in West Bengal in the present elections to fight the CPI(M).

The Right C.P. leaders echoed all the slanders of the ruling classes against our Party in West Bengal and Kerala and thereby did their best to undermine the prestige and efficacy of the U.F. in the minds of the people. Supporting repression against the people in West Bengal, launching it against the people in Kerala, the Right C.P. leaders openly paraded the Indira Congress as a progressive force. They did their best to discredit the U.F. of the democratic forces as a viable alternative against the Indira Congress as well as against the Grand Alliance. Thus, the Right Communist and others helped Indira to take away a large part of the democratic vote. In the name of strengthening the progressive forces they have acted as the salesmen of the bourgeoisie sapping the strength of the people.

Thus the tactics of the Right C.P., the SSP and PSP leaders undermined the alternative of an anti-Congress democratic front and helped Indira Gandhi to come out as the only alternative to the Grand Alliance.

Despite the sweeping victory of the Indira Congress in most of the States—Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura have not only weathered the storm but shown to the people how a correct principled class and democratic political stand coupled with continuous mass work and developing the independent strength of the working class and its Party along can check and rebuff the class enemy and advance the cause of the people.

The election results in Kerala are being paraded by the bourgeoisie and their servitors, the Right Communist leaders, as a great victory of the Congress and a defeat for the CPI(M). They conceal the fact that our Party and the candidates sponsored by it secured no less than 41 per cent of the total votes cast which no party in the unscrupulous combination opposed to us can boast. They conceal the fact that the Indira Congress dared not face us along in Kerala and for getting six out of the 19 seats it had to seek an opportunist alliance with all and sundry including the Muslim League and the Kerala Congress, the ruthless representatives of Kerala landlords and big plantation-owners. They conceal the fact that in this unscrupulous game the Indira Congress leaders had to tell lies at each step, sometimes denying and sometimes averring that an alliance did exist between them and the Right C.P., between them and the Muslim League. The fact is that no other party in Kerala can stand against us on its own; that our opponents can range only a combination devoid of all principles against us.

The hypocritical claim of the Right C.P. and Indira Congress that they were intent on fighting the Syndicate-Jana Sangh reaction was exposed in Kerala. Against Comrade A.K. Gopalan, in Palghat Constituency, they all—the Right Communists, Indira Congress, Jana-Sangh, Syndicate alliance and the Socialist Front—supported one candidate, a Jana Sangh man. Their hypocrisy was equally exposed when against Comrade Jyoti Basu they combined with the Syndicate-Jana Sangh combine and the Indira Congress as well as with all other parties in sponsoring Ajoy Mukherjee as their common candidate.

West Bengal again showed that the triumph of Indira Gandhi was not inevitable despite the treachery of the reformists and the revisionists if the Party could rally the masses through continuous mass struggles, both economic and political.

In West Bengal the struggle was extremely arduous. The election atmosphere smelt of gunpowder and saw the glint of murderers' knife. It was preceded by a Goebbelsian propaganda of the Congress and the Right C.P. Press to slander our Party. The Press agencies carried on this nefarious propaganda throughout the country.

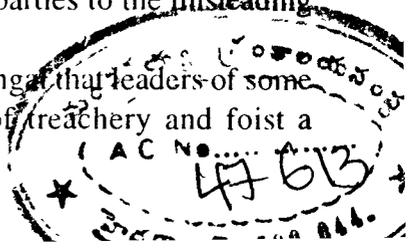
Fighting against these odds, against curfew, mass arrests, murders and combings, the electorate of West Bengal routed the traitors, who broke the U.F. and brought their parties on the verge of liquidation. Ajoy Mukherjee, who was artificially built into a colossus with the aid of big money and the hireling Press, has been cut to size, with his entire party getting five seats. The Right C.P. could get only 13 seats and some of these with the support of the Congress. Their treachery, their anti-CPI(M) hatred could achieve nothing for themselves, it only secured for the Congress a large number of seats.

The Congress on its own, with all the advantage of division of democratic votes and Indira's image, could secure less seats than what it secured in 1967. In 1967, when the anti-Congress forces were divided into two U.Fs. our Party got 43 seats. In 1969, when there was one U.F., we got 83; in 1971, when the U.F. was split, when some of its former parties had entered into alliance with the Congress, worked for it, we got 111 seats on our own and 123 for our alliance and came out as the largest single party.

Such is the measure of popular shift towards us in the last four years. This shift is further seen in our great success in the Parliamentary elections. Out of 40 seats, our Party has swept 20 seats leaving the Congress with 13; in the 1967 elections, our Party could secure only five seats. Our Parliamentary votes increased from 18 per cent in 1967 to 35 per cent in 1971.

The bourgeois hirelings and their revisionist servitors were daily raising the cry that our Party's line was sectarian, that we were being isolated from the people. The Right C.P. leaders were humbugging their ranks with this ridiculous propaganda. The electorate has shown who is isolated, and who is being supported. The electoral victory in the Assembly and Parliamentary elections in West Bengal constitutes a magnificent achievement of which our Party and cadres can be justly proud. It should open the eyes of the rank and file of other democratic parties to the misleading propaganda of their leaders.

The P.B. warns the people of West Bengal that leaders of some parties wish to continue their policy of treachery and foist a



Congress Ministry on West Bengal. West Bengal can yet be saved from the clutches of the Congress rule which is synonymous with poverty, unemployment, CRP, curfew and raids on houses and killings by anti-social elements and Naxalites with the active help of a section of the police. Any party which becomes accessory to getting the Congress into power when the electorate has refused to give it the largest number of seats, leave aside the majority, will be guilty of betraying the people.

It is the duty of all democratic parties to take a firm stand against the Congress and help in the formation of a democratic non-Congress Government in West Bengal. The problems of West Bengal cannot be solved without waging an irreconcilable struggle against the Centre. To support a Congress Ministry is to betray the people of West Bengal, into the hands of the Central Government, who can only send troops to West Bengal but not provide new jobs.

The P.B. warns the people that the machinations of the Right C.P. leaders to conspire with the Congress to deny a democratic Ministry led by the U.F. will, if successful, lead to disastrous consequences. In the name of the democratic movement and people of West Bengal, the P.B. appeals to all democratic parties to come together to prevent the formation of a Congress Ministry, and ensure advance for the people of West Bengal and their movement.

The elections have come and gone. The problems of the people remain. Only fools and knaves will proclaim that Indira Gandhi's success can lead to the solution of any basic problem or even an honest attempt for solving them. So long as the basic policies arising from the capitalist path remain, more and more misery will be the lot of the people, notwithstanding tall talk about tackling the unemployment or some other problem. On the contrary, because of the deteriorating economic situation, greater and greater assaults on the people are predicted. And the big majority of the Congress will only facilitate the attack. The stable Government is going to be a Government of stable attacks and repression. It is not for nothing that the imperialists and their Press abroad see no danger to them in the big victory of the Indira Congress. In fact, President Nixon, the butcher of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos

and other Asian peoples, has hailed the victory. They know it is not a victory of the anti-imperialist people, not a victory of the have-nots, nor of those who would oppose imperialist aggression in Vietnam.

The readiness with which some of the Syndicate leaders are prepared to join hands with the Indira Congress also shows that the former also realise that they have nothing to fear from the victory. The victory has consolidated the forces of the status quo.

The P.B. warns the toiling masses that armed with its majority in Parliament, and having beguiled many by its promises, the Indira Congress Government is bound to attack all resistance of the masses ruthlessly. The way in which it is handling the Airlines employees' strike after the election victory is symptomatic of its outlook towards all struggles.

The masses will lose heavily, the democratic movement will be curbed, if the democratic parties allow the present situation to continue, leave the democratic forces disunited and allow all initiative to pass into the hands of the Indira Congress.

The rank and file of the democratic parties, the SSP, the PSP, the Right C.P., etc., must see for themselves the disastrous results of the policies pursued by their leaders. They must ask themselves the question,—must all their sacrifices, their fight, their struggles lead them into the camp of the Congress, are they destined to act as the drummer-boys of the Congress? They must repudiate the path. What is needed once more is the restoration of a United Front of the democratic parties and forces which will be considered by the people as an alternative to Congress rule. Had the Right C.P. and others not undermined that alternative, not discredited the idea of the U.F., the election results all over India would have been radically different.

There is nothing to be disheartened at the election results. The P.B. is confident that in the period ahead, working people realising that they have been cheated with empty promises which cannot be fulfilled, within the framework of the capitalist path of development, in collaboration with foreign monopolists and with dependence on foreign aid, will rise with accumulated fury and fight the attacks on their living standards.

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The P.B. calls upon all its units, members and sympathisers to prepare the masses and all democrats for united struggles which the future will unfold. In these struggles the political unity of all toiling masses must be forged so that it becomes an irresistible force capable of seeing through the manoeuvres of the ruling classes and successfully challenging the landlord-bourgeois rule.

On Recent Events in East Pakistan

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on
March 16, 1971

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press on March 16, 1971:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) sends its warm fraternal greetings to the brave people of East Bengal for the glorious struggle for State autonomy and for democracy they are valiantly conducting against the military regime of Pakistan.

The terrible atrocities committed by the military dominated by personnel from West Pakistan and the shooting down of people *en masse*, have not cowed them but on the other hand, have only still more steeled their determination to carry on the fight with greater vigour and intensity. The entire people have risen as one man against the military regime. The port and dock workers have refused to unload military hardware at the Chittagong Port. Even judges of the High Court have refused to administer oath to the new Governor.

The total and complete non-co-operation of the entire people of East Bengal against the military regime has led to a situation wherein the military regime's writ does not run in East Pakistan. On the other hand, civil administration has been taken over by Mujibur Rahman, the leader of the Awami League.

The national upsurge for State autonomy, democracy and against oppression and exploitation has been so sweeping and universal that appeals based on religion have miserably failed to stem the tide.

The P.B. congratulates the people of East Bengal for their valour, courage and determination in the struggle and is confident that before long their just struggle will be crowned with success.

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Greets the People of West Bengal*

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on March 15, 1971

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press on March 15, 1971:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) thanks the people of West Bengal for their magnificent rally behind our Party and the United Left Front in the Parliamentary and Assembly elections.

The twenty seats captured by our Party in the Parliamentary election from the State and the emergence of our Party and the ULF as the biggest single bloc in the Assembly constitute a victory of the democratic forces against the vested interests and their parties. The people of West Bengal have given the lie to the propaganda that our Party was isolated from the masses and by their massive vote have repudiated all those who charged our Party with the violence that was let loose by the anti-social elements working in collusion with the authorities.

The Polit Bureau pays its tribute to the courage and determination of the people of West Bengal who exercised their franchise in the midst of army combings, CRP assaults and series of murders of the best sons of the people. The P.B. salutes the memory of those who fell victims to the policemen's bullets or the assassins' dagger while defending the cause of democracy.

The conscious and enlightened electorate of West Bengal—the working class, the peasant masses, the employees and other toiling sections have seen through the alluring politics of the Jagjivan Ram Congress and refused to be baited by it. While in the rest of India, the Congress (J) was sweeping the polls, in West Bengal, it had to

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, March 21, 1971

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Greets the People of West Bengal 27

content itself with only 13 Parliamentary seats out of 40, as much as 20 being captured by our Party.

The verdict of West Bengal is clear. The majority does not want a Congress Government. It reported that sordid efforts are being made by some leaders to bring the Congress back to power. The Congress is attempting to pressurise the Right Communists to support its ministry with the threat that otherwise their Kerala Ministry which subsists on Congress support will be toppled.

The P.B. warns that the interests of the people of West Bengal have been already damaged by those who broke the U.F. It will be an act of crowning infamy if any democratic party or its leaders now conspire to foist a Congress Government on the State—a Congress Government which is synonymous with the CRP and police terror.

The P.B. calls upon all democratic forces, parties and individuals to unite and see that the Congress is not allowed to steal into power. It calls upon the ranks of all democratic parties to exert their full strength and ensure the formation of a democratic ministry in accordance with the wishes of the people.

Right Communist Betrayal Again*

P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M) issued a statement in Calcutta on March 20, 1971.

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on March 20, 1971:

Sri Rajeswar Rao, in his reply to our telegram that discussions be held between their party and our Party indulges in false and motivated slander that we have been murdering cadres of their party and other Left parties and that useful discussions will be possible only if we openly admit this guilt and pledge that in future we shall abandon this policy. This excuse in order to hand over power to the Congress will not deceive the toiling people.

In West Bengal about 230 of our comrades and supporters have been murdered during the last one year under the rule of the Congress Government at the Centre and many of them have been killed by Naxalites and rowdies belonging to the Congress, CPI, etc. and of course by a section of the police and with their help. Hundreds of our people have been forced out of their houses for months together. In Kerala, too, so far over 40 of our people have been killed. Our lists on both counts are ready for anyone to examine. It is also not a secret that the CPI and the Congress have been supporting the Naxalites on innumerable occasions. If the CPI has any such list of people murdered and forced out of their homes we may jointly examine all the cases.

We are not raising this question nor various past allegations as more important and basic issues are at stake. After the electoral results we thought it necessary to take the initiative to approach the CPI and other parties in order to urge upon them to reconsider

* Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, March 28, 1971

their stand and hold discussions with us for the formation of democratic Governments both in West Bengal and Kerala and debar the Congress from power. But it seems the CPI leaders pursuing the same line of installing the Congress Government in West Bengal which means limitless suffering for the people and murderous assaults against the CPI(M) cadres and other democratic sections of the people. Already arrests and assaults have started and the air is thick with rumours of extensive Government preparations for large-scale repression by the police and military as the chances of a Congress Government brighten with the support of the CPI.

The democratic people of West Bengal and the rest of the country will not be cowed by these threats and will prepare to fight back till they defeat the nefarious conspiracies of the ruling classes and their supporters.

But even now, without going into mutual allegations, will the leadership of the CPI start discussions with our Party to prevent the Congress Party from coming back to power in West Bengal and for fighting the blackmail of the Congress in Kerala?

Text of Telegrams

Copy of telegram sent by Comrade P. Sundarayya to Sri Rajeswar Rao, General Secretary, CPI (Right) on March 19, 1971:

We have read with concern the resolution adopted by CPI in West Bengal in support of a Congress Government which will mean untold suffering for the people. Our appeal for formation of a Left-democratic Government with the support of ULF and ULDF parties and others to prevent the Congress from coming back to power has gone unheeded. The overwhelming majority of people demand an anti-Congress Government. Our Party urges upon your Executive Committee to reconsider the position after the election and immediately discuss with us the formation of a Left-democratic Government in West Bengal. In Kerala too Congress blackmail can be defeated if we can unite.

Copy of telegram from Sri Rajeswar Rao, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Right), dated March 20, 1971:

We heard your telegram on radio before it reached us. Strange that you released your so-called appeal to us simultaneously to Radio and Press. Also strange that you seek our help to get hold of

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State Government while continuing line of disruption of unity of Left and democratic forces, attack on our and other Left parties as betrayers and unabashed terrorism and physical liquidation of cadres and leaders of other Left parties including ours. You are still continuing these activities even after elections. We have reports that our comrades' houses are attacked and they are forced to quit. Already thirteen hundred families in and around Calcutta have been forced to quit. Some are being killed also. If you are sincere in your professions you should publicly declare that you will give up this policy. That alone can be the basis for fruitful dialogue between our two and other Left parties. Since your telegram is in the Press we are also releasing our answer to the public.

CPI(M) Pledges Full Support to Bangladesh

Statement issued by *P. Sundarayya*, General Secretary of CPI(M) in New Delhi on March 27, 1971

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has issued the following statement in New Delhi on March 27, 1971:

The People of Bangladesh (East Pakistan) *en masse* voted for the Awami League and its leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, demanding full autonomy for States in Pakistan and the Central Government to be in charge only of foreign affairs and defence and for immediate transfer of power to the elected representatives in the National Assembly.

The military dictator Yahya Khan rejected this demand and has now resorted to brutal military massacring of the people of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has declared Independence of Bangladesh and called on the people to fight the occupation forces of the Centre.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns this brutal onslaught and military massacres on the part of the military forces, whole-heartedly supports the struggle of the people of Bangladesh and calls upon the people of India and the Indian Government to extend all the support that could be rendered to the people of Bangladesh.

Resolution on Post-Election Situation 1971*

Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its Calcutta meeting held from April 8 to 12, 1971

The following is the text of the resolution "On post-election situation and tasks facing the democratic forces" adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from April 8 to 12, in '71:

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) greets the people in various States who, withstanding all pressures and temptations, stood valiantly by our Party and voted for it. It particularly extends its revolutionary greetings to the people of West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala for their magnificent response to the call of the Party to foil the game played by the ruling Congress and for giving the Party and its allies the proud privilege of being the major political force in their States. The Party and its allies polled the largest number of votes in all these States while in two of them, in Tripura and West Bengal, they became first in terms of the seats gained.

This record of the CPI(M) and its allies in the three States stands in marked contrast to the debacle of all other parties of the democratic opposition to the Congress. For instance, the Right Communist Party, the SSP, the PSP and the RSP had a combined strength in the dissolved Lok Sabha of 62 while in the new Lok Sabha it has been reduced to 32. The CPI(M) alone increased its representation from 19 to 25 because of its correct Marxist-Leninist policies and because of boldly leading the struggles of the toiling masses against the ruling classes.

The Right Communist Party did maintain its representation in the Lok Sabha. It is, however, well known that all the seats won

*Published in the compilation of CPI(M) Documents from February 1969 to April 1971

by it were virtually the gifts of the ruling Congress. This party, therefore, has transferred itself from a partner in the democratic opposition to the position of a mere satellite of the ruling party. In spite of the support given to it by the ruling party, however, the Right Communist Party's vote fell from 5.2 per cent to 4.9 per cent (76 lakh to 71 lakh). As for the CPI(M) and its allies, their vote increased from 4.2 to 5.6 per cent (63 lakh to 84 lakh).

The elections have seen the debacle of the parties of the extreme Right—the Jana Sangh, Syndicate and Swatantra having been humbled in the contest. This combine which had 199 seats at the time of dissolution of the Lok Sabha has now only 46 seats. The Jana Sangh and Swatantra which won 79 seats and polled 264 lakh votes (18 per cent) have now won only 30 seats polling 153 lakh votes (10.5 per cent).

But the rout of the reactionary alliance has not meant a victory of the democratic forces and the people.

Thus the election results show that the main party of the bourgeoisie has manoeuvred in a way in which while carrying on its electoral conflict with the Rightist elements from its own class, it has dealt blows against the rising democratic movement.

The victory of the ruling Congress headed by Indira Gandhi cannot be a victory of the people, of the democratic and toiling masses, struggling against poverty and exploitation.

The reins of power have been handed over to a party whose record in accentuating the poverty and unemployment of the Indian masses, as well as dependence on foreign loans, is unexcelled.

The reins of power have been handed over to a party which has done its best to suppress the peasants and agricultural workers' movement for land; whose Chief Ministers only a couple of months before the elections blandly declared that land ceilings would not be lowered and that no radical land legislation would be passed.

The ruling Indira Gandhi Congress has been able to regain the position which the undivided Congress had enjoyed before 1967.

Post-election developments too show that the ruling Congress is using its electoral victory to further strengthen itself in the main at the expense of the Left and democratic forces. It is trying to absorb forces of the extreme Right reaction against which it claims

to be fighting. Hardly had the results of election been announced, when the leaders of the ruling party in various States started their intrigues to get back into their fold as many of their old colleagues who had joined the Syndicate and had, therefore, been once described as reactionary. While formally criticising the practice of defections, the leaders of the ruling Congress did not hesitate to strengthen themselves by inducing a large number of Syndicate Congressmen and other reactionary elements to join them in toppling the Syndicate Governments in Mysore, U.P. and Gujarat. In Orissa, they went to the extent of electing a notoriously reactionary old Congressman, Dr. Mahtab, as leader of the Legislature Party and prospective Chief Minister. It became thus clear that the so-called new radical image of the ruling Congress only helped it to regain the position that it had lost in 1967 and after.

No sooner than the elections were over, all over the country the State Governments led by the ruling Indira Gandhi Congress have mounted innumerable police and landlord-goonda attacks on the voters who voted for the CPI(M) and other parties of the democratic opposition. This attack on the people is being intensified as is evidenced by bans and suppression of legitimate strike struggles of workers and Government employees in different States.

The policy pronouncements made by the Prime Minister and her colleagues after the election also indicate that they are not going to make any basic changes in the policies which the Congress has been following for the last 23 years. On the contrary, it is intent on launching ferocious attacks on the working people. Heavier taxation, inflation and high prices, wage-freeze, freedom for landlord and rich peasant elements to exploit the rural poor, assurances to Big Business and foreign monopolists—all these are threatening the overwhelming majority of the working people.

Furthermore, the problem of unemployment is getting more and more serious. The Government's promise of spending a paltry sum of Rs. 50 crores for provision of a mere five lakh jobs, does not touch even the fringe of the problem. The unemployment problem can be solved only by abolishing landlordism and monopoly capital which would facilitate large-scale industrialisation.

Basing on the huge majority in the Lok Sabha the Indira Gandhi Government has declared its policy of more and more bureaucratic

centralisation, encroaching on the rights of the States instead of enlarging the autonomy of the States as demanded by the democratic forces. This is a slap in the face of the DMK which allied with the Indira Gandhi Congress on the ground that it would give greater powers to the States enabling them to build a prosperous economy.

Knowing full well that all these policies are bound to rouse the anger of the working people and give rise to an increasing wave of mass struggles, the ruling party and the Government are forging new weapons of repression.

All this has come to a head in West Bengal and to a lesser extent in Kerala as well. The spectacular victory gained in the rest of the country has emboldened the ruling Congress to increase the ferocity of the police CRP rule in West Bengal. Denying the biggest political party and the Front in the Legislature the right to form the Government and face the Legislature as normal constitutional practice demands, it imposed on the people of Bengal an opportunist combination of reactionary and opportunist elements headed by Ajoy Mukherjee, leader of a party rejected by the people of Bengal, even without facing the Legislature. It is only by unashamedly enlisting the support of the Syndicate Congress MLAs, it could install this Government.

The Indira Gandhi Congress has been claiming that it is opposed to Hindu as well as Muslim communalism. Its leaders, therefore, have been denying that they have any alliance or understanding with the Muslim League in the whole of India except in Kerala. But when they found that in West Bengal, too, they cannot form their Government without the support of the seven Muslim League MLAs, they took three of them in the Ministry—this, too, in a State where their own party has 17 Muslim MLAs and the CPI(M) and its allies have 15, thus giving a premium to the communal section of the Muslims.

This Government has denied all civil liberties to the people to prevent them from expressing their resentment and struggling for their demands. Extensive use of Section 144, imposition of curfew, use of military to terrorise the people, the police and CRP attacks,

large-scale arrests and tortures in lock-ups, police shamelessly allying with anti-social elements and the Naxalites to beat up and murder active workers of the democratic movement and specially of the CPI(M)—thus a reign of terror has become the order of the day.

During the short time that has elapsed after the formation of the present Ministry on April 2, no less than fifty were brutally murdered of whom ten are leaders and active workers of the CPI(M) and its allies. Physical annihilation of the cadre of the one political party, the CPI(Marxist), which had the courage and capacity to challenge the authority of the ruling Congress—this has been put on the agenda by the ruling Congress and its satellites, who have joined together in order to bring into existence the present Government.

The Central Committee deplors the treacherous role played by the Right Communist Party and other constituents of the former non-Congress U.F. in this sordid game of the ruling Congress. Not only did they break the U.F. and its Government formed after the 1969 mid-term elections, not only did they join the Congress in whipping up the anti-Marxist hysteria, not only did they participate in a number of murderous attacks on the leaders and cadres of the CPI(M) and its allies, but even after the debacle they had at the hands of the electorate in the recent Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, they helped the Congress in re-establishing its reactionary Government. The Right Communist Party which claims to be the most uncompromising opponent of the Syndicate Congress unashamedly joined the Syndicate and offered its support to the Ajoy Mukherjee Government. While calling itself a “Communist Party” it has not the least compunction to join hands with all types of rabid anti-Communists.

In Kerala, too, the Right Communist Party is heading a Government which, with the full support of the ruling Congress has unleashed a reign of police repression and is giving protection to landlords and their goondas. The last few days after the election have seen in Kerala half a dozen instances in which active workers of the agricultural labour and peasant movements have been killed by goondas, not to speak of innumerable instances in which, though they were not killed, serious injuries have been inflicted.

Both in West Bengal and in Kerala, therefore, the Right Communist Party has become the conscious instrument of the terror regime which the ruling Congress wants to establish wherever the working people are fighting for their democratic rights.

The SSP, too, has been playing the game of the ruling classes. Its political line has in fact been the reverse of the Right Communist Party Denouncing the Right Communist Party line of supporting Indira Gandhi and her Congress, the SSP, however, has been a willing partner of the Grand Alliance formed by the Syndicate, the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra. Just as the Right Communist Party is heading a Congress-supported Government in Kerala and supporting a Congress-led coalition Government in West Bengal, so did the SSP join the Syndicate-led Government in U.P. and continues to head a Syndicate-Jana Sangh coalition Government in Bihar. After the fall of the Syndicate Ministry in Mysore, the SSP took the initiative in trying to bring into existence another variant of the same Syndicate Government.

The result of the Lok Sabha election should have opened the eyes of these parties. For, the policies pursued by the Right Communist Party, the PSP, and the RSP (Kerala) on the one hand and those pursued by the SSP, on the other, have only helped the ruling Congress to strengthen itself at the expense of both of the reactionary opposition as well as democratic opposition. The only party that withstood this onslaught has been the CPI(M) which refused to toe the line of either the Indicate or the Syndicate. Our Party, too, suffered serious reverses in all States where it has not become strong enough to come before the people as a real alternative to both the Indicate and Syndicate alliances and where our efforts to forge and maintain united democratic fronts against both the Congress alliances were disrupted.

In view of this experience gained by all parties of the democratic opposition, the Central Committee appeals to all of them to turn a new leaf and to help the restoration of the unity of democratic opposition forces which, with ups and downs on various occasions, all these parties pursued from 1952 to 1969. It was this unity of democratic forces which helped in weakening the Congress and ultimately in breaking the monopoly of its power in the Fourth

General Elections. It was just because many of these parties became instruments in breaking this unity of democratic opposition after the split in the Congress that the ruling Congress headed by the Prime Minister has been able to regain the position which the undivided Congress had enjoyed before 1967. It is thus obvious that none of the constituents of the democratic opposition can stand against this tide unless they abandon the path of joining this or that Congress. On the other hand, if only the path of collaboration with this or that Congress is at least now abandoned and all parties of the democratic opposition come together, the offensive of the ruling Congress can be halted and the democratic movement can be taken forward. For, the rank and file members of, and masses owing allegiance to everyone of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties ardently desire and are bound to join any united democratic movement which takes upon itself the task of fighting for the democratic rights of the common people.

The Central Committee, therefore, appeals to all parties of the democratic opposition to co-operate with the CPI(M) in forging a powerful instrument of struggle against the landlord-big bourgeois ruling classes and their political parties. It appeals to them all to initiate immediate talks, bilaterally or multilaterally, to overcome all the obstacles and evolve a common plan of action:

(a) Get all parties of the democratic opposition to withdraw their support from the Ajoy Mukherjee Government of West Bengal and to facilitate the formation of a non-Congress Government led by the CPI(M) which is quite feasible if only these parties abandon their attitude of hostility to the CPI(M).

(b) Get the Right Communist Party, RSP and PSP to withdraw from the alliance with the Congress in Kerala and strive for a non-Congress democratic Government in the State.

(c) Get the SSP to withdraw from the SVD Government in Bihar and to stop the game of forming similar Governments as was attempted in Mysore.

(d) Enter into fraternal consultation among the parliamentary groups with a view to co-ordinating the work of all parties of the democratic opposition within Parliament.

(e) Develop joint action in organising mass struggles on T.U., agrarian and other issues; to this end, arrange consultations among the Central T.U.s., and other mass organisations on an all-India, State and local basis.

(f) Organise a countrywide campaign for civil liberties, for the repeal of P.D. Acts and other repressive legislation, withdrawal of Section 144 and other prohibitive orders, issued to suppress the struggles of the toiling people and democratic forces; withdrawal of CRP and military from West Bengal; withdrawal of all cases launched against the toiling people, political parties and democratic forces; release of all arrested and detained persons in connection with the people's struggles.

The Central Committee appeals to all these parties to realise that the victory gained by the ruling Congress Party in this election is sure to be used against all working class and peasant movements and against every democratic struggle. Thus it is such a danger to all of us that it is necessary for us all to take all steps to overcome the split that has taken place in the camp of the democratic opposition.

The Central Committee appeals to all Party units to launch a widespread and determined campaign to forge such unity. It reminds them that this campaign can succeed only if our Party boldly initiates and develops common mass struggles on the most pressing problems and issues that affect all the masses including those who are still behind other parties; and also by convincing them how our policies are correct and can effectively lead to defeating the anti-people policies of the ruling classes.

Cry Halt to this Reign of Terror*

By Jyoti Basu

Ghoshpukur village in Hooghly district. The evening of March 24. The army appears and cordons off the village. The police begin going from house to house, beating men, insulting women, young and old, looting whatever they can lay their hands on inside the houses. Next morning they come again. Most of the men are away. They begin attacking the women. The 23-year-old daughter of Akkel Ali is beaten and when her mother tries to save her, she is also beaten and both are dragged by their hair. Hearing their cries for help, other women rush in. A contingent of the police, led by the officer-in-charge of the station, arrives and takes over the attack. They bayonet Akkel Ali's wife. Selima Khatun, Maria Khatun, Anwara Begum, Nurunnahar Begum, Sarifun Khatun, Alemun Khatun, Latiman Bibi, among others, are kicked and bayoneted. Maria Khatun is almost stripped naked before she is bayoneted. They kick Arshed Ali's pregnant wife. One of the beasts tries to violate 32-year-old Nurunnahar. She is saved because of the resistance of others. The aged mother of Yunus Sheikh is beaten. Another woman is stripped while being dragged to the police van. The assault over, they arrest a number of women and children.

This happened in Ghoshpukur but it can be any village in West Bengal, or for that matter any town, even the City of Calcutta because such combings by the CRP and police with the help of the army take place every day all over the State.

* Booklet published by the C.P.I. (M) in April 1971 on the terror created in West Bengal by the Indian National Congress with the help of a section of police.

Combings and Killings

The State's police force is sixty thousand strong, in addition are fifty thousand para-military forces like the CRP, Border Security Force, etc., and more than fifty thousand of the army and these near-two-lakh armed thugs have been let loose on the people of West Bengal to commit murder and mayhem. The CRP and army units have been posted all over the State, not only in district and sub-divisional towns but in all important centres even below the level. Regular combing operations by the police and the CRP with the help of the army are being organised in mahalla after mahalla in the towns, in village after village in the rural areas. Indiscriminate arrests, mass torture, selective killings have become the order of the day. More than twenty thousand persons have already been arrested of whom 750 are still in custody, refused bail, and another one lakh have warrants of arrests pending against them. From the date of the imposition of President's rule on the State, March 19, 1970, to the end of December, 149 CPI(M) workers and supporters had been killed, by the CRP and police and by anti-social elements organised by the Congress and its allies; the number rose to 219 on the eve of polling day and as this is being written, it has already crossed the 250 mark. In addition are many others who have been killed in the same period.

Nothing has happened in the villages and towns to attract this fury of the "guardians of law and order". These wanton arrests are being made, this beating, torture and maiming is going on and innocent people are being killed like mad dogs only because the Congress and the landlords, the mineowners and other employers and the gangster elements organised by them need these operations to terrorise the people, to suppress the working class, peasant, women's, student, youth and general democratic movements and struggles, and specially to crush the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which stands in the forefront of these movements and struggles.

It is no ordinary repression that West Bengal is witnessing today, but a reign of semi-fascistic terror, a systematic attempt to physically liquidate the leaders and cadres of the CPI(M) and the mass movements.

Beginning of Conspiracy

Reaction's conspiracy had begun immediately after the assumption of the second United Front Government in West Bengal. The Ministry was sworn in on February 25, 1969, and within a few days, on March 19, communal riots were engineered in Jagatdal in 24-Parganas district in which two lives were lost and many were injured. The attempt clearly was to divide on communal lines the ranks of the working class who had massively rallied to make the victory of the U.F. possible in the mid-term elections. On March 24, the CRP opened fire on workers in the Durgapur Steel Plant. Clearly the attempt was to discredit the U.F. Government. But that Government in which the CPI(M) was the major constituent was able to defeat these conspiracies and during the one year of the Government, it helped workers in the factories, mines and plantations to gain an annual Rs. 50 crores in the form of wage-increases and bonuses. Above all, the anti-people CRP was ordered back to the barracks and the police was strictly prohibited from intervening in working class struggles on the side of the employers as had been the practice under the Congress regime.

The toppling of the second U.F. Government was the signal for reaction to raise its monstrous head again. On March 17, 1970, when the working class and people of West Bengal observed a massive general strike and hartal to protest against the toppling of the U.F. Government in response to the call of the CPI(M) and the mass organisations, thirty people were killed among whom were CPI(M) unit Secretary Nani Debnath of Kesoram Rayon Factory, Hooghly; two in Cooch Behar; one in Burdwan; three workers of the Gauripur Jute Mills, four workers of the Hukumchand Jute Mills, two in Baruipur, two in Habra, all in the 24-Parganas district. Workers in many other places including the collieries and plantations were attacked and among those assaulted and injured on the day were two CPI(M) MLAs, Gopal Basu and Patit Paban Pathak.

Since then these attacks on workers and their leaders have continued with mounting ferocity. Among CPI(M) and trade union leaders killed so far are Comrades Jiban Maity, Niresh

Thakur, Santosh Bhattacharya, Ananta Dutt, Amal Thakur, Snehendru Das, B. N. Prasad, A. B. Roy, Ram Chandra Rai, Bibek Panja, Sukumar Bhowmik, Kali Chakravarty, Sultan Munshi, Biswanath Ghosh of Durgapur and many others. Attempts were also made on the lives of Comrade Rabin Mukherjee, engineering workers' leader, and Comrad Mohammad Amin, jute workers' leader, but these attempts failed. The CRP entered the CPI(M) office in Noapara and beat Comrades Jamini Saha, MLA, Ramanath Chatterjee and other trade union leaders. The workers killed in various parts of the State are many.

Attacks in Collieries

In the collieries, for instance, attacks and murders had begun even at the time of the U.F. Government. Right Communist and SSP trade union leaders in the coalmines who, because of their links with the mineowners and contractors, were continuously betraying the workers, were furious when the CPI(M) began organising the mine-workers and giving them militant leadership in struggles for their demands. Goondas organised by these so-called trade union leaders began attacking CPI(M) leaders and killing workers who rallied to the CPI(M) -led Colliery Mazdoor Sabha (CMS, Raniganj). From October 12 to 17, 1969, hundreds of armed goondas organised by the contractors and trade union leaders in their pay, made continuous attacks on the quarters of workers belonging to the CMS in the Sripur group of collieries. Two workers, Halim Mia and Idris Khan, were killed, many workers were injured and a number of their quarters were burnt down. On February 10, 1970, emboldened by the fact that the conspirators against the U.F. Government were near success, armed goondas organised by the management and some Right Communist trade union leaders attacked the workers of the Patmohana Colliery and killed five workers—Biswanath Rajwar, Biswanath Goala, Srikisen Singh, Ruly Goala and Kuar Singh. Fifteen days later, on February 25, police came to the aid of Right Communist trade union leaders and opened fire on a meeting held to protest the attack on two CMS leaders and

killed four workers—Nathari Pradhan, Khadon Pagar, Kashi Bisai and Kashi Gore of the Nageswar and Mithapur Collieries. On March 18, immediately after the toppling of the U.F. Government, SSP men and hired hoodlums attacked the CMS office in the Sripur Collieries and the Mari dhowrah and when the workers were defending themselves, police opened fire on them and killed two. On March 21, the police and goondas raided Nischinta and the women from here had to take refuge in the jungles nearby for days together. The British Bengal Coal Company ejected about 70 workers and their families at the point of guns with the help of hired hoodlums who took away six of the women and raped them. The police rescued two of them after two days. Similar to the attacks and murders in the colliery area were the attacks and killings organised by Right Communists and SSP men in the tea gardens of North Bengal.

Terror in Durgapur

But the worst repression, unparalleled in any working class struggle, was reserved for the workers of Durgapur when they went on a continuous strike from August 12, 1970, to protest against the posting of the Central Industrial Security Force and arrests of respected union leaders including the local MLA, Comrade Dilip Mazumdar. Armed personnel numbering 24,800 from the CRP, special Armed Police, Border Security Force, West Bengal Police, etc., were mobilised in Durgapur to suppress the 60,000 workers. Section 144 and continuous curfew were imposed on the township. Every quarter in the Steel Township in which striking workers were living was raided by the CRP; men, women and children were brutally beaten. Milk and vegetable supply to the township was stopped to starve the workers and their children. Demonstrating workers were inhumanly lathi-charged on Ashoke Road, Rana Pratap Road, Jaidev Road, Chandidas Road, etc.; a women's demonstration was lathi-charged and teargassed on Ashoke Avenue. Women were dragged on the road by the police, one of them, Smt. Chakravarty, was kicked and beaten with rifle-butts, many of them had their saris and blouses pulled and torn. Seventy-

year-old Smt. Sumitra Bala Devi was arrested and a 24-year-old girl, Sanyal, was arrested and beaten. Hundreds of workers were arrested, many more dragged into police vans, beaten savagely and thrown into ditches and bushes. During the strike the CRP even raided the hospital and harassed the patients. One of the workers arrested was tortured with electric shocks to force him to give evidence against himself.

In Rural Areas

This horrifying repression was not restricted to the working class alone, an equally ferocious onslaught was being made on the peasants and agricultural workers in the rural areas.

During twenty years of Congress rule no land had been distributed to agricultural labourers and poor peasants despite all the talk about land reforms. And all during this period eviction of sharecroppers had continued in full swing. But during the period of the U.F. Government evictions were totally stopped, more than two-and-a-half lakh acres of surplus land was taken away from the possession of landlords and distributed in 1967 to poor peasants during the first U.F. Government and about four lakh acres of benami surplus land clandestinely held by landlords were recovered and taken possession of by the poor peasants in 1969 during the second U.F. Government. The landlords, hoarders, and blackmarketeters were furious.

Even before the fall of the U.F. Government in March 1970, they had begun showing their ire. In Burdwan district, in the first clash that took place in Chaitanyapur, a landlord family owning 1,200 acres of land opened fire and killed two peasants, both of them supporters of the CPI(M).

After the toppling of the U.F. Government, almost the entire rural area of the State, specially in 24-Parganas, Burdwan, Howrah, Hooghly and Nadia, has been converted into a huge armed camp with almost daily actions against the rural poor. The atrocities that are being committed beggar description.

In Hooghly district, for instance, there have been attacks again and again, on the villages, Polba being the most attacked of them. This is what happened when village Kangsaripur was

attacked by the police and CRP. The men were all beaten and chased away and then the target became the women. Karmi Mandi, Lakshmi Mandi, Sukhi Hansda, Maku Murmu were all raped. In repeated raids in this village, many were taken to the police lock-up and tied to tree branches by their feet with their heads down.

In Burdwan district when the police and army combed the village of Osmanpur, they mercilessly attacked the tribal people. They asked for certain people and when they were not found, they arrested whomsoever they could find in the houses. Begum Rakia, a young woman, and Alema Bibi, over sixty years old, were among the women beaten. All the household articles including utensils, sickles, spades, etc., were looted. In Kutubpur, doors and windows of houses were broken, ovens were smashed and earthen vessels in which the Muslim women were cooking were broken and the food that was being cooked was kicked away. Women were hit with rifle-butts and filthily abused. A team of CPI(M) MPs, Comrades Saroj Mukherjee, Bijay Modak and Somnath Chatterjee, who visited the village found broken pieces of earthen vessels scattered throughout the village. In a tea-shop in Naiti village in Hooghly district, all those who were taking tea were mercilessly beaten including the Anchal Pradhan who dared to protest. When the police and CRP raided the villages of Lalpur, Harishpur, Jinpur and Kishipur, they broke into every house, beat up all the inhabitants and arrested 72 persons. Bibi Tudu and Pago Tudu, wife and daughter of Purna Tudu were badly tortured. Fifty-year-old Haider Ali, father of seven children, was arrested and beaten to death. A small village under the Basanti police station in South 24-Parganas was raided by the CRP. All the menfolk fled. The CRP arrested about two dozen peasant women, removed their sarees and bound their hands with them and while taking them in a motor launch raped six of these women. In Dhapa, on the outskirts of Calcutta City, where the poor people had occupied a few acres of land, the CRP arrived and arrested a large number of people including three women, one of them a twelve-year-old girl. All there of them were raped, the young girl by eleven CRP men.

In village Bijur in Burdwan district, to help a landlord owning land over the ceiling limit, the CRP opened fire on a peaceful procession of peasants killing two on the spot and injuring 20 including women. Hundreds of villages have been raided in this fashion, thousands arrested and tens of thousands beaten and tortured, dozens of women dishonoured.

Attacks on Students

The terror regime has, in fact, left no section of the democratic movement untouched.

On July 24, 1970, the students and employees of Jadavpur University were discussing within the university premises how to ensure peaceful examinations by defeating the Naxalite plan to sabotage the exams. The CRP rushed into the place and beat them all mercilessly injuring about 200 persons. The excuse for this wanton attack was that a small cracker had burst somewhere outside the university compound, a long distance away. But instead of rushing to the place where the cracker had burst, the CRP rushed into the university premises to beat up the students and employees.

Only recently, the army and the CRP had swooped on the Calcutta University and arrested an employee and some others. Hoodlums of the Congress Chhatra Parishad had earlier stabbed and killed Debabrata Pal, an employee. A few months ago a student supporter of the CPI(M) had been brutally murdered in the Regional Engineering College in Durgapur.

In Calcutta City, 1,200 policemen raided the CIT tenements in Beliaghata, one early morning, surrounded the whole place, rounded up 49 young boys, isolated four of them, took them to a distance of fifty yards and right in the presence of the inhabitants of the tenements, shot and killed them. Ashoke Bose, one of the boys shot and killed, held a national talent scholarship. Samir Ranjan Chakravarti and his brother—a policeman himself—were shot dead by some police officers. Samir Bhattacharya, a boy of 17, was beaten to death in the Shyampukur police station. Many such lock-up murders have already taken place. On May 2, again in Calcutta City, bombs

were thrown on a procession by gangsters hired by the Congress. Uma Adhya, an activist of the Central Calcutta Mahila Samiti, was seriously injured and one of her legs had to be amputated. Comrade Parul Bose, and activist of the Mahila Samiti and wife of Comrade K. G. Bose, leader of middle class and Government employees and of the 12th July Committee, was stabbed inside a class room in the school where she is teaching. Comrade Jharna Dasgupta, also a teacher and Mahila Samiti worker, was stabbed and seriously injured in Durgapur. Two days later, on May 4, Amal Nandi of the Democratic Youth Federation in Uttarpara was shot and killed. Comrade Santosh Bhattacharjee, a respected leader of the secondary teachers' movement, was murdered on April 6, 1971.

The deaths in a clash of three persons, the Sain brothers, known criminals even according to police reports, became the occasion for launching widespread terror in Burdwan district. Raids, goonda attacks, a huge number of arrests, etc., were made. Respected leaders like Binoy Konar, MLA, Gokulananda Roy, MLA, who were not even in the town on the day were arrested a month later—during this whole period they were functioning openly—and were beaten in the lock-up. Even after a year, Comrade Binoy Konar, who has been re-elected to the Assembly with a majority of over 18,000 and many others have not been given bail. During this period three CPI(M) members of Burdwan, one of them released on bail after being in jail for eight months, were murdered in broad daylight. Not one goonda has been arrested. One caught and handed over by the people was let off by the police. A lawyer, Bhavadish Roy, of Burdwan who has been defending CPI(M) cadre, workers and peasants involved in cases was brutally killed on April 19, 1971.

No exhaustive list of the attacks and killings is possible here. But from the typical cases quoted, it is clear that the police and the goondas, inspired by the Congress and some other political parties and a section of the higher echelons of the administration, are out to eliminate the CPI(M) in places like Beliaghata, Jorabagan, Dum Dum, Baranagar in Calcutta and the surrounding areas of 24-Parganas and from districts like Burdwan, Cooch Behar, Nadia, Hooghly, Howrah, Malda.

Why This Terror ?

Why has this reign of semi-fascistic terror been imposed on the people of West Bengal and which are the chosen instruments of reaction in its diabolical plans against the democratic movement ?

As stated earlier the out of the Congress in the 1969 mid-term elections and the installation of the second U.F. Government had helped the workers, peasants and other toiling people to unleash powerful mass struggles and win important gains. The landed interests, Indian and foreign monopolists, the Congress rulers at New Delhi were all furious. And that is when the conspiracy began. Finding the government machinery not at their beck and call, finding that the Congress was no longer strong enough to help them, they tried to utilise the flags of some of the parties of the U.F. itself and these parties agreed to oblige. This was the beginning of their degeneration which ultimately made them appendages of the ruling Congress party.

The political shelter given by these parties to the landlords and capitalists encouraged them to organise goonda attacks on peasants and workers and precipitate clashes. This is the real story behind the so-called inter-party clashes over which a lot of noise was raised at that time. The CPI(M) was falsely charged with responsibility for these clashes—the beginning of the theme of the CPI(M)'s "politics of violence". Facts, however, show that the CPI(M) was not only not responsible for these clashes but was in fact the victim in many of them.

Practically all the clashes that took place were connected with land or wage struggles. Sixtyfive out of the 85 persons killed in these clashes were CPI(M) supporters while 20 belonged to other parties. Twenty more were killed in clashes between supporters of other parties opposed to our Party. Some other facts should be noted, which are being consciously suppressed by the slanderers and the whole Big Business Press. In the district of Burdwan in the first clash that took place, a landlord family owning more than 1,000 acres fired without any excuse and killed two peasants who were CPI(M) supporters. In the

district of Midnapore whatever clashes took place, not the CPI(M), but the Bangla Congress and Right Communists were involved. Even after the break-up of the U.F. Ministry in the first big clash in which five in a family were murdered and in most of the other clashes in this district, not the CPI(M), but the Right Communists and the Bangla Congress were involved. In the district of 24-Parganas in the first two big clashes in which four persons in a family in one place and one peasant and one policeman on duty in another place were murdered, the CPI(M) was involved in neither. In those cases where we were involved, we were the victims. Moreover, the total clashes in rural areas during the whole U.F. period were very small taking into consideration the magnitude of the extent of land involved. Even the bourgeois Press had to admit that the clashes during the harvest period were small in number. In the colliery and tea plantation areas the SSP and Right C. P. acted as shock troopers for the owners and organised some clashes.

During this period, the Naxalites being isolated from the peasants and workers, degenerated and started attacking educational institutions. It is the CPI(M) which stood firmly against such vandalism. It was our Comrade Krishna Roy who became the first victim of the murderous attacks of Naxalites when they attacked a student demonstration in the Calcutta University. In the subsequent period of President's rule, these elements were encouraged and directed by the Congress and their accomplices to spearhead their attack on us. A large number of our comrades were killed by them. Still the Congress and its allies, particularly the Right Communists, have the temerity to accuse us of attacking the Naxalites and trying to exterminate them.

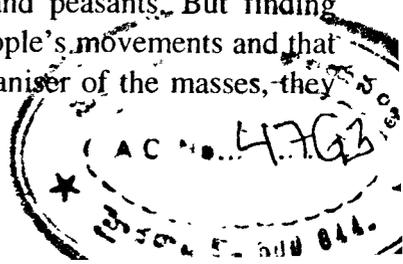
During the U.F. period, except the few clashes in connection with land or wage struggles, life was peaceful. Anti-social gangs were cornered. People never before had found such security to their life. Even the bourgeois Press had to admit that during the Puja days thousands of men and women moved freely in Calcutta during whole nights without any fear of anti-social elements. But as the democratic mass movements

continued to advance, the conspiracy to break the U.F. was maturing and the slander against the CPI(M) was intensified to provide an excuse. The question of so-called inter-party clashes was discussed again and again in the U.F. Committee and some unanimous decisions were taken. They proved that our accusers were wrong. In answer to the charges levelled by all-India SSP leaders we urged upon them to agree to joint enquiries, but they did not respond. We challenged the arch-conspirator Ajoy Mukherjee to bring concrete instances against us and agree to proper enquiries. But knowing full well that their accusations were nothing but vile slanders, the conspirators at the behest of the ruling Congress and in the interests of landlords and capitalists unilaterally broke up the U.F. Government. This was made possible only because the Right Communists and their friends joined the conspiracy.

Multi-Pronged Attack

The phenomenal advance of the mass democratic movements and the alarm in the reactionary camp of landlords and Big Business were the real reasons behind the conspiracy to break up the U.F. Government. Just for this reason, multipronged ferocious attacks on the people and their democratic rights were organised simultaneously with the imposition of President's rule on March 19, 1970. The obvious purpose of the intensification of terror during President's rule was to help the landlords and capitalists to snatch away the lands and other gains achieved by the people during the U.F. period, to crush the people's democratic movements and to try to form a stooge Government in alliance with the Congress to continue the attacks. The unprecedented reign of terror began with the orgy of March 17, 1970, and continues to this day.

In the beginning the goonda attacks were mainly directed against mass struggles of workers and peasants. But finding that they were unable to crush the people's movements and that the CPI(M) was the inspirer and organiser of the masses, they decided to murder Party workers.



Naxalites and Anti-social Elements

Anti-social gangs, wagon-breakers, rowdies of the Congress and other anti-CPI(M) parties were organised and utilised for this purpose. A section of the police officers and their henchmen were drawn into the conspiracy. Special efforts were made to direct the activities of the Naxalite degenerates in this direction. These groups openly declared their plan through their paper and posters to kill individual persons, individual policemen and wreck educational institutions. With a view to mobilising these forces in their plan to murder our workers, the leaders of the Congress, Bangla Congress, Right C.P. and their accomplices began to speak highly of them as “well-intentioned brave boys”, established contact with them, sheltered them, directed their activities and murderous attacks against our Party cadres. The Naxalite gangs had already degenerated enough to play this role. When some of the Naxalite boys went beyond the limits set for them, they were mercilessly dealt with. A Congressman was murdered in Dakshineswar and after that eight dead bodies of Naxalites suspected to be connected with this murder were mysteriously found on roadsides at Barasat. It was clear that a section of police officers in league with Congress goondas did it. Pressed by public resentment, Justice T. P. Mukherjee was appointed to enquire into the murders. But no sooner had he started the enquiry an attempt was made on his life, and the enquiry has been shelved. But utilising this dual method of persuasion and reprisals, the Naxalites were harnessed by the Congress and a section of police officers for their plan of murders.

A number of police personnel have also been killed by Naxalites. It should be noted that they are mostly ordinary policemen including traffic policemen. But there seems to be a plan behind these murders and they were not only tolerated, but even encouraged by Congress leaders and a section of police officers. Many of those killed were associated with the Non-Gazetted Police Association which was formed and recognised during the U.F. period.

That all these murder gangs were organised and sheltered by the Congress and their agents are not mere assumptions, but are

proved by concrete facts. The criminals wanted in connection with some murders were found in the house where Sri Swarajbandhu Bhattacharjee, a PSP (dissident) leader and a close supporter of Ajoy Mukherjee, stays in Calcutta. But this news was kept deliberately suppressed. The factory of the ex-Congress Minister Sri Parimal Ghosh was a den of known Naxalite gangsters who were used to attack us. Subsequently, the son and wife of Parimal Ghosh himself were attacked by the same elements. Maybe they wanted more money and picked up quarrels on that issue.

The few instances cited above show how various goonda gangs were encouraged, organised and utilised to attack and murder CPI(M) cadre. The goondas were armed and were directed to attack our comrades and our strong bases. Whenever the people successfully resisted the attacks, the police and the CRP inevitably came, attacked the people and sheltered the goondas. This was the modus operandi and it has been perfected since then. By December 1970, 149 of our workers had thus been killed, hundreds wounded and thousands forced to leave their areas. There are many areas that have been made inaccessible to us due to the combined goonda and CRP attacks.

Simultaneously, the high-level slander campaign was pushed up to cover up the criminal attacks and put the blame on us. Whenever our workers were murdered, and the majority of those killed were ours, it was simply said that somebody was killed in a clash and then our comrades were arrested. Whenever the people resisted and goondas were forced to run away, it was said that CPI(M) people made the attack and then also our people were arrested and tortured.

The Congress rulers and their agents always try to justify their police, CRP and gangster attacks by talking glibly about restoration of 'law and order'. But it is they who have worsened the situation by their barbarity. Once anti-social and goonda gangs are organised and encouraged, they become a danger to the lives and property of ordinary people also. This is just what is happening and daily growing. During the U.F. period anti-

social elements were cornered. Now they are encouraged to thrive in the towns and villages.

Violence Before Elections

The mid-term elections in March 1971 were themselves held in an atmosphere smelling of gun-powder and under the gleam of the assassin's knife. Even after dissolving the Lok Sabha and ordering fresh elections, the Congress rulers wanted to avoid an Assembly poll in West Bengal because they knew they could not win.

When ultimately they were forced to hold elections against their wishes, they became more desperate and intensified their semi-fascistic terror attacks in order to defeat the CPI(M) and the ULF and to ensure victory for themselves. The elections were not allowed to be held in a normal atmosphere. Instead of withdrawing the CRP and stopping their raids, about fifty thousand army men were brought in to help the CRP in their attacks and to terrorise the people to vote for the ruling Congress.

Secondly, they were used to help the goonda attacks against the CPI(M). Regular combing operations and tortures were undertaken in Party's strong areas, but no such operations were there in pockets controlled by the goondas. One example will suffice. In Baranagar constituency, where 13 of our people were murdered during President's rule, a big area covering about 20,000 votes to the east of the B.T. Road was controlled by the goondas with the support of the Congress, Right Communists, Naxalites, etc. Our workers were driven away and forced to leave their homes. Even I, who was the candidate, could not enter the area up to the last day. But no so-called combing operation ever took place here. Rather this area was guarded by the military to prevent our workers from going there for any election campaign. But in the other areas from where we could not be driven away and where goondas could not carry out their murderous depredations with impunity (although our opponents never felt any difficulty to carry on their propaganda), combing operations were undertaken again

and again. It was done only to terrorise the people and help the goondas to attack them. Actually, with every such operation, the goondas came and attacked with arms. Always the police and the CRP gave protection to goondas. Similar measures were taken in many constituencies.

Simultaneously, murders of our workers by Congressite and other goonda gangs were intensified. It was made impossible for us in many areas even to paste posters or go for house-to-house propaganda without adequate guards. Within the short span of the election campaign period, i.e., from January 1 to March 9, 1971, 70 of our workers were murdered.

The Congress rulers and other reactionaries grew more desperate and hatched up a heinous conspiracy to murder some candidates and some noted non-Marxist leaders to sabotage elections and at the same time intensify the slander campaign to confuse the people and defeat us in the elections. Everybody knows that our Party has always been and is against individual murders and we have condemned such murders again and again. It was our Party which consistently fought against the Naxalite theory of murders of individuals. It was our Party which campaigned for elections for the whole year and the election results show that we were confident of victory. Our Party would not do anything which could in any way affect the holding of elections. It was also known that the Naxalites openly declared that they would murder election candidates. In spite of all this, the conspirators worked out the new plan of murders only to malign us.

The murder of the respected Forward Bloc leader, Hemanta Basu was a part of this sinister conspiracy. Though the leader of a party opposed to us, Hemanta Basu had not attacked us during the last two years. Hence the conspirators decided that a dead Hemanta Basu would be more useful to them in their slander campaign than a living Hemanta Basu. No sooner had he been murdered, the Congress leaders and their friends began shouting without even any semblance of enquiry that the Marxists had done it. Sri Siddhartha Ray, the ruling Congress leader, was in North Bengal. After arriving at Dum Dum

Airport he took the pose of knowing everything by smell and accused our Party of the murder. We openly expressed our fear that some foreign intelligence agency had a hand in it. It was also supported from other sources. The police dogs were taken to the spot and on that basis two persons were arrested, one of whom was a relative of the Congress (R) leader, Prafulla Kanti Ghosh. They have now been let off, and charge-sheets against seven persons, all absconding, many of them connected with the local ruling Congress, have been filed. But still the slander campaign against us was pushed only to work up a section of the people against us in the elections and to provide excuse for murdering more of our comrades.

Similarly, the murder of some election candidates was utilised to falsely accuse us. After filing nomination papers, the Bangla Congress candidate at Ukhra and Syndicate Congress candidate at Dum Dum were murdered and the elections were postponed. If any party has benefited by them, it is the ruling Congress. We had won both the seats in the last election by good margins and in the parliamentary elections this time which were not postponed, our candidates have polled in these two Assembly constituencies many thousand votes more than the ruling Congress or any other candidate. In Ukhra it was reported that the ruling Congress candidate had pressed the father of the murdered candidate to withdraw his son from the election. Evidence has been tendered before a magistrate to the effect that some ruling Congress people are responsible for this murder. A certified copy of the evidence was shown in the Lok Sabha. Still, we were being slandered by the Congress and their friends. In spite of the fact that the police authorities are biased in favour of the Congress, we could in no way be implicated in these murders. Still the slander went on.

Three of the CPI(M) candidates—Dilip Mazumdar, Gokulananda Roy and Rabin Sen—had to fight the elections after being barred from visiting their constituencies. Another candidate—Binoy Konar—has been in jail throughout the period.

In a nut-shell, the ULF and our Party had to fight the elections against heavy and unprecedented odds and in an

atmosphere of semi-fascistic terror. No state in our country and not even West Bengal earlier had to face such terror attacks.

The expectation of the ruling Congress and their agents of winning a victory by this method was belied. Though our Party and the ULF were prevented from obtaining an absolute majority by a few seats, we emerged as the single biggest party and front with 123 seats out of 277 and obtaining 35 per cent of the votes polled. We were far ahead of the ruling Congress which could secure only 104 seats and 28 per cent of the votes. The party of the arch-traitor, Ajoy Mukherjee, was practically thrown into the dustbin of history with only five seats. The Right Communists and the Forward Bloc who played the most heinous game in the anti-Marxist campaign were cut to size with only 13 and three seats respectively out of which four and two seats they could get only with direct Congress support. The policy of anti-Communism under the garb of "Left" phrases was rejected by the people. The only party to gain by the treachery of the Right Communists and their friends was the ruling Congress. But it, too, was far behind the Congress position of 1967 in terms of seats and that of both 1967 and 1969 in terms of votes. In the context of the pro-ruling Congress sweep in most of the States, this was a big defeat for the ruling Congress.

The failure of the Congress rulers to defeat us and prevent us from being the single biggest party made them far more desperate. Hence they decided to intensify the semi-fascistic multi-pronged attacks after the elections. West Bengal is virtually being ruled by force with the support of the army.

Diabolical Plan

A conspiracy was initiated to forge an opportunist combine of all reactionary forces including the ruling Congress, the Syndicate, Muslim League, etc., and parties like the Bangla Congress that was rejected by the people. This would not have been possible had the Right Communists not betrayed the voters and agreed to join even the Syndicate to support the Congress. This was one part of the conspiracy.

Knowing full well that the people will not accept such treachery lying down, the reign of terror and goonda attacks

were intensified. Section 144 was clamped on the whole State from the morrow of the polling date. The right to express opinion and to criticise has been taken away completely. The voice of the people was gagged.

Simultaneously, CRP and police attacks backed by the army took more violent and brutal forms. Combing operations have extended to villages. Indiscriminate arrests and tortures are taking place. In the name of finding out so-called "wanted" persons, whose number will be about one lakh, whole mahallas and villages are being encircled and merciless tortures are being perpetrated. Where tens are arrested, hundreds are beaten. Women are not spared. A large number are being arrested on the plea that some explosives have been found which in reality are absolute lies. The people have no right to protest and demonstrate.

Goonda gangs have become more violent and emboldened and they are receiving more open support of the police and the CRP in broad daylight, with drawn daggers and firearms and under the protection of the police and the CRP they are murdering our workers. Seldom in any democratic country have such terror attacks been organised even after a general election.

A reactionary ministry formed by an opportunist and unstable combine was imposed on the people on April 2 behind their back. Since then a diabolical plan to liquidate the democratic forces has been worked out. It was expected that the Assembly would be immediately summoned. People are facing serious problems. Within two weeks the price of rice has shot up in some areas by more than fifty rupees per quintal. Factories and mines are being closed. All these need discussions. But knowing full well that even according to their own declarations, the government has only a precarious majority, if at all, they refused to call an immediate session of the Assembly. Not only that, all avenues of expressing opinion are totally blocked. Moreover, police, CRP, military attacks and murder campaigns have taken a more organised form. From March 10 to April 25, 43 of our workers have been murdered of which 24 were

murdered since the formation of the Ministry. Comrade Santosh Bhattacharjee, the veteran leader of the secondary teachers' movement, and two women workers, Bithee Dey and Anjali Ghosh, are among those murdered. Comrade Anjali Ghosh was killed when she refused to divulge the whereabouts of her son who belongs to the CPI(M).

The goonda gangs that the Congress ruler themselves and their hangers-on have organised or encouraged and utilised against us, do sometimes work as boomerang against their own masters or are sometimes used by themselves in their internal quarrels, as in the case of the murder of Sri Nepal Roy, MLA. The preliminary police reports and arrests proved that the culprits were anti-social elements. A comment in the Congressite daily, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, hinted at the murder being the result of inner quarrels in the ruling Congress camp itself. But still these incidents are being used to slander and intensify the attacks on us. Some Congress Ministers are reported to have openly asked the police not to mention the Naxalites or any anti-social gangs in case of any such murders, but to implicate our Party and cadres in them. The Prime Minister herself is encouraging and justifying the murders of our comrades by repeating the old falsehood that it is we who started it.

We have come to know from very reliable sources that a high level plan has recently been worked out to arrest within a very short period thousands of our comrades including leaders and MLAs on false charges and to murder quite a number of them either in police lock-ups, or on the way, or to get them murdered by gangsters. The CRP and military attacks will also be intensified. It has come to our knowledge that a good number of our MLAs will be removed either by arrests or by murder before the Assembly session is called so that the reactionary combine can show an artificial majority in the Assembly. Incidents will be created or even murders or attempted murders will be organised by gangsters in order to implicate our Party and arrest our workers and at the same time to use them as cover for mounting more attacks on us. Already there are instances to show that this diabolical plan has been put into operation.

Conspiracy in Action

Within a very short period three police officers or constables in Burdwan were attacked and their revolvers snatched away. There are reasons to suspect that these incidents are part of a plan to hand over some small arms to the Congress goondas. Curiously enough, no steps have been taken to apprehend the real culprits. On the other hand, Comrade Binoy Choudhury, MLA, one of our Party's State leaders, along with four others of our Party were arrested. Comrade Choudhury went to Burdwan much after the incident. Still he was taken to the police station and kept there till 11 in the night. Ultimately finding that it was impossible to implicate him, he and another were allowed to go, but three were kept in custody. Attempts have been made on the lives of Comrades Rabin Mukherjee and Mohammed Amin, both MLAs.

The Central Intelligence Bureau at the behest of the New Delhi rulers are engaged in a vile conspiracy in this matter. False reports are being manufactured to attack and arrest our comrades. A so-called top secret memorandum (No. C4/C71 (18) dt. 3.4.1971) has been sent to the DIG, I.B. of West Bengal, in which it has been written that the CPI(M) has adopted a plan to murder some individuals by hiring some persons; that it is we who persuaded Naxalites to murder Nepal Roy, etc. It has also named two of our leading comrades who are supposed to be in charge of such operations. A copy of this note along with my letter to the Prime Minister is being reproduced as an appendix to this booklet for the people to understand in what sort of vile conspiracy the Central Congress leaders are engaged.

A large number of our local leading comrades including respected teachers, trade union and Kisan Sabha workers have already been arrested without trial under the Prevention of Violent Activities Act as anti-socials. The Government of West Bengal has decided to arrest soon a very large number of our comrades under this Act. In Durgapur also 47 of our comrades have already been arrested in this way by April 23.

Defend Democracy !

What is thus going on in West Bengal and what is planned for the immediate future is no ordinary repression. It is nothing short of a desperate semi-fascistic plan to destroy democracy and to liquidate the democratic movement and its cadres. Even before the elections, some of the Central Congress leaders were reported to have been toying with the idea of creating a miniature Indonesia in West Bengal. They know that the pro-ruling Congress sweep as seen in the recent elections in our country except in three States, has been created by false promises and tall talk about "removing poverty". They know that their bourgeois-landlord policy will not be changed in any significant way. Hence the illusion created among the people will not last long and the people in many States will be drawn into mass struggles in a big way. In that condition, the strong mass movement of West Bengal will have a tremendous impact on the struggles all over India. They want to crush the people of West Bengal into submission by brute force before then. Hence standing on the crest of the present pro-ruling Congress sweep the reactionary ruling circles have thought it opportune to translate their dream of initiating a bloodbath into reality.

The people of our country cannot allow this criminal plan to succeed. It will mean an end of democracy and establishment of a military autocratic rule under the garb of parliamentary forms. Every decent person irrespective of political affiliations who loves democracy must realise the danger and raise his or her voice of protest. The workers, peasants and other toiling people will surely note that the criminal plan of the Congress rulers does not mean a danger to West Bengal alone, but to the people, their movements and struggles in the whole country.

For their part, the people of West Bengal will not take the attacks meekly. They may be compelled to go through far more severe trials, but they will surely face them squarely. The people all over India cannot remain silent when this criminal attack on the West Bengal people goes on. They will surely rise in vigorous protest actions.

We demand that the West Bengal Assembly be immediately summoned, Section 144 be immediately lifted, the CRP and the army be withdrawn from the State, all arrested leaders and

workers of the democratic movement be released forthwith and full civil liberties be restored and that no shelter and encouragement must be given to gangsters.

We appeal to the workers, and all toiling people of West Bengal to prepare themselves politically and organisationally to meet the challenge. Their day-to-day demands are intimately connected with the above political demands. Combine all those demands to form a single current of strong mass struggles that can defeat all attacks and restrictions. We appeal to the people of the whole country to stand solidly by their brothers and sisters in West Bengal who are engaged in a grim struggle. It will protect their own democratic right and strengthen their own struggles, We appeal to the members and supporters of all parties and organisations who profess to stand by the people to realise what harm is being done by the present policy of the Right Communist leaders and their friends who have gone to the length of joining with the Syndicate to help the ruling Congress and with whose support alone the Congress-led reactionary combine could come to office in West Bengal. We call upon them to exert all their pressure to bring these parties back to the path of democratic unity against the Congress rulers.

APPENDIX I

The Secret Note

Top Secret

Copy of Memo No. : C4/C71 (18) dated 3.4.1971 from Deputy Director, S.I.B. (MHA), Government of India, 9/1, Gariahat Road, Calcutta -19 to D.I.G., I.B., Calcutta.

Sub : Programme of State C. P. M.

The State C.P.M., it is reported, utilised Probhat Biswas, Sankar Das, Sambhu Hela and Sukhomoy Dutta to murder Nepal Roy, Cong. (R) MLA, on March 30 in North Calcutta. Sankar Das and Probhat Biswas are anti-social elements and have been known to be Naxalites. They, however, agreed to work for the CPM against money and assurance that the Party would look after their families.

The following targets have also been selected :

(a) Dilip Sen, Debnath Das (of Hooghly District) and Khokan Chandra have been directed to take action against Prafulla Kanti Ghosh, Cong. (R) MLA.

(b) Kalimuddin, Pijush Deb and Samsur Ali have been directed to take action against Abdul Rauf Ansari, Congress (R) MLA.

(c) Profulla Sarkhel, Sujit Dutta, Montu Bose and Sailesh Das Gupta have been directed to take action against Saral Deb, FB-MLA.

It is learnt that Rajdeo Goala and Lakshman Bhattacharjee (both CPM) would guide these actions.

This is for your information.

Jyoti Basu's Letter to the Prime Minister

16.4.1971

Prime Minister,
Government of India.

Dear Prime Minister,

Please find herewith a statement which I have issued on a top secret memorandum submitted by the Deputy Director, SIB (MHA) to the DIG, IB. Such tactics devoid of all political morality may vitiate the atmosphere temporarily and create serious difficulties for us but it can never succeed in the long run as has been seen in the past when various slanders and repression were let loose against our Party. May I request you to give serious and urgent consideration to this unspeakable conspiracy and ensure some democratic and decent processes even in dealing with the party opposed to the Congress.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- Jyoti Basu

Jyoti Basu's Statement to the Press

Shri Jyoti Basu, MLA, has issued the following statement to the Press on April 15, 1971 :

A top secret memorandum No. C4/C71 (18) dated 3.4.1971 from Deputy Director, SIB (MHA), Government of India, 19/1, Gariahat Road, Calcutta-19 to DIG, IB, Calcutta reveals a diabolical plan to implicate the CPI(M) in cases of murder of individuals which are taking place daily. This intelligence agency of the Government of India has worked out a sinister line manufacturing secret reports of the CPI(M)'s conspiracy to 'take action' or murder Congressmen and others opposed to the CPI(M) by hiring alleged anti-social elements and Naxalites. The objective of the agency is to direct the police to arrest members of the CPI(M) even if no murders take place, on the plea that they have conspired to murder. In the memorandum many names of alleged anti-social and Naxalite elements are given such as Dilip Sen, Debnath Das (Hooghly district), Khokan Chandra, Kalimuddin, Pijush Deb, Samser Ali, Prafulla Sarkhel, Sujit Dutta, Montu Bose, Sailesh Das Gupta who it is stated are hired tools of the CPI(M) for taking action against Sri Prafulla Kanti Ghosh, MLA, ruling Congress, Sri Rauf Ansari, MLA, ruling Congress, Sri Saral Deb, MLA (FB). Some other alleged anti-social elements like Prabhat Biswas, Sankar Das, Sambhu Hela, Sukhamoy Dutta are stated to have a hand in the murder of Sri Nepal Roy, MLA, ruling Congress and it is alleged that they agreed to work for the CPI(M) for monetary consideration.

Among all these anti-social elements whose addresses are not given and who are unknown to us the name of one Sailesh Das Gupta has been mentioned. I hope it does not refer to Comrade Sailesh Das Gupta, Secretary of the Barasat Local Committee of our Party, and our candidate in the last election.

Even such important leaders of our Party like Comrades Lakshman Bhattacharjee in Baranagar, 24 Parganas, and Rajdeo Goala, Councillor, Calcutta Corporation, and member of the Calcutta District Committee of our Party, have been mentioned as those who 'would guide these actions'. Such is the loathsome policy being pursued by this department of the Government of India. Soon after the formation of the Government in West Bengal, some Ministers reprimanded the officers who dared to

suggest that Naxalites were responsible for the murder of an important individual and directed them to implicate the CPI(M). The Intelligence Department of the Government in West Bengal has given the lead by preparing this blatantly false report. The Naxalites and other anti-social elements have with the patronage of a section of the police killed scores of members and supporters of the CPI(M) and they have been given shelter and encouragement by anti-CPI(M) parties including the ruling Congress. But there have been occasions when the gangsters have revolted and struck at their masters because of conflicts which have arisen among them. The attempt to foist the guilt on the CPI(M) for the gruesome murder of Sri Hemanta Bose and some others before and after the election has ended in failure. Hence this latest plan has been worked out at the behest of the Government. The people are aware that the CPI(M) has denounced in no uncertain terms such murders of individuals and has held the administration and a section of the police responsible for such vandalism.

The conscious democratic people of West Bengal who rejected the vicious slanders against our Party and established it as the first party, must compel the Government of India and West Bengal Government to desist from such machinations. The people must realise that this is a deliberate attack against the biggest party in order to cow the people into submission and destroy their movements for democracy and other economic and political demands.

APPENDIX II

Our Comrades who have been murdered

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
1.	Kariman Sheikh	} Gouripore, 24-Parganas	17.3.1970
2.	Badal Dutta		
3.	Asit		

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
4.	Usharani Guha Thakurta	} Baruipur, 24-Parganas	17.3.1970
5.	Kamal Das		
6.	Iman Ali	} Habra, 24-Parganas	„
7.	Sanjay Samaddar		
8.	Abdulla	} Hajinagar, 24-Parganas	„
9.	Kalachand Das		
10.	Jagabandhu Acharya		
11.	Fakira	} Tribeni, Hooghly	„
12.	Nani Debnath		
13.	Taran Mali		
14.	Ramjiban Santra		
15.	Subhas Rajbhar	Dewanhat, Cooch Behar	„
16.	A shop-keeper of	Cooch Behar market	„
17.	Kajal Das	Burdwan	„
18.	Rajen Das	Garubhasa, Cooch Behar	20.3.1970
19.	Haidar Ali	Kalachhara, Hooghly	21.3.1970
20.	Jogesh Burman	Goargarhi, Cooch Behar	24.3.1970
21.	Ledam Hansda	Dadpur, Hooghly	„
22.	Tapan K. Das	Baranagar, 24-Parganas	„
23.	Santimoy Ghosh	Amta, Howrah	31.3.1970
24.	Mangaleswari Roy	Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri	3.4.1970
25.	Kashiram Das	Nagrakata, Jalpaiguri	7.4.1970
26.	Jaid Sheikh	Domkal, Murshidabad	14.4.1970

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
27.	Khair Mohan Singh	Karandighi, Dinajpur	23.4.1970
28.	Mrityunjay Sen	Jadavpur, 24-Parganas,	2.5.1970
29.	Mohammed Salim	Calcutta	3.5.1970
30.	Amal Nandy	Uttarpara, Hooghly	4.5.1970
31.	Samir Ghosh	} Calcutta	5.5.1970
32.	Panchu Lal		
33.	Tapan Das	Chandernagore, Hooghly	10.5.1970
34.	Nidhu Das	Calcutta	12.5.1970
35.	Tapan Sarkar	Calcutta	19.5.1970
36.	Moti Das	Rajarhat, 24-Parganas	19.5.1970
37.	Kausher Ali Naskar	Altekhalī, 24-Parganas	28.5.1970
38.	Mayarani Sarkhel	Dhapa, 24-Parganas	1.6.1970
39.	Sukharanjan Saha	Calcutta	5.6.1970
40.	Dilip Sur	Chunchura, Hooghly	12.6.1970
41.	Srikanta Gharami	Baruipur, 24-Parganas	12.6.1970
42.	Madhusudan Mukherjee	Durgapur	14.6.1970
43.	Rafiqullah Mullah	Joynagar, 24-Parganas	16.6.1970
44.	Md. Anwar Hossain	Burdwan	20.6.1970
45.	Kanua Burman	} Kushmandi, Dinajpur	20.6.1970
46.	Bijal Deashi		
47.	Krishnadev Sharma	Kushmandi, D'pur	2.6.1970

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
48.	Himanshu Sekhar Sarkar	Uttarpara, Hooghly	21.6.1970
49.	Milan Ghosh	Habra, 24-Parganas	5.7.1970
50.	Subodh Das	Garulia, 24-Parganas	6.7.1970
51.	Aulad Hussain	Barasat, 24-Parganas	6.7.1970
52.	Hriday Ranjan Chowdhury	Chunchura, Hooghly	6.7.1970
53.	Sanjoy Pal	Uttarpara, Hooghly	8.7.1970
54.	Ramadhar Jadav	Belur, Howrah	9.7.1970
55.	Gobindo Let	Raina, Burdwan	15.7.1970
56.	Sudhangshu Dutta	Haroa, 24-Parganas	17.7.1970
57.	Dipak Majumdar	Barrackpore, 24-Parganas	18.7.1970
58.	Biman Mukherjee	Calcutta	19.7.1970
59.	Ganesh Pal	Baranagar, 24-Parganas	20.7.1970
60.	Mirlal Sheikh	} Bijur, Burdwan	25.7.1970
61.	Kalu Murmu		
62.	B. N. Prasad	Durgapur	28.7.1970
63.	Ramchandra Roy	Howrah	28.7.1970
64.	Pradip Sarkar	Calcutta	3.8.1970
65.	Bibek Panja	Budge Budge, 24-Pgs.	4.8.1970
66.	Probodh Dolui	Keshpur, Midnapur	7.8.1970
67.	Nasiruddin Ahmed	} Lalgola, Murshidabad	10.8.1970
68.	Saidur Rahman		
69.	Hazrat Ali		

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
70.	Anil Bag	Contai, Midnapur	12.8.1970
71.	Ramakanto Das	Katwa, Burdwan	13.8.1970
72.	A. B. Roy	Durgapur	13.8.1970
73.	Chitta Gosh	Baranagar, 24-Parganas	„
74.	Ananta Dutta	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	16.8.1970
75.	Sachindranath Biswas	Aranghata, Nadia	„
76.	Santu Roy	Calcutta	31.8.1970
77.	Sukumar Bhowmik	Aranghata, Nadia	„
78.	Dilip Dutta	Batanagar, 24-Parganas	1.9.1970
79.	Abani Bhusan Chakraborty	Calcutta	2.9.1970
80.	Jiban Maity	Howrah	5.9.1970
81.	Mohammed Mujibul	Diamond Harbour, 24-Parganas	5.9.1970
82.	Kalu Das	Haltu, 24-Parg.	10.9.1970
83.	Dilip Ghosh	Dhapa, „	12.9.1970
84.	Arun Mondal	Calcutta	14.9.1970
85.	Rammurti Ganguli	Suri, Birbhum	20.9.1970
86.	Prasanta Sarkar	Krishnagar, Nadia	21.9.1970
87.	Bijon Saha	Baranagar, 24-Parganas	21.9.1970
88.	Snehendu Das	Chanditola, Hooghly	23.9.1970
89.	Nani Saha	Belgharia, 24-Parganas	„

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Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
90.	Ramchandra Mandi	Sadarghat, Burdwan	29.9.1970
91.	Chandi Biswas	Calcutta	12.10.1970
92.	Nikhil Mukherjee	Raniganj, Burdwan	12.10.1970
93.	Abdul Mannan	Dadpur, Hooghly	„
94.	Haradhan Bhattacharjee	Behala, 24-Parganas	13.10.1970
95.	Manik Burman	Charmajdia, Nadia	15.10.1970
96.	Amal Thakur	Bansberia, Hooghly	16.10.1970
97.	Purna Jana	Kakdwip, 24-Parganas	20.10.1970
98.	Probir Roy Chowdhury	Behala, 24-Parganas	„
99.	Sunil Karmakar	Kalyani, Nadia	20.10.1970
100.	Javed Mir	Purulia	„
101.	Barun Ghosh	Champdani Hooghly	22.10.1970
102.	Mihirlal Das	Tegharia, Nadia	25.10.1970
103.	Ramanath Mondal	Haroa, 24 Pgs.	28.10.1970
104.	Krishnapada Das	Dhapa, 24 Pgs.	31.10.1970
105.	Rajendra Singh	Calcutta	1.11.1970
106.	Madar mal	Calcutta	„
107.	Balai Ghosh	Jadavpur 24-Parganas	7.11.1970
108.	Anil Aich	Calcutta	9.11.1970
109.	Biswanath Chakraborty	Bansdroni, 24-Parganas	9.11.1970

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
110.	Tarakeswar Guha	Nabagram, Hooghly	,,
111.	Sunil Chakraborty	Calcutta	,,
112.	Nilkanto Saha	Calcutta	15.11.1970
113.	Atul Mistry	Chakdah, Nadia	16.11.1970
114.	Mohanlal Ghosh	Calcutta	,,
115.	Bhim Singh	Pingla, Midnapur	17.11.1970
116.	Jahar Ghosh	Belgharia, 24-Parganas	18.11.1970
117.	Swapan Nag	Batanagar, 24-Parganas	21.11.1970
118.	Raj Kumar Roy	Calcutta	22.11.1970
119.	Asit Dalal	Belur, Howrah	23.11.1970
120.	Subhas Saha	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	23.11.1970
121.	Niranjana Bosu	Chakdah, Nadia	23.11.1970
122.	Kanai Dey	Chakdah, Nadia	24.11.1970
123.	Tushar Basu	Shibpur, Howrah	26.11.1970
124.	Bulu Manna	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	27.11.1970
125.	Saral Roy	} Panihati, 24-Parganas	29.11.1970
126.	Dipak Chakraborty		
127.	Adhir Chakraborty		
128.	Ramu Soren	Gajol, Malda	,,
129.	Jot Narayan Singh	Calcutta	17.3.1970
130.	Swapan Ganguli	Calcutta	2.12.1970
131.	Madhusudan Mondal	Behala, 24-Parganas	3.12.1970
132.	Amiya Batabyal	Khandaghosh, Burdwan	4.12.1970

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
133.	Ramchandra Das	Maheshtala, 24-Parganas	4.12.1970
134.	Proloy Das Majumdar	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	,,
135.	Harikhetra Pal	Memari, Burdwan	,,
136.	Ashim Ganguly	Shibpur, Howrah	6.12.1970
137.	Chitta Kar	Ashoknagar, 24-Parganas	12.12.1970
138.	Dilip Saha	Ashoknagar, 24-Parganas	12.12.1970
139.	Chanchal Dhara	Howrah	,,
140.	Kali Chakraborty	Khardah, 24-Parganas	13.12.1970
141.	Gopal Sil	Calcutta	13.12.1970
142.	Bablu Mondal	Calcutta	14.12.1970
143.	Kanai Bagdi	Bhatar, Burdwan	19.12.1970
144.	Tapan Banerjee	Chanditola, Hooghly	19.12.1970
145.	Piru Hazra	Raina, Burdwan	,,
146.	Kalachand Dhar	W. Putiary, Behala, 24-Pgs.	22.12.1970
147.	Madhusudan Pandit	Howrah	31.12.1970
148.	Ramkrishna Roy	Burdwan	31.12.1970
149.	Niresh Thakur	Calcutta	1.1.1971
150.	Sekhar Nag	} Baranagar, 24-Parganas	1.1.1971
151.	Robin Nandy		
152.	Gour Sundar Dey	Manipur, Nadia	1.1.1971
153.	Deb Kumar Chakraborty	Baranagar, 24-Parganas	2.1.1971
154.	Kanak Kanti Roy	Berhampore, Murshidabad	4.1.1971

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
155.	Sultan Munshi	Calcutta	7.1.1971
156.	Bhanu Hazra	„	„
157.	Sankar Goswami	„	8.1.1971
158.	Biswanath Ghosh	„	9.1.1971
159.	Satyen Chakraborty	Belur, Howrah	12.1.1971
160.	Arun Debbhuti	Burdwan	14.1.1971
161.	Tarun Dutta	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	17.1.1971
162.	Moti Sil	Dhakuria, 24-Parganas	„
163.	Bachchu Majumdar	Behala	24.1.1971
164.	Kiron Banerjee	Calcutta	26.1.1971
165.	Basanta Dutta	Bamangachi, Howrah	„
166.	Pijush Chakraborty	Calcutta	„
167.	Amitava Roy	Shamnagar, 24-Parganas	29.1.1971
168.	Nitai Debnath	Raipur, Burdwan	30.1.1971
169.	Kalyan Dutta	Calcutta	30.1.1971
170.	Ganesh Ghosh	Calcutta	„
171.	Deepak Mazumdar	Calcutta	15.1.1971
172.	Jogen Roy	Bansdroni, 24-Parganas	1.2.1971
173.	Benoy Ghosh	Barasat, 24-Parg.	2.2.1971
174.	Shyamal Mitra	Howrah	2.2.1971
175.	Paramananda Mukherjee	Howrah	„
176.	Subhendu Sen Gupta	Calcutta	3.2.1971
177.	Abani Bhattacharjee	Bansberia, Hooghly	3.2.1971
178.	Rabin Chakraborty	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	4.2.1971

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
179.	Nitai Bhowmik	Dum Dum	
		24-Parganas	4.2.1971
180.	Swapan Roy	} Calcutta	„
181.	Shib Shankar Singh		
182.	Golak Biswas	Mogra, Hooghly	„
183.	Anil Mali	Calcutta	5.2.1971
184.	Lal Chand	Calcutta	6.2.1971
185.	Bijoy Singh	Calcutta	„
186.	Asish Ghosh	„	„
187.	Sunil Mukherjee	Howrah	8.2.1971
188.	Sankar (Gopal) Bose	Calcutta	9.2.1971
189.	Dulal Roy	Calcutta	12.2.1971
190.	Manmohan Biswas	Calcutta	13.2.1971
191.	Manoj Biswas	Calcutta	14.2.1971
192.	Sushil Roy	Kadamtala, Howrah	14.2.1971
193.	Ashim Mukherjee	Barasat, 24-Parganas	16.2.1971
194.	Bijon Dey	Calcutta	17.2.1971
195.	Shyamal Guha	Barasat, 24-Parganas	18.2.1971
196.	Ramgati Pal	Durgapur	20.2.1971
197.	Tapan Kumar Lodh	Baranagar, 24-Parganas	22.2.1971
198.	Nimai Mondal	Haltu, 24-Pargs.	„
199.	Sankar Mullick	Belur, Howrah	23.2.1971
200.	Tarun Ghosh	Kalyani, Nadia	„
201.	Alok Ghosh	Calcutta	25.2.1971
202.	Dilip Das	Calcutta	27.2.1971
203.	Kanai Majumdar (Anil)	Baranagar, 24-Parg.	„

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
204.	Bipad Baran Banerjee	Katwa, Burdwan	18.2.1971
205.	Sunil Majumdar	Lillooah, Howrah	23.2.1971
206.	Keshab Putatunda	Noapara, 24-Pargs.	26.2.1971
207.	Shyamal Banerjee	Calcutta	2.3.1971
208.	Prasad Roy	Rajarhat, 24-Parganas	3.3.1971
209.	Ranjan Chowdhury	Siliguri, Darjeeling	„
210.	Sankar Sahu	Calcutta	4.3.1971
211.	Shyamal Dutta	„	5.3.1971
212.	Dhiren Chakraborty	Baranagar, 24-Pargs.	„
213.	Kartik Dey	Baidyabati, Hooghly	6.3.1971
214.	Montu Das	Barasat, 24-Pgs.	7.3.1971
215.	Saroj Halder	Calcutta	„
216.	Sudhanshu Kar Gupta	Barasat, 24-Pgs.	„
217.	Ranjit Chanda	Burnpur, Burdwan	7.3.1971
218.	Partha Das Gupta	Baje Shibpur, Howrah	„
219.	Arun Dutta	Burdwan	8.3.1971
220.	Swapan Samajpati	Baranagar, 24-Pargs.	„
221.	Gopal Nag	Baltikuri, Howrah	10.3.1971
222.	Rabi Bagchi	Calcutta	„
223.	Babulal Roy	Calcutta	„

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
224.	Gobindo Dey	Calcutta	12.3.1971
225.	Jugal Saha	Pyradanga, Nadia	12.3.1971
226.	Anil Shee	Krishnagar, Nadia	17.3.1971
227.	Kartik Mukherjee	Calcutta	18.3.1971
228.	Narayan Roy	Sheoraphuli, Hooghly	22.3.1971
229.	Sailen Bhattacharjee	Noapara, 24-Parganas	"
230.	Madhab Roy	Tiamari, Nadia	23.3.1971
231.	Robi Banerjee	Bally, Howrah	24.3.1971
232.	Manik Ganguli	Howrah	24.3.1971
233.	Jiban Das	Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri	"
234.	Kartik Pal	"	"
235.	Bithee Dey	Dum Dum 24-Pgs.	29.3.1971
236.	Jayanta Chakraborty	Calcutta	"
237.	Nizamuddin	Noapara, 24-Pgs.	31.3.1971
238.	Sattar Singh	Calcutta	31.3.1971
239.	Subodh Dey	Noapara, 24-Pgs.	"
240.	Lakshmi Nayak	Kalna, Burdwan	6.4.1971
241.	Santosh Bhattacharjee	Berhampore, Murshidabad	"
242.	Dinabandhu Bishayee	Dum Dum, 24-Parganas	7.4.1971
243.	Anjali Ghosh	Dum Dum 24-Parganas	8.4.1971
244.	Bulu Das	Calcutta	11.4.1971
245.	Amulya Dhara	Baidyabati, Hooghly	13.4.1971
246.	Mahendra Shao	} Falakata, Jalpaiguri	14.4.1971
247.	Somra Oraon		

Cry Halt to this Reign of Terror 77

Sl. No	Name	Name of Town or village	Date
248.	Subimal Dey	} Behala, 24-Parganas	14.4.1971
249.	Dilip Patra		
250.	Krishna Biswas	Burdwan	"
251.	Ashok Bhattacharya	Nibadhui 24-Parganas	15.4.1971
252.	Ajoy Ghosh	Bally, Howrah	"
253.	Madan Pal	Makhla, Hooghly	16.4.1971
254.	Gour Dasgupta	Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri	"
255.	Nirmal Ghosh	Calcutta	19.4.1971
256.	Bijoy Dubey	Calcutta	20.4.1971
257.	Dulal Ghosh	Bally, Howrah	17.4.1971
258.	Dulal Das	Calcutta	18.4.1971
259.	Bhavadish Roy	Burdwan	19.4.1971
260.	Manash Dey	Siliguri, Darjeeling	19.4.1971
261.	Nepal Mondal	Goragacha, 24-Parganas	19.4.1971
262.	Nirmal Kar	Calcutta	"
263.	Biswanath Ghosh	Durgapur	22.4.1971

Semi-Fascistic Terror in West Bengal

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in Calcutta from April 8 to 12, 1971

The following is the text of the resolution "On the Situation in West Bengal" adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from April 8 to 12, 1971 :

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes with grave concern that the Congress rulers, having failed to weaken and defeat our Party and the ULF in the elections, have hatched a diabolical plan to liquidate the democratic forces and have started implementing it by the naked use of police, the CRP, the military and anti-social murder gangs.

The plan includes indiscriminate arrests and tortures, regular combing operations by the CRP with the help of the army, and planned physical liquidation of leaders and organisers of the democratic forces by the police and non-official murder squads.

An integral part of the plan is to intensify the Goebblesian type of slander and hate campaign in order to cover up the criminal design. It poses a serious danger to the people of the whole country.

242 Comrades Killed

The Central Committee draws the attention of the people to the fact that since the conspiracy to break up the UF Government in West Bengal was put into effect, i.e. since March '70, the Congress rulers, through the President's rule administration in West Bengal, unleashed a semi-fascistic reign of terror in West

Bengal to crush the democratic movement and people's resistance and intensified it step by step. Thousands of CRP were brought in and posted as a permanent contingent to attack the people. They were used as shock forces to beat and torture the people. More than one lakh police, CRP and BSF personnel were mobilised against the people. More than twenty thousand were arrested and warrants of arrest issued against about one lakh people on framed up charges.

Failing to check the onward march of the people's movement, a plan was worked out to murder leaders and workers of the democratic movement. Degenerate Naxalites, Congressites and other anti-socials were encouraged and utilised for this purpose. Even before the elections were announced, i.e., by December 1970, 149 of our workers and sympathisers were thus murdered by the police or hired gangsters. It rose to 219 on the eve of the polling day and has since gone beyond the figure of 242. To cover up these activities, the campaign of hatred and falsehood was intensified accusing our Party of violent activities. The fact that mostly our workers were being murdered was deliberately suppressed.

The Central Committee notes that these atrocious attacks failed to suppress the democratic movement and hence the Congress rulers were reluctant to hold Assembly elections in West Bengal. When, ultimately, they were forced to agree to the elections being held, they did not restore civil liberties but intensified the reign of terror in their desperate attempt to inflict defeat on the democratic forces. Over and above more than one lakh police, the CRP etc., more than fifty thousand military personnel were brought in and posted all over the State. The military were used not for ensuring peaceful elections, but to help the CRP to create terror among the people and break people's resistance against goonda attacks. The campaign of murdering democratic workers was also intensified. During the short period of the election campaign, seventy of our workers were murdered.

Failing to terrorise the people even with such attacks, the ruling circles and their accomplices became more desperate and

planned to murder non-Marxist leaders like Hemanta Basu and accuse our Party in the Goebblesian way to intensify the hate campaign and confuse a section of the people so that the ULF can be defeated. Our Party, while refuting the malicious charge against us, openly expressed the doubt, and this doubt was corroborated by other sources, that some foreign imperialist agencies might have had a hand in the murder. But no probe was made. The murders of election candidates in Suri, Ukhra and Dum Dum, which were organised by the reactionary combine to sabotage elections and to create an anti-Marxist atmosphere, were similarly used to malign us. Though the police was biased in favour of the ruling Congress and a section of the police officers were directly involved in the conspiracy, yet our Party could in no way be implicated in the murders. Despite this the slander campaign was continued. Never in any country of parliamentary democracy and never in any State of our country were elections held in such a condition of semi-fascistic reign of terror and against such heavy odds.

Semi-Fascistic Terror

The Central Committee notes with pride that in spite of such brutal attacks and hate campaign the ruling Congress and their accomplices failed to defeat the ULF and our Party in the elections. On the other hand, the ULF and our Party emerged as the single biggest front and party with 123 MLAs in a House of 277 and with the biggest percentage of vote. The Congress rulers became more desperate. Violating all norms of parliamentary democracy and in utter disregard of the verdict of the people, the ULF was prevented from being called to form a Government. A conspiracy was hatched to forge a reactionary combination of all and sundry including the Muslim League and the Syndicate Congress and impose a subservient Ministry on the people.

Simultaneously, the reign of terror was intensified. Blanket orders under Section 144 was imposed all over the State. Curfew became a regular feature. Regular combing operations by the police and the military, both in towns and villages, and arrests, tortures and murders have become the order of the day.

A large number of our people are being daily arrested on the plea that some explosives have been found which in reality are absolute lies. Seldom in any country which claims to be a parliamentary democratic country, such terror attacks are organised even after a general election.

The Central Committee notes further that since the imposition of a reactionary coalition Ministry on the people on April 2, a diabolical plan to liquidate the democratic forces has been worked out. It was expected that immediately after the formation of the Ministry the Assembly will be summoned. Knowing fully well that even according to their own declarations, the Government has got a precarious majority, if at all, they have refused to call a session of the Assembly. Not only that, all avenues of expressing people's opinion have been totally blocked. The voice of the people is completely gagged by Section 144. Moreover, the CRP backed by the military have been let loose to intensify their terror attacks. Indiscriminate arrests and tortures are taking place. Murders of our leaders and workers have taken a more organised form. Within five days since the formation of the reactionary Government eight of our comrades including the respected leader of the teachers' movement, Comrade Santosh Bhattacharjee, have been murdered.

The Naxalites, the Chhatra parishad and other murder gangs that the Congress rulers and their hangers-on have themselves encouraged or organised and utilised against us, are sometimes working as a boomerang against them or are being used in their internal quarrels as in the case of the murder of Nepal Roy, MLA. But these are being used as excuses to further intensify their attacks on our Party and other democratic forces. Some Ministers are reported to have openly asked the police not to accuse the Naxalites or other anti-socials, but to implicate our Party and cadres in these cases. The Prime Minister herself is encouraging and justifying the murders of our comrades by repeating the old falsehood that it is we who started it.

The Central Committee has come to know from very reliable sources that a high-level plan has recently been worked out to

arrest within a short period thousands of our comrades including leaders and MLAs on false charges and to murder quite a number of them either in police lock-ups or on the way or get them murdered by gangsters. At same time, the CRP and the military will be used to create terror among the people by intensifying so-called combing operations in the name of arresting wanted persons. It has come to our knowledge that a good number of our MLAs will be removed either by arrests or murders before any Assembly session is called so that the reactionary combine can show an artificial majority for them in the Assembly. Incidents will be created and even murders will be organised so that they can be used as covers for such co-ordinated attacks. Already there are instances to show that this diabolical plan has been put under operation.

The Central Committee is of the considered view that it is no ordinary repression. It is nothing short of a desperate semi-fascistic plan of destroying democracy and of liquidating the democratic movement and its cadres. Even before the elections, some of the Central Congress leaders were reported to have been toying with the idea of creating a miniature Indonesia in West Bengal. They know that the pro-ruling Congress sweep as seen in the recent elections in our country except in three States, will not last long and the militant mass movement in West Bengal will help in radicalising the mass movement all over India and thus will mean a serious danger to the class rule of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. Hence standing on the crest of the pro-ruling Congress sweep the reactionary ruling circles have thought it opportune to translate their criminal dream of initiating a blood bath into reality. If this is allowed to materialise, it will mean the end of democracy and establishment of a military autocratic rule in our country.

The Central Committee warns the Central Congress Government as well as the West Bengal Government to stop before the precipice, discard the criminal plan and return to the path of democratic functioning. No brute force could ever suppress a people however big the sacrifices exacted from them. The valiant self-respecting people of West Bengal may

be forced to go through severe trials, but they will surely face them squarely. The people of other States cannot remain silent when this diabolical plan is carried out in West Bengal.

The Central Committee demands that the West Bengal Assembly be immediately called, the CRP and the military be immediately withdrawn, all arrested MLAs and people connected with workers', peasants' and democratic movements be immediately released, Section 144 and curfew be withdrawn and full civil liberties be restored. No encouragement must be given to gangster elements.

Campaign Against Repression

The Central Committee calls upon the people of West Bengal and all Party units here to understand the gravity of the situation and take urgent political organisational measures to meet it. It calls upon the people all over India and all our Party units to realise to danger arising out of the criminal activities of the ruling classes and organise a mass campaign in support of the above demands.

It appeals to the members and supporters of all parties and organisations who profess to stand by the people to realise what harm is being done by the leaders of the Right Communist Party and their friends who went to the length of joining with the Syndicate and with whose support the reactionary Congress led combine could come to power. It appeals to their members to raise their voice against the policy pursued by the leaders and against the semi-fascistic barbarity let loose in West Bengal and join the common struggle in support of the above-mentioned just demands.

The Central Committee calls on all Party units to observe the week from May 1 to 7, 1971, as a WEEK AGAINST RÉPRESSION IN WEST BENGAL and to take the facts of the semi-fascistic terror in the State through posters, demonstrations, meetings, etc., and draw the widest masses of people to protest against this terror and demand and immediate end to it.

On the Heroic Struggle of the People of Bangladesh

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in Calcutta from April 8 to 12, 1971.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its deep indignation at the wholesale massacre of tens of thousands of unarmed civilians of Bangladesh by the army of the military regime of Pakistan.

The people of Bangladesh had struggled for long years against the military regime, against its suppression of all democratic rights and civil liberties and for the transfer of power to the civilian elected Government. In the face of the huge upsurge of the people in both the wings of Pakistan for the transfer of power to a civilian elected Government, Yahya Khan, the military dictator, was forced to order election on the basis of adult suffrage.

Over 95 per cent of the voters of Bangladesh had cast their votes for the Awami League on the basis of a programme of a Federal State of Pakistan with complete autonomy for the five States comprising the Federation.

The Yahya regime, unwilling to accept the verdict of Bangladesh, launched an offensive against the people, unleashed terror and virtual genocide on the people of Bangladesh. Defenceless people have been bombed, innocents have been lined up against walls and shot dead in cold blood : the military regime has launched a total war on the people. Negotiations were used by the Pak military clique as a cover to unleash the offensive.

The people of Bangladesh rose to a man to fight against the attack of the military dictatorship, for democratic rights, with

whatever arms they could lay hands on, with the police and a section of the army joining their ranks. The heroism they are displaying, the sacrifices they are making in a sacred cause have added another glorious chapter to the history of people's revolts.

It was in these circumstances that the people of Bangladesh had established a provisional Government of Swadhin Bangladesh and are valiantly fighting the Pakistani army with whatever arms they are able to get and even with bare hands.

The responsibility for this situation squarely lies on the military regime of Pakistan.

The brutalities and mass killings resorted to by the army have few parallels in history.

Despite all this, the army has not been able to suppress the freedom fighters, who with the support of the entire people, are in control of the entire countryside and even some cities. More and more workers, peasants and other toiling sections of Bangladesh are coming into the forefront which ensures the success of the struggle.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) pays its tribute to the heroism of the people of Bangladesh and extends its wholehearted support to their struggle.

Worldwide criticism of the brutalities of the military regime on the unarmed people has not deterred it from continuing its terrorism and genocide.

The C.C notes that the Indian Parliament has expressed "its whole-hearted sympathy and support" to the struggle of the people of Bangladesh. But this expression of sympathy is not sufficient to meet the needs of the situation. The C.C demands of the Government of India to forthwith recognise the Provisional Government of Swadhin Bangladesh and render all material assistance to it so that they can withstand the onslaught of the army and defeat it.

The C.C, while welcoming the spontaneous support of all sections of the people of India to the valiant struggle for freedom and democracy of the people of Bangladesh, wants to make it clear that this can have real meaning only if it is based on democratic principles.

The C.C appeals to the democratic forces and people of India not to give encouragement to the chauvinistic slogans of certain reactionaries such as united Bengal, nor allow any slogans against the people of West Pakistan.

The C.C wants the people to realise that the struggle of the people of Bangladesh is a just and democratic struggle and against its ruling clique, and is not against the people of the western wing of Pakistan.

It is the military regime of Pakistan which over the last many years, suppressing all democratic demands and aspirations of different peoples of both wings of Pakistan and ultimately resorting to the genocidal attack on the people of Bangladesh that forced the people of Bangladesh to declare themselves independent of Pakistan. The unity of Pakistan could have been preserved on the basis of equality and democracy for all the units and peoples of both wings of Pakistan.

The C.C appeals to the toiling people of all units of the western wing of Pakistan to support the just struggle of the people of Bangladesh. This is in their own interest and will help in their own struggle for democracy and to put an end to the autocratic military regime.

The C.C also warns the people of Bangladesh to be aware of imperialist manoeuvres to take advantage of the situation.

The C.C appeals to all units to launch a massive campaign to make the Government of India accord recognition to the provisional Government of Bangladesh.

It appeals to them to collect aid, in the form of money and material for the suffering people of Bangladesh, and send the collections to the Solidarity and Aid Committee, whose Chairman is Comrade Jyoti Basu. The C.C calls upon all its units to observe April 25 as a solidarity day.

Black Day For West Bengal

Statement issued by the Secretariat of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M), in Calcutta, on April 2, 1971.

The Secretariat of the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on April 2, 1971 :

April 2, 1971 is a black day for the people of West Bengal when a reactionary coalition has been installed in office behind the back of the people.

Flouting the unmistakable anti-Congress verdict of the people, ruling Congress has conspired to combine not only with all sorts of reactionary elements, but also with those who have been unceremoniously thrown away by the people into the dustbin of history. It is a crude deception of the people to suggest that this reactionary combine enjoys the support of the majority of the people.

The support given by the Right Communists and their friends to this combine is nothing but a gross betrayal of the people's verdict.

Knowing fully well that the people will not tolerate this stealing into power by the Congress, the whole State has been virtually kept under siege by the CRP and the army and the voice of the people is kept gagged.

Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, April 11, 1971. CPI(M) candidates were victorious in 111 Assembly seats in the mid-term election in West Bengal in 1971 (and subsequently secured two more seats) and was the biggest Party in the State Assembly but, despite this fact, CPI(M) was not called by the Governor of West Bengal to form the State Government. The coalition Government formed in West Bengal in 1971 by the Right Communist Party-Bangla Congress-Indian National Congress combination was short lived.

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It was expected that the Assembly will immediately be summoned after the formation of the Ministry. But it is reported that an attempt is being made to postpone the session of the Assembly for some months in order to gain time before facing the legislators.

It is also evident that the reactionary combine wants to utilise the time to intensify the reign of terror and try to crush the people's movement by brute force. The people of West Bengal cannot take it lying down. We call upon them to raise their voice of protest in all possible ways, stand up against attacks and prepare themselves for greater sacrifices.

Review Of Post-Election Situation In Kerala

Kerala State Committee of CPI(M) reviewed the Post-Election situation in its meeting held in Thiruvananthapuram on March 20-22, 1971

A meeting of the Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was held on March 20, 21 and 22, Comrade E. K. Nayanar presiding. The meeting began with paying homage to Comrade G. Sukumaran Nair, President of the Vellarada Panchayat, who lost his life in a jeep accident during the election campaign for the Independent candidate in the Trivandrum constituency, Sri V. K. Krishna Menon.

The Committee expressed its gratitude to the voters of Kerala who, despite the alliance of the ruling front, misuse of power by them, the flow of money on a large scale, pressure of the Church hierarchy and other influential people, have shown that the CPI(M) is the biggest political party in the State and the Party and those who co-operated with it, constitute the biggest political alliance in the State.

The people of Kerala have thus given a new mandate to the Party to intensify the struggles against the new Kerala budget with its enhanced tax burdens on the people and to fight for the demands of the masses. The Committee was confident that those who worked along with the Party during the elections and those democrats whose illusions about the "progressive character of the Indira Congress" will be shattered soon under the impact of the attacks of the Central and State Governments will actively participate in these mass struggles.

Greetings to West Bengal & Tripura

The Committee greeted the voters of Tripura who gave both the seats to the Lok Sabha from there to the CPI(M) and the

voters of West Bengal who gave to the CPI(M) 20 of the 40 Lok Sabha seats and 111 of the 277 seats to which elections were held for the State Assembly and the hundreds of thousands of revolutionaries who worked untiringly for this victory of the Party.

The Committee expressed its indignation at the heinous attempts of the Central Congress Government and some political parties including the revisionists of West Bengal to keep the CPI(M), the largest party in the Assembly, out of office and bring back to office the Congress which has been rejected by the people of the State. The Committee expressed the confidence that the CPI(M) and the democratic forces in West Bengal would succeed in rallying the people in a big movement to defeat these moves against the best interest of the people of West Bengal and of Indian democracy.

The Central Committee of the Party will meet in April to review the results of the elections. In Kerala the District Committees of the Party will be meeting to review the election work in each constituency and examine the achievements and weaknesses of the Party during this work. Following these, the State Committee at its next meeting will make a detailed review of the elections.

Subject to such a detailed review, the Committee came to certain political conclusions with the material available so far. The Secretariat of the Committee has been asked to prepare a comprehensive political report including these conclusions and it has been decided to organise discussions at all levels in the Party on the basis of this report.

Since the election results have proved that the political line of all the parties which joined both the Indicate and the Syndicate fronts in the elections is wrong, the Committee was confident that the ranks and followers of these parties would be forced to make policy reappraisals. To facilitate this process, the Committee decided to conduct organised explanatory campaign on how to build up, in the post-election situation, a powerful democratic front in opposition to both the Congresses and the reactionary fronts under their leaderships.

Agitations and Struggles

The Committee also came to the conclusion that mere explanatory campaigns would not be enough to liberate these friends from the hold of the policies whose bankruptcy has already been proved. Only by organising agitations and struggles against the visible consequences of the anti-people path of building democratic unity through agitations and policies pursued by the Governments in the State and the Centre and by building mass unity transcending political loyalties in these struggles can a genuine democratic opposition movement be built up. The Committee hoped that all those who co-operated with the CPI(M) in the recent elections and the democrats who in the coming days will be ready to extend such co-operation will accept this path of building unity through struggles.

The Committee is convinced that any democratic party, group or individual who attempts to build such democratic unity through agitation and struggle cannot move forward even by an inch without facing the anti-struggle attitude of the Kerala and Central Governments.

In Kerala, the attitude of the Government towards the struggle of the State Government employees has made it clear that the Government that rules the State is a Congress Government under the formal leadership of a fake Communist which has no compunction in opposing the demands of workers and middle class employees that they should get dearness allowance to compensate the rise in prices.

Even when the strength their struggle forced the Government to negotiate and reach a settlement with the Government employees, its attitude to the strike of the coir workers which began before the Government employees' strike was one of total unconcern. It did not even go through the long-standing practice in this State, since the days of Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's dewanship, of convening conferences at the official level to work out a settlement in the coir workers' strike.

There is enough evidence that the Central Government is also planning to take a more severe attitude to struggles of the working people. The lock-out declared in the Indian Airlines is

an instance. This practice of declaring lock-outs in public sector concerns is a challenge to the working class movement.

The Committee has called on Party units at all levels to fight against this attitude of the Government and win the legitimate demands of the workers and middle class employees with a correct approach to building trade union unity. The Committee greeted the Government employees, coir workers, etc., who challenged the anti-worker policy of the Government, fought heroic struggles and won not inconsiderable benefits.

Work on Mass Fronts

The Committee reviewed the work of the kisan and agricultural workers' organisations in the context of the difficult problems facing the peasants and agricultural workers.

Court judgements setting aside the provisions of the Land Reforms Act one by one; the organised efforts and goonda attacks of landlords and big landowners to deprive the peasants and agricultural workers of their rights even where these rights have not been taken away by court judgements; the illegal activities of the police and other authorities to help these big landed interests; the use of Sections 107 and 145 on an unprecedentedly large scale against workers of kisan and agricultural labour organisations—all this has created a really explosive situation in the rural areas. In this background the Committee examined in detail the question of how to develop the movements of the peasants and agricultural workers and laid down concrete programmes for the same.

The Party is of the view that there is nothing common between the utterances of the ruling front leaders regarding the problems of students and youth and their actual practice. The policies of the ruling parties far from solving the problem of unemployment only intensify it and the Committee decided to make organised efforts to convince the student and youth masses that as long as the policy of building capitalism in collaboration with foreign monopolists and in alliance with the landed interests continued, this problem of unemployment would only get intensified.

The Committee reviewed the situation in the women's movement and noted with concern the humiliation to which women of the toiling sections are subjected under the Mini-Front-Congress rule. Not only are women participating in struggles filthily abused, the police have been unleashed even to commit rape on them.

The committee was proud that the cadre of the women's movement have been able to face all this courageously and stand by the side of the men in the struggle for their demands and also for removal of the disabilities which they suffer as women. The Committee wanted Party units at all levels to extend all co-operation and support to the cadre of the women's movement in their work.

The Committee after examining the role of the Party in the agitations and struggles on various fronts decided to formulate guidelines to make them more effective and to conduct Party schools to help the Party cadre to implement these guidelines.

Disciplinary Actions

The Committee examined the public statement of A. V. Aryan that he will not work for any candidate in the Lok Sabha election, the decision to suspend him pending enquiry on the basis that his statement was in effect opposition to the Party and the letter he wrote justifying this action. The Committee also took into account that he had earlier openly said he was not prepared to work under the leadership of committees duly elected under the Party Constitution. On the basis of all this, the Committee decided to expel him from the Party.

The Committee also went through the decision of the Palghat District Committee expelling E. R. Chandran who was a member of the D. C. and two others and their appeal against the decision. The Committee rejected the appeal holding that the D. C.'s decision was entirely correct.

CPI(M) On Nationalisation Of General Insurance

**Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in
Calcutta on May, 14, 1971**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on May 14, 1971 :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the Central Government's Ordinance nationalising general insurance, as a small step, that would go to help to check the power of individual monopolists, if properly utilised. But our experience with the nationalisation of the life insurance, the Imperial Bank and 14 big banks, accompanied with paying tens of crores of rupees as compensation, and constituting boards with the representatives of monopolists and their mode of functioning which in the main has been serving the interests of the monopolists, makes it necessary to warn the democratic forces to be on their guard. They must continue their struggle and mobilisation, demanding nationalisation, of all monopolist concerns, both foreign and Indian, without compensation and for fundamental changes in the Constitution and for setting up a really people's Government in place of the present big bourgeois landlord Congress Government headed by Indira Gandhi Congress.

CPI(M) Memorandum To The Planning Commission

Submitted on June 25, 1971

Comrade A. K. Gopalan, on behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), submitted a memorandum containing the Party's proposals and policies to the Planning Commission on June 25, 1971 at the invitation of the Commission. The other members of the CPI(M) delegation were : Comrades Samar Mukherjee, M. K. Krishnan, Dinen Bhattacharyya, Mathew Kurien, Bijoy Modak and Jyotirmoy Basu. Planning Minister C. Subramaniam and Minister of State for Planning Mohan Dharia were present.

The following is the text of the CPI(M)'s memorandum :

We are again engaged in a process of revising the Fourth Five-Year Plan, changing horses in midstream. The fact that the Government of India and the Planning Commission are thinking of changing the development strategies and the priorities underlying the Fourth Five-Year Plan reveals the serious crisis in the whole planning process—a process which has involved many agonising reappraisals ever since 1966. In fact, this is the result of the general economic doldrum the country finds itself in—a result brought about in no small measure by the wrong economic policies pursued by the Government of India during the last twentyfour years of Independence.

The root of the crisis in the planning process lies in the fact that policies pursued have been grossly inadequate to fulfil the main objective of planning—the optimum use of the material and human resources of the country for the most rapid

industrialisation of the economy and modernisation of all fields of socio-economic activity with a view to ensuring higher standards of living for the toiling people consistent with distributive justice.

At the meeting of the National Development Council, when "The Approach" document of the Planning Commission was discussed, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, then Chief Minister of Kerala, had expressed his disagreement with the general approach and the policies initiated by the Planning Commission and the Government of India. He had pointed out that, if the country is to get out of the difficulties into which it has fallen, the basic policies which have so far been pursued and which have been the guiding lines for the Planning Commission will have to be reserved. He had submitted a detailed note elaborating his "Critique of the Planning Commission's Approach to the Fourth Five-Year Plan", which was circulated to all members of the National Development Council.

Moreover, at the time of the finalisation of the revised Fourth Plan in March 1969, the Kerala State Planning Board under the chairmanship of E. M. S. Namboodiripad had submitted a lengthy document entitled "Alternate Policies for the Fourth Five-Year Plan". We consider that the alternative policies embodied in this document should be the basis for a meaningful revision of the Fourth Five-Year Plan.

The failure of the developmental effort in India is the failure, primarily, of political leadership. It is futile to talk of 'planning', if it is not Socialist planning. In fact, the two terms are indivisible. The 'mixed economy' which the Government proclaims as its basic policy ensures the failure of any genuine planning. It becomes a cover for developing capitalism—which is antithetical to a planned economy.

Whereas all the Socialist countries that have adopted planning are making rapid strides in economic development, why is our economy stagnating ? If the Socialist countries could have an average annual rate of growth 7.4 per cent in the period 1966-69 it is because of their Socialist planned economies. In India, it is not planning that has failed, but the hotch-potch that goes

by the name of planning. The bankruptcy of our so-called 'third path' is to blame for our failure on the economic front.

Two decades of planning has resulted in mounting poverty, chronic unemployment, crippling prices, industrial stagnation and foreign dependence. We have yet to see any signs of change from these destructive policies pursued by the Government. The only sections of the people who have benefited from such policies have been the monopolists and the landlords, which speaks volumes for the class character of the Indian Government.

The result of these blatant class policies is that the basic goal of achieving the minimum standard of living is unattainable. The goal of doubling the per capita income of 1950-1951, originally proposed in the First Plan to be achieved in twentyseven years, that is, in 1977, has been postponed again in the uncertainties engulfing the Fourth Plan. Now it will take more than fiftyfive years from 1950-51 to attain the objective of doubling the per capita real income in India. The burdens on the people have been increased systematically, impoverishing them while the big monopolists and landlords have flourished, thanks to the Government's economic policies. On all fronts of the economy, two decades of "mixed economy planning" has resulted only in the strengthening of the exploiting classes and greater misery for the working people. In all sectors, we see lop-sided development, distorted perspectives and meagre results—characteristic of capitalist development.

Agriculture and Food Policy

The general crisis in the economy has its roots also in the failure to implement land reforms and to curb the inequalities in the rural sector. The failure of land reforms and the caricature of it in implementation require no comment except to quote the Home Ministry Report : "No fixity of tenure for eightyone per cent of the tenants. About eightytwo per cent of the total number of tenants mainly in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Bihar, Haryana and West Bengal do not enjoy fixity of tenure". As for agricultural labour : "The

condition of agricultural labour has not changed materially, and in some respect has worsened.”

After two decades of planning the number of people living under the poverty line has increased from fiftytwo per cent of the rural population in 1960-61 to seventy per cent of the rural population in 1967-68. This shows the dismal failure on the agrarian front and the landlord-oriented policies of the Government. The concentration of land remains intact : seventysix per cent of the rural households own only nineteen per cent of the cropped area, whereas the upper 2.5 per cent of the rural households own twentyeight per cent of the cropped area. With the advent of the ‘green revolution’ and the ‘package programme’ with its emphasis on the irrigated areas, the disparities have dramatically widened leading to new social tensions and class conflict. Unless the concentration in land is removed, and land reforms are implemented and the surplus land is distributed to the landless, the problem of agricultural landless and unemployed will continue to mount negating any development in the agrarian sector.

The failure on the food front to make the country self-sufficient reveals the hollowness of the exaggerated claims made on behalf of the ‘green revolution.’ The Government expects to do away with concessional food import by the end of 1971 or at the latest 1972, but the target visualised for the Fourth Plan of annual growth in food production of 5.5 to 6 per cent, even if achieved, will be inadequate. It will require a growth rate of 7.9 per cent in the Fourth Plan. The Plan estimate appears unattainable and the higher growth rate of 7.9 per cent impossible. Unless there are radical changes in the entire range of socio-economic and political policies there is no hope for development.

The failure to release the tremendous potential for growth in the agrarian sector should be squarely blamed on the Government. To rectify the situation we suggest the following :

1. Radical ceiling on landholdings leaving as much land as a family with a plough unit and occasional wage labour can cultivate personally and distribution of the surplus to the agricultural poor and landless labour.

2. All cultivable waste land should be distributed to agricultural poor and landless labour.
3. Strictly enact and enforce laws preventing every kind of eviction and all kinds of benami cultivation.
4. Guarantee irrigation, seeds, pesticides, implements and other inputs to the small and medium peasants.
5. Supply of agricultural machinery on co-operative basis or State auspices.
6. On this basis there should be encouragement and assistance for Mutual Aid and co-operative forms of agricultural production.
7. Abolition of debt burden of agricultural labourers and poor peasants and reduction of debt burden of poor peasantry and the provision of adequate credit facilities to them.
8. Fixing of fair wages for agricultural labour and guarantee of employment throughout the year or unemployment relief.
9. Immediate allocation of house-sites in the rural areas for all agricultural landless and poor peasants.

Industrial Policy

It is one of the stated aims of the Plan to modernise our economy by rapid industrialisation so that our country can break the grip of backwardness, dependence, unemployment and poverty. Yet in the industrial policies of the Government, we see a deliberate move to defeat this purpose. By strengthening the monopolists the Government has vitiated any hope for rational economic power in the hands of the present system. The concentration of economic power in the hands of 75 Big Business houses has been adequately documented.

Despite the Government's oft-repeated claims to the contrary, the power of these houses has grown. The proportion of assets of the 75 business houses to that of all the non-Government and non-banking sectors increased from 46.9 per cent in 1963-64 to 53.8 per cent in 1967-68. Even after the elections the

Government has dispersed licences to the Birlas, Tatas, Mafatlals, etc., in glaring contradiction to the Government's anti-monopoly professions.

The system of licensing which favours the Big Business houses at the expenses of the small businessmen has led to tremendous increase in the assets of the monopolists. The Birlas in 1963-64 had assets worth Rs. 290 crores and in 1966-67 it totalled Rs. 510 crores, an increase of Rs. 220 crores in three years. Presumably the Planning Commission has been a willing partner in such diabolic ventures, or they were asked by the political power at the Centre to sign on the dotted line.

Given this systematic encouragement to monopolies, the industrial policy of the Government remains a mockery. The rule of the public sector is reduced to that of a tool working in the interests of the private sector.

We demand that—

1. All big enterprises owned by any of the 75 monopoly houses listed by the Monopolies Enquiry Commission be immediately nationalised without compensation.
2. An active policy of encouragement of medium and small-scale entrepreneurs and industrial co-operatives should be implemented.
3. The Central Government should provide assistance to the State Governments for taking over factories and mills closed or threatening closure, and to work them as public undertakings.
4. A policy of rapid industrialisation must be formulated with adequate emphasis on all products, old and new, that form the base of industrial advance through forward planning on future technology in regard to supply of raw materials and capital goods, the new industrial sector must depend on the country's own resources to the maximum possible extent.
5. Integration of up-to-date factories with the backward and traditional industries so as to guarantee employment and minimum national wage. The losses of the backward sector should be borne by the most profit-making sectors.

Labour Policy

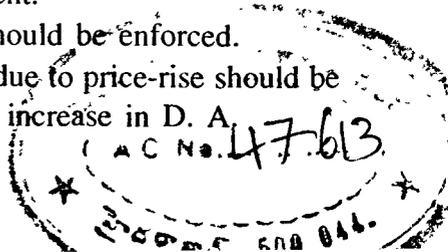
The Government now talks in terms of wage-freeze and linking wages to productivity. This reveals its anti-working class bias. Increasingly, workers' strikes are being repressed with brutal force as in the case of the Durgapur strike, where the CRP and CISF were unleashed on the workers. The repressive apparatus in the shape of CRP and CISF are being expanded (the budget recently allocated an additional sum of Rs. 9.5 crores for CRP) and utilised to curb working class militancy.

On the other hand, the legitimate rights of the workers and their unions are ignored. Collective bargaining of trade unions with managements and the democratisation of the entire management of the public sector and social security schemes remain to be implemented. The standard of living of the workers is continuously falling with the decrease in their real wages. The wholesale price index was 100 in 1959-60 and it stood at 202 in June 1971. The recent budget will further increase the cost of living by 6.5 to seven per cent, according to an *Economic Times*' survey.

With the faulty policies on the industrial front, many mills are closing down and industries like coir, cashew and handloom are gravely affected. Thousands of workers have been thrown into the streets by such closures and the managements are allowed to continue their exploitation and profiteering in disregard of their efficient management and production.

We propose the following :

1. The right to collective bargaining and the right of workers to strike.
2. Ban all lock-outs and closures of factories.
3. Trade unions to be recognised on the basis of secret ballot by all workers employed, the minority unions being given proportionate representation in negotiations with employers and Government.
4. Need-based minimum wage should be enforced.
5. Erosion of wages and salaries due to price-rise should be compensated automatically by increase in D. A.



6. Repeal of all anti-labour laws and change in the attitude to labour on the part of the Government.

Employment Creation and Unemployment Relief

After every Plan, unemployment has been increasing at an alarming rate and this has aggravated the economic crisis. This problem requires a prompt solution :

1. Already we have made a series of suggestions to revive the Indian economy both in the industrial and agrarian sectors which will guarantee existing employment and provide new job opportunities.

2. Till these policies are fully realised and unemployment eradicated, large-scale public works should be undertaken by the Government, so as to provide adequate employment. Works such as irrigation, roads, construction of houses, schools and hospitals and other public utility works should be launched.

3. There should be full utilisation of man-power planning covering both skilled and unskilled and the immediate formulation of a co-ordinated man-power planning.

The unemployment problem cannot be solved in the present way by allocating Rs. 50 crores which is thinly dispersed all over the country. This is only tinkering with the problem. While these crash measures against unemployment are being initiated, urgent steps to be taken to provide unemployment relief and a scheme of unemployment insurance should also be adopted.

Health and Social Service

1. The whole health services should be nationalised and medical facilities made available to all citizens.

2. Steps should be taken to improve the doctors and nurses ratio to the total population to one in 3,000.

3. Reverse the policy of reducing admission to the medical and nursing professions and provide short-term course of one or two years in medicine. Also there should be further opportunities to study after this short course.

4. Start co-operative medical facilities for doctors and this should be particularly concentrated in rural areas.
5. Guarantee of old age pensions is a necessity which should find a place in the Plan.
6. Sickness benefits should be introduced.

Education

The educational system reflects the stagnation and disorder in the country in general. There is no rational, scientific, national policy of education. The increasing student unrest reflects the broad discontent of the student community regarding the anachronistic and outmoded system existing in our schools and universities. The stress at present is on university education. Only scant attention is paid to the crucial field of elementary system of education. The syllabi and contents of the courses reflect the colonial legacies and is permeated with imperialistic values. The role of PL 480 money and the financial assistance given by various American private foundations in our education and its infiltration to virtually every institution of higher education reflects the dependency on American aid and influence.

Even though we had planned to impart elementary education to every child up to the age of 14 by 1961, even now we have not reached anywhere near the target. Not only that, a tendency has been growing to divert most of the available material resources for running certain 'model' schools and special universities which cater mainly to the children of the upper strata of the society.

The number of illiterates is increasing every year. It is estimated that in absolute number there are more illiterates in India in 1970 than the total population of India on the eve of Independence. Our dismal failure in this sphere becomes all the more evident when we find that in China and Cuba illiteracy has been totally eradicated.

Therefore, we demand that the following changes be made in the educational plan :

1. Give primary education the topmost priority and give every child up to the age of 14 primary education. This target should be achieved within a period of five years. Therefore, schools should be opened in every village up to the eighth class immediately.
2. After the child completes this course till the age of 16 he should be trained in vocational schools part-time studying and part-time learning his vocation for which he should be paid remuneration.
3. The State must take full financial and other responsibility to train all children and fix them in some job or profession by the time they complete or reach the age of 16. Even the children who take up a job or profession should be helped to complete their studies up to the standard in secondary education.
4. All primary, secondary and college education should be run by the State. Any minority or denominational schools are to be allowed provided they are run at their own expenses.
5. Steps should be taken to eliminate all American finance and influence in education which hampers the development of an independent educational policy.

Centre-State Relations

The present system of Centre-State relations should be changed to allow for the country to mobilise its total potential, prevent regional imbalances and provide a more democratic framework for the country's development.

The Centre's revenue receipts have shown a marked increase during the last two decades compared to the current revenues of all the States.

Parallel to this concentration of power at the Centre, the country is suffering from the uneven development of the various regions which is characteristic of the development of capitalism. The growing disparities in income levels between States and regions and the neglect of problems connected with tribal and backward areas have led to increasing tensions and obstacles to rapid development.

Therefore, it is imperative that 75 per cent of the revenues collected by the Centre should be allocated to the States through a States' pool. Similarly, certain subjects should be transferred from the Central and Concurrent Lists to the States List (See Appendix). Only this will ensure adequate powers for the States and provide for a balanced development.

The Industrial Licensing Policy of the Government should be directed in such a way that private sector investments are channelled to less developed regions with a view to reducing regional imbalances. In decisions of location of Central sector investments, the Government of India and the Planning Commission should not be guided merely by static concepts of mission should not be guided merely by static concepts of locational principles; the location of such projects should be used as a lever for reducing regional imbalances even if it means a slight deviation from optimality at the national level.

In continuing their class policies, the Government instead of mobilising internal resources by nationalising foreign enterprises and certain big monopolies and dispossessing the princes and landlords of their ill-gotten wealth, has been leaning more and more on the Western imperialist Powers for providing the resources which actually go to strengthen these monopolist and semi-feudal classes in India.

Private Foreign Capital and Collaboration

The recent years have witnessed a rapid increase in foreign capital investments in the private sector. The number of foreign collaborations has dramatically increased in the industrial sector and it is now 3,191. Simultaneously, foreign aid has increased from Rs. 32 crores in 1950-51 to Rs. 9,444 crores by the end of March 1970. Foreign private capital invested in industry amounts to well over Rs. 1,000 crores.

Despite the tall talk of "self-reliance" the Government is busy with the policy of "more dependence to get rid of dependence". Every year now we repatriate profits, dividends, royalties, etc., of the order of Rs. 200 crores abroad and to this must be added the figure of Rs. 450 crores which goes for *debt servicing*.

This increasing dependence on foreign resources and the danger to our economic independence can only be wiped out by the following measures :

1. Cancel all agreements of non-financial collaborations between the Indian and foreign monopolists.
2. Foreign financial collaborators must be divested of all controlling powers immediately, while negotiations are made for gradual repayment of their actual financial contribution according to a realistic criterion.
3. Declare a moratorium on export of profits and repatriation of foreign private capital, while negotiating for the rescheduling payments of past loans, and also for reduction of interest rates on loans.
4. Withdraw from the International Patents Convention and make all technical know-how available inside the country accessible to all on the payment of a relatively small fee to a central agency.
5. Put a complete ban which must be enforced on the exports of surplus capital by the Indian monopolists in the form of 'joint ventures', etc.
6. Enforce a ban on import of consultancy services and on projects handled by foreigners on a turn-key basis.

Crisis in Resource Mobilisation

This crisis that exists in resource mobilisation has led the Government to mortgage our future to foreign imperialist Powers. Domestic savings which increased from 8.5 per cent to 11.5 per cent have slumped to 6.4 per cent. On the other hand, our foreign debt now stands at Rs. 7,000 crores. Taxation as a means of squeezing the poor continues to increase as witnessed in the latest budget. Indirect taxation continues to increase whereas direct taxation diminishes. In the recent budget direct taxation was only 27 per cent and indirect 73 per cent. The inability to raise resources makes the Government heap further burdens on the common man. The failure to nationalise monopoly companies, both Indian and foreign, and to mop up the profits, the failure to put a ceiling on urban property and the

failure to limit incomes and expenditures of individuals and families, etc., is the root cause of the failure to mobilise resources. Instead the Government resorts to gimmicks like the abolition of privy purses with heavy compensation which defeats the aim of the measure. For an effective domestic resource mobilisation, the following measures have to be immediately implemented :

1. Abolish privy purses without compensation and stop payment of compensation to landlords and big capitalists.
2. Ceiling on incomes.
3. End deficit financing which transfers value from the toiling masses to propertied classes.
4. Rigorous tax enforcement and deterrent punishment to tax-evaders and corrupt officers.
5. Cut down defence expenditure by 50 per cent and develop a people's militia equipped and trained with arms composed of citizens who can be used in times of emergencies and war.

It is only if all the above measures are immediately effected that this crisis will come near solution. But the Government avoids any measure which remotely affects the interests of the richer sections of society and which might lead to a change of the present socio-economic structure.

Planning and Democracy

To make planning effective on the economic front, there should be wide-ranging measures to make our society more democratic. Unless the people's co-operation can be voluntarily elicited (a factor conspicuously absent in the past), the plans can never be effectively implemented. For this we demand the following steps :

1. There should be an immediate end to the use of repressive laws and regulations like the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Sections 144, 107, 109, 151, 153, etc. The use of the police and military to crush the democratic movement will have to be stopped.

2. Immediate radical amendment of the basic tenets of the Constitution to facilitate radical socio-economic legislation.
3. A democratic language policy consisting of the immediate replacement of English by the regional language and the medium of instruction; complete equality of all regional languages with none of them considered as a superior 'national' language.
4. The principle of secularism should be rigorously put into practice, with firm action against communal organisations and riots. Energetic measures to eliminate caste domination.
5. Protection of minorities and eradication of untouchability and upliftment of tribal and scheduled caste people.

Unless the above socio-political measures are implemented urgently, real planning will remain elusive.

The goal of planning in India should be for a Socialist, democratic and independent India. Nothing in the recent policy pronouncements or measures taken by the Government indicate a step towards this goal. This Government remain impervious to the basic aspirations of the people of India. Unless these proposals are adopted there will be no economic advance in the Fourth Five-Year Plan.

APPENDIX

Change In the Lists of Seventh Schedule

(55) In List I of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India : *Amendments* :

List 1. *Item 5.* And at the end, the words :

Excluding small arms and ammunition and explosives necessary for them. (In the State list add : Small arms and ammunition and explosives necessary for them.)

Item 7. To be formulated as follows : Armament industries

Item 9. Preventive Detention of alien subjects and enemy personnel and persons subjected to such definition.

Item 32. Omit the words “save in so far as Parliament by law otherwise provides”.

Item 43 and 44 : Reformulate both as one as follows :
Incorporation, regulation and winding up of corporations whether trading or not, including banking, insurance and financial corporations with objects not confined to any State but not including co-operative societies and universities.

Item 52. Industries, that can be developed only on the basis of raw material of more than one State, or on the basis of *inter-State Corporation and large-scale industries* requiring an outlay of more than 100 crores.

Item 53. Omit the words “other liquids and substances declared by Parliament by law to be dangerously inflammable.”

Omit items 54, 55, 58, 60, 70 in the words “all India services”; 76, 92 and 97.

(56) In List III of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India : the following entries namely :

3, 4, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 31, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 46, shall be omitted.

In amendment item 38 : Electricity—production and distribution involving more than one State.

Amendment 57. In List II of Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India, add the following entries :

1. Small arms, ammunition and explosives necessary for them.
2. a. All other industries that do not fall under item 7 and 52 of List I.
b. Plantations.
3. Regulation of mines and mineral development (item 54 of List I).
4. Regulation of labour and safety in mines and oilfields (item 55 of List I).
5. Manufacture, supply and distribution of salt—item 58 of List I.

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6. Sanctioning of Cinematograph film exhibition—item 60 of List I.
7. Taxes on the sale or purchase of newspapers and on advertisements publications—item 92.
8. Any other matter not enumerated in List I and List III including any tax not mentioned in either of these Lists—item 97.
9. *Amend items 23, 24, 26, 27, 33, in the light of amendments of these clauses in List I and III.*
10. *Add items 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 31, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 46, from List III.*

Item 38. Electricity—production and distribution of which within a particular State.

Statements of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)*

Adopted at the meeting of Polit Bureau in Coimbatore
from June 15 to 19, 1971

I. Defeat The Black Act

The P. B. of the C. C. of the CPI(M) condemns the enactment of the Preventive Detention Act under the new name of Internal Security Act, authorising the detention without trial of any person, thus trampling underfoot elementary democratic rights and civil liberties.

The Indira Gandhi Government had to abandon its attempt to extend the life of the old P.D. Act last year because it could not carry the Bill through the then Parliament in the teeth of opposition from all Opposition parties.

The use of the P.D. Act when it was on the Statute Book from 1950 and of the Defence of India Rules had amply demonstrated that it was used to suppress the rising opposition to the anti-people policies that the Government was pursuing. Thousands of leaders and workers of the democratic Opposition parties including MLAs and even leaders of Opposition in the legislatures were kept under detention without trial. In Kerala the Leader of the Opposition was detained just on the eve of a no-confidence motion against the Government. In 1965, on the eve of the elections to the Assembly in Kerala, almost all the candidates of the first party in the State were detained in jail thus preventing them from carrying on the election propaganda against the ruling Congress. Moreover, during this period thousands of leaders and workers of the trade unions, kisan and other democratic movements were thrown in jail solely with the object of preventing the working class, peasants and other

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, June 27, 1971.

democratic sections of the people from fighting against the Government's anti-people, pro-monopolist and pro-landlord policies. Thousands of innocent people belonging to the minority communities were also detained without trial. Today, also, during the last few months, in West Bengal under similar Acts, hundreds of workers of the trade union and kisan movements and of the CPI(M), the first party in State, have been detained.

It is not without significance that the Indira Gandhi Government within two months of its coming to power with a large majority, hastened to enact this law by means of an Ordinance. It only shows that its slogans of 'garibi hatao' and fight against monopolists raised during the election campaign were only to hoodwink the people and it has no intention of implementing its promises. The Budget shows that the Government is going to pursue the same old anti-people, pro-monopolist, pro-landlord policies of the undivided Congress Party. Knowing full well that the common mass of people will rise in militant struggles against these policies, the Government is arming itself with new powers to suppress these democratic struggles that are bound to break out.

The P. B. is glad that even those parties that supported the Indira Congress during the last elections have opposed the measure.

The P. B. appeals to all democratic parties, mass organisations, to all democrats and lovers of civil liberties to build a powerful united mass movement against this draconian Act and compel its repeal.

II. Organise Protests Against Budget

The Railway and General Budgets presented to Parliament last month show that the present Government headed by Indira Gandhi is pursuing the same policies as were pursued by the undivided Congress—the policies of heaping heavy burdens of taxation on the common people and resorting to deficit financing on a large scale.

Most of the additional burdens of taxation imposed in the two Budgets fall on the common people. They tend to raise the prices not only of the particular commodities which are taxed but by increasing the cost of producer goods and of transport rates, raise the general price-level itself. Already, immediately after the Budget proposals were announced, prices of most commodities of common consumption have risen. Even the price of sugar has risen.

In the coming months when deficit financing will become a reality, prices will rise still more. The Central Government has provided for Rs. 220 crores of deficit financing in its Budget. Added as this is to the deficits that have already been provided for in the State Budgets, deficit financing by the Central and State Governments together would, this year, amount to over Rs. 400 crores, according to Budget estimates.

Experience has amply demonstrated that the actual deficits at the end of the year would far exceed the Budget estimates. It is significant to note that the deficit of Rs. 850 crores provided for the five years of the Fourth Plan has already been reached in the first two years of 1968-69 and 1969-70.

The consequences of this heavy dose of taxation and deficit financing will be that, far from holding the price-line, as the leaders of the Government claim to be their policy, general cost of living will continue to rise still further so that the general living standards of the common people will sharply fall, unless it is fully neutralised by the grant of D.A. in proportion to the rise in cost of living. It is, therefore, inevitable that the working class and salaried employees would be forced to resort to various forms of direct action, in order to defend their living standards. The leaders of the Government, however, have made it clear that they will not countenance any such struggle. The demand made by them on the working class and the middle class employees that any increase in the earnings should be related to increase in productivity at the very time when they themselves have actively released inflationary forces, is nothing but an attempt to impose a cut in the earnings of workers and salaried employees.

The taxation and deficit financing, however, impose burdens on other sections of the people as well. Equally affected are the peasants and other sections of owners of small property. For, they are getting a smaller share of the earnings which they make on productive work, since the larger share goes by way of either tax or through higher cost of living. The price of many of the producer goods which they need for carrying on their productive activity will also go up. The budgetary policies are thus affecting the entire working people.

While the bulk of the new imposts have been by way of indirect taxation, it is significant that the corporate sector has been left almost untouched. It is no wonder that the monopolists and their Press have welcomed the Budget.

It is, therefore, not surprising that almost all parties which before the mid-term elections to Parliament had assured the people that the victory of Indira Gandhi's Congress in the elections would mean firm measures against monopolists, have been forced to declare that the new Budget dashed their hopes. Voices of protest have also been raised within the ranks of the ruling party itself.

The P.B. hopes that this resentment against the new Budgets will find concrete expression in widespread demonstrations of protest. The P.B. calls upon all Party units to organise meetings, demonstrations and other forms of protest against these policies either jointly with other democratic parties and elements wherever possible or independently. The Party calls upon all its units to popularise the basic economic policies advocated by the Party which alone would help the evolution of such policies of finding resources for national development as would not heap heavy burdens on the common people.

III. Call for United T.U. Action

The P.B. of the C.C. of the CPI(M) congratulates the representatives of the all-India Trade Union Centres and all-India Federations of trade unions, who categorically and unequivocally rejected the Government's proposals at a conference on May 20 and 21, for a wage-freeze and no strike.

They further nailed down the propaganda of the employers and Government that the crisis in the industrial sector is due to man-days lost on account of the struggles of the working class as a slander and sharply pointed out that closure of large number of factories, gross under-utilisation of capacity in both the public and private sectors are the direct results of the basic economic policies of the Government for which the workers are in no way responsible.

The P.B. welcomes the declaration of the representatives of the Trade Union Centres and Federations held on May 18 and 19 in Delhi and appreciates the fact that they have been able to draw up a common platform. It also notes that the meeting has appealed to the trade unions to rally the working class round this programme and strive for united trade union action.

The Budget of the Government which was presented subsequent to the conference which imposes heavy burdens on the common people, the enactment of the Internal Security Act in the teeth of opposition of the entire T.U. movement and Opposition parties, the declaration of the Government that no increase in D.A. would be given to the Central Government employees in spite of the sharp rise in prices after the Budget, the reduction of D.A. by Rs. 12 per month of the Engineering workers of West Bengal, the clamour of the Bombay Millowners' Association for freezing D.A. at the existing level—all these show that the Government and the employers are determined on the course of heavy attacks on the living standards of the working class and the common people. United action has, therefore, become an urgent necessity.

The P.B. hopes that the trade union leaders will lose no time in devising ways of united trade union action against these attacks at the local, regional, State and all-India levels.

IV. On Bangladesh

Nearly three months have passed since the people of Bangladesh rose in revolt against the military regime of Yahya Khan and asserted their right to freedom and democracy. Braving the most bestial atrocities known to history, they are

still courageously fighting against many odds. Yahya Khan has failed to find enough traitors to install a puppet regime in Bangladesh and thus fool the people of the world.

The C.C. of the CPI(M) in the resolution adopted in April had demanded that the Government “forthwith recognise Swadhin Bangladesh and render all assistance to it, so that they can withstand the onslaught of the army and defeat it.”

It made it clear that “the struggle of the people of Bangladesh is a just and democratic struggle and against its ruling clique, and not against the people of the western wing of Pakistan”. It further pointed out that “it is the military regime of Pakistan which, over the last many years, was suppressing all democratic demands and aspirations of the people of both wings of Pakistan and ultimately resorting to the genocidal attack on the people of Bangladesh. That forced the people of Bangladesh to declare themselves independent of Pakistan. The unity of Pakistan could have been preserved on the basis of equality and democracy for all the units and peoples of both wings of Pakistan”.

It had also appealed to the “toiling people of all units of the western wing of Pakistan to support the just struggle of the people of Bangladesh” pointing out that “this is in their own interest and will help in their own struggle for democracy and to put an end to the autocratic military regime”.

Our stand, thus, has nothing in common but, on the contrary, is diametrically opposed to that of certain reactionary sections in India stemming from their hatred of Pakistan. That is why the C.C. had warned the democratic people of India against giving “encouragement to the chauvinistic slogans of certain reactionaries such as a united Bengal” and against “any slogans against the people of West Pakistan”.

The P.B. of the C.C. of CPI(M) condemns the Government of India for the fact that despite expressing copious sympathy for the struggle of the people of Bangladesh, and promising to consider the question of recognition of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh, it has resiled on the question of recognition and is harping on the question of finding a political

solution. It has evidently done so, under pressure from the USA and certain other quarters.

This failure to recognise the Provisional Government and render all material assistance had tremendously hampered the struggle of the people of Bangladesh and led to the migration of over five million people of Bangladesh into India as refugees. This huge refugee influx has created huge problems for India and particularly to the border States of West Bengal, Tripura, Assam and Meghalaya. Thus, it is the Government of India that is responsible, by its failure, to recognise the Provisional Government and render all material assistance for this situation.

The P.B. demands that the Government of India must bear the responsibility for looking after the refugees and give them adequate relief and shelter till conditions are created in Bangladesh when they can go back without fear.

The P.B. deplors the fact that the attitude of the Socialist and Afro-Asian countries which could be expected to render assistance to freedom struggles, has been totally disappointing.

The P.B. notes that demands are being made in Parliament and outside for armed intervention by the Government of India against Pakistan. The P.B. is of the opinion that such a line, if implemented, would transform the essentially democratic struggle in Bangladesh into that very conflict between India and Pakistan which the Yahya Khan military clique and its patrons want it to appear. This will have a catastrophic effect on the resistance movement in Bangladesh itself.

The P.B., therefore, appeals to the democratic forces and parties of India not to countenance such demands. It reiterates its demand that the Government of India should forthwith render all material assistance including arms to all the fighting forces of Bangladesh without any discrimination. The P.B. appeals to the people of India to bring irresistible pressure on the Government of India towards this end.

Rally For Common Struggles*

CPI(M) West Bengal State Committee's call to Democratic Forces

Statement issued in Calcutta on July 5, 1971

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has released the following communique to the Press in Calcutta on July 5, 1971:

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met from July 2 to 4, 1971, in Calcutta. Muhammad Abdullah Rasul presided.

Promod Dasgupta, the Secretary of the State Committee, introduced the agenda of the meeting and explained certain decisions taken by the Polit Bureau in its last meeting. He placed before the State Committee the tentative time-schedule for the local, district and State Party Conferences, before the Ninth Party Congress to be held at the end of December, 1971, the final dates and political-organisational document for which will be finalised in the next Central Committee meeting in August, 1971.

He explained the P.B. resolution on "Bangladesh" and the State Committee decided to continue the campaign to force the Government of India to recognise the Government of Bangladesh and to render all necessary help including supply of arms to all freedom-fighters of Bangladesh and to work for the relief of the evacuees from Bangladesh.

The State Committee passed a condolence resolution on the death of 101 comrades—members and sympathisers of the CPI(M), who, together with a few hundred more people of other democratic organisations and innocent citizens, were

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, July 11, 1971.

killed by the CRP, police and anti-social elements during the 88 days of the reactionary Coalition Government of the Congress-Muslim League in West Bengal. The Committee in another resolution condemned the brutal murder of Comrade Mahadev Banerji, a member of the Burdwan District Committee of the Party, by Congress goondas on the night of July 2 at Kalna Railway Station. The Committee was convinced from the circumstantial evidences that a section of the police with whose help the ruling Congress has organised "killing squads" was behind the goonda attack. The Committee called upon the democratic people to organise and resist such murderous attacks against the leaders and cadres of the democratic movements. The Committee expressed deepest sorrow and expressed heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families of all these martyrs.

After the reports of movements conducted during the last two months were made by the representatives of various districts and members of the State Committee, it discussed the tasks for building up a broad-based democratic mass movement and chalked out a programme of action. Promod Dasgupta summed up the decisions taken by the Committee with regard to the struggles to be conducted by the workers, employees, peasants and other sections of the people. While summing up, he said that the reports of mass movements heard in the meeting were encouraging. According to the decisions of the last State Committee meeting, broad masses both in the kisan and working class fronts had been drawn together to resist unitedly the attacks of the vested interests who are helped by armed forces of the Government and goondas. Moreover, there are a number of instances, where the mass following of other democratic parties also participated in such struggles of the workers, employees and kisans.

Certain organisational decisions were also taken by the Committee. Some of the important decisions are as follows :

1. The Committee decides to call upon all democratic forces—all anti-Congress democratic parties and organisations to unite and campaign to demand of the Government of India that an early date for fresh election

in West Bengal must be declared immediately and according to our Party it should be held in November 1971.

2. The Committee calls upon the people of West Bengal to prepare for greater sacrifices and sufferings to oppose the autocratic rule of the Congress and unleash massive struggles for democracy, people's livelihood and for upholding the dignity and the honour of West Bengal. It reminds the democratic people of the State that the ruling Congress is treating the State of West Bengal as a special case, that it cannot trust even its own appointed Governor and the Government of India has appointed a Congress party representative, a Congress Minister, to rule West Bengal. President's rule has been imposed in many States but West Bengal has been set apart for special treatment by the Centre. Together with the fight against the violation of principles of democracy, against semi-fascist methods of repression against the people, against the autocratic rule of the Congress with the help of the bureaucracy, police, CRP, military and anti-social elements and many repressive black Acts, all sections of people must get together for the common fight against the heavy burden of new taxation of the Central Budget, high prices, menace of unemployment, and other economic exploitation. The peasants have to fight for land, for relief and against eviction.

The State Committee endorsed the efforts being made for the unity of all anti-Congress democratic parties and groups for struggle against the policies of the Congress Government. It called upon its members and supporters and the people to build up united movements which may culminate in a general strike. The Committee also directed all its units to organise independent mass struggles in various sectors and unite different militant mass organisations of the working class, peasantry, students, youths and other sections of the people for their urgent demands.

3. The State Committee calls upon all the democratic lawyers and other democratic organisations to organise a convention for civil liberties and democratic rights with eminent persons with a view to forcing the Congress Government to restore civil liberties and other democratic rights that have been curtailed in West Bengal. The convention should voice the demand for withdrawal of Section 144, CRP, military and other repressive measures resorted to in many parts of the State, suggest measures to compel the administration to desist from aiding and abetting the anti-social elements to ensure functioning of normal life in the State.
4. The State Committee noted with satisfaction the Party membership drive in the State of West Bengal. West Bengal accounts for 31,000 Party members, out of the total all-India tally of nearly one lakh Party members. The State has nearly fulfilled its quota for membership drive. Now, the Committee decides to take up some stringent organisational steps to enable the Party to successfully face the onslaught of the enemies.
5. The Committee decides to raise a Special Fund of Rs. 60,000 by November 1971, to defray the expenses necessary for building up the coming mass movements as well as for the preparation of Party Conferences. The quota for various district units have also been fixed up by the Committee.

CPI(M)'s Note to Central Minister : Indian National Congress Responsible for Lawlessness and Anarchy in West Bengal

Note dated July 7, 1971 jointly submitted by Jyoti Basu and Harekrishna Konar to Shri Siddhartha Sankar Ray, Union Minister-in-charge of West Bengal under the President's Rule

The text of the note dated July 7, 1971, signed by Comrades Jyoti Basu and Harekrishna Konar on behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to Sri Siddhartha Ray in reply to the latter's invitation to the Party to the meeting of political parties in Calcutta on July 7, 1971:

We acknowledge on behalf of our Party the receipt of your letter dated July 5, 1971, inviting us to participate in a discussion mainly on the question of law and order and "to deal with the present utter lawlessness and to eradicate this senseless politics of murder that engulfs Bengal today."

According to our Party, soon after the U.F. Government went out of office in 1970, certain administrative changes were made and officers transferred with a lot of fanfare on the advice of the Government of India and the Congress party in West Bengal which were meant to gear the bureaucracy and the police to take effective and violent measures against the CPI(M) and its allies and the mass movements. With this objective in view, massive propaganda based on lies and slander was let loose against the CPI(M), depicting it as a party interested in chaos, disorder, violence and murders. Thus, the real perpetrators of such crimes were sought to be shielded and a green signal given to open and planned violence by the State authorities.

Ruling Classes Responsible

The views of our Party regarding the genesis of the present situation wherein secret killings and violence against the people

are the order of the day in West Bengal are widely known, the distortions and blackout of those views by the Press of the vested interests notwithstanding. We have held that it is the ruling classes and the ruling party that have organised and unleashed the present lawlessness and murderous activities, having failed to crush the people's movements and stem the advance of the democratic people. Unable to grapple with the political situation emanating from the deepening crisis and panicky at the rising tide of the people's movements your party, the ruling Congress, used the CRP, Border Security Force, West Bengal Police as well as the Army to perpetrate violence against the people. It also organised the vast army of the underworld thugs, cut-throats and hoodlums and directed them against the democratic movement and specially against its spearhead, our Party, the CPI(M).

It is strange but true that the Naxalites who proclaim individual murders to be their creed, were given shelter, fed and armed by a section of the police and in some areas by the Congress and some other anti-CPI(M) parties, and egged on to murder innumerable members and supporters of our Party and the cadres of the mass organisations. The Naxalites were given protection on innumerable occasions when the people attempted to resist their anti-social activities. The degeneration of the administration is evidenced by the fact that even when over a hundred policemen belonging to the subordinate category and not particularly known as torturers of the people are killed, it remains indifferent and there is reason to believe that a section of the police also has a role to play in this in order to strike terror in those ordinary policemen who are trying to organise themselves on a democratic basis.

No discerning eye will fail to take note of the fact that the feature of killing individuals as a means of gaining political objectives is a phenomenon that has raised its ugly head only after the toppling of the second U.F. Government in March 1970. During the U.F. regime, unfortunately, some deaths did take place but they invariably occurred during clashes in the course of movements for land and other demands of the people.

Shielding the Gangsters

However, during President's rule in 1970, and under the Congress-Muslim League Government, individual killings became the order of the day and even now these are continuing. Hundreds of our Party leaders, workers and supporters have been killed, many hundreds wounded and maimed, thousands arrested on false charges and under the PVA Act, and warrants have been issued against a lakh or more people. Times without number our Party has stated that it does not believe in individual murders. In fact, such murderous activities which engage our cadres in warding off the attacks adversely affect the mass organisations. Our policy is to mobilise and activate the masses in order to achieve our political objectives. In this background, and in the face of such realities, you have called all the political parties to have parleys to find out a modus operandi to end the present "politics of murder."

Are you asking us to believe that the underworld thugs with criminal records, many of them confirmed jail-birds, organised under the protective wing of a section of the police and fed and led by them, and in many cases by your party, indulging in daily orgies of murder and loot are the ones against whom you would like to take action and that is why parties have been called to have confabulations with you today at the Writers' Buildings?

We cannot but remember how your party and you yourself acted to shield the real murderers of Sri Hemanta Kumar Basu and to utilise this gruesome event for election purposes instead of trying to find out the real culprits. What has happened to the enquiry to unravel the so-called mystery of the murder? What the police dog could not do, Sri Tarun Kanti Ghosh and you accomplished by declaring that the murderers belong to our Party. Similarly, within half an hour of the murder, a high-ranking officer of the police told the Press that he suspected our Party was involved in it, and an obliging Press gave publicity to all these inventions.

Who murdered Sri Nepal Roy, one of your own party leaders? Who murdered the election candidates in Ukhra and Dum

Dum? Who stabbed Justice T.P. Mukherjee, who was appointed to unravel the mystery of the murder of the eight boys whose bodies were found in Barasat? Who murdered Sri Ajit Biswas and Justice K.L. Roy? Who murdered the watch-dealer of the Sovabazar area, Sri Tarak Dutta?

On July 4 last, a gang of hired hooligans, armed to the teeth, and protected by the CRP units on either flanks, launched a barbarous attack on the area bound by Chitpur Road on the west, Chittaranjan Avenue on the east, Grey Street on the south, and Shyambazar street on the north. The CRP units fired more than 200 rounds and the gang of hoodlums hurled more than 300 bombs. Who led this gang? He was none other than the son of a Congress leader. In this company was seen the illustrious leaders of the local underworld with criminal past such as Siu, Kamal, Pinaki, Ashok and others. Is it not a fact that the lastnamed one is wanted by the police in connection with the murder of Sri Tarak Dutta, the watch-dealer? Is it also not a fact that till the last midterm poll of 1971, all the above-mentioned criminals went by the name of Naxalites in the Jorabagan constituency area?

Congress-Naxalites Collusion

Will you enquire on how many occasions shelter has been given to Naxalites by Congressmen? Have you stopped to think how killings, bomb throwings, burning of schools and colleges in broad daylight and forcible collections of funds by rowdies can continue in Calcutta, Howrah and the industrial areas of Hooghly and 24-Parganas without the connivance or help of a section of the police? Is it not true that honest policemen are afraid to do their duty because of interference of Congress Ministers and Congressmen and also the Government of India? Do you not know that there are charges of murder against the O.C., Jorabagan and the D.C., North, and they continue to be in duty and remain the pet officers of the ruling party? Yet, it is in the northern part of Calcutta that murders galore are taking place for the last one and a half years.

What is happening in Jadavpur, Tollygunge, Noapara and Baranagar and other areas? It is not the anti-social elements alone who are the main actors in the ghastly drama that is being staged there for the last so many months? It is the CRP and a section of the police who are taking the help of these armed rowdies and jointly indulging in the orgy of murder and arson. In one swoop alone, such a joint action of the CRP and the armed gangs took five lives and injured more than a dozen in the Netaji Colony on May 29.

We remind you that it was on June 1 when the people of Calcutta and adjacent areas were protesting against these murders through strikes and hartals that you yourself threatened in a meeting in Jadavpur area the CPI(M) with violent measures, whilst being very understanding about the Naxalites.

In the Ichapur factory on may 22, four workers were shot dead under the leadership of the O.C., Noapara, for having dared to protest against the killing of a fellow worker by anti-social elements, but no enquiry followed despite promise made in the Lok Sabha.

We cannot but become cynical when you and your party express concern about "this senseless politics of murder that engulfs Bengal today." Having masterminded this politics of murder, having engineered and implemented it, to take up the posture of impartiality and neutrality is not at all convincing.

Murders in Burdwan

The attitude of the Government finds an eloquent expression in the happening in Burdwan district, where the Congress was severely mauled in the election. Immediately following the toppling of the U. F. Government in March 1970, the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police were replaced by officers who are entrusted with the sacred duty of wiping out the CPI(M) and suppressing the democratic advance of the people. In Burdwan town alone, since the imposition of President's rule, as many as 13 of our Party workers and supporters have been waylaid and killed by Congress gangsters. All these gruesome murders except one were committed in

broad daylight in the full view of dozens of people. The murderers are known by their names and appearances. The police know their hide-outs. Yet, such is the neutrality and impartiality of the Congress rule that not even a single murderer has been apprehended.

In Durgapur, CRP units and the hired thugs killed more than half a dozen of our workers but not a single murderer has been brought to book. Your party tried to finish off the trade union movement of the Durgapur workers by seeing to it that the Central Industrial Security Force was stationed within the plants and by siding with the police who arrested under false charges if murder top trade union leaders and when the workers struck work in defence of their leaders and basic trade union rights, it was your Government that unleashed a terror the like of which no industrial town anywhere within this country ever witnessed.

Only a couple of days ago, the armed thugs of your party brutally murdered one of our leaders of Burdwan district. They were lying in wait and almost at dead of night, when Comrade Mahadev Banerjee alighted from the train at the Kalna station, he was murdered. No arrests have been made.

What happened at Alhadipur village of Burdwan district? It was the armed gang of your partymen loaded in trucks and flanked by the armed detachments of the police that went all the way to the village and killed, maimed and plundered and razed the entire village to the ground. But instead of arresting these marauders from outside, local people who were attacked are being arrested.

We do not have any intention of cataloguing all the events that have happened, mainly through the good offices of your party. We have mentioned only some of them, by way of examples, to underscore the fact that it was your party which was responsible for the present state of lawlessness and anarchy in the State.

Killing of the individual is but one aspect of the present state of lawlessness. There are others. When individuals masquerading as students take up the flag and festoon of the students'

organisation led by your party, organise raids within the Writers' Building and beat up Government employees in their desks, we wonder how you label such vandalism.

When the State Government calling itself a Democratic Coalition Government issues thousands of appointment letters to your partymen in utter disregard of all rules of recruitment without advertisement for recruitment in the papers, examinations, interviews and selections, how exactly do you inculcate in the citizens respect for laws?

When areas after areas are cordoned off and searches are conducted and indiscriminate arrests are made innocent people are harassed and tortured in police lock-ups and beaten to death, and all administrative enquiries are dispensed with, and the goondas get away from the combing net, do you help in endearing the police to the people?

When the Government of your party pleads helplessness to prevent the theft of overhead railway traction wires, and as a result thousands of daily commuters to the office are punished for late attendance, can you draw the sympathy of the people?

The list can be endless and there is no end to the volume of the crimes committed by your party. It was your party at the Centre, of which you are a Cabinet Minister, that unceremoniously dissolved the Assembly and did not give any chance to the opposition parties to form a Ministry. Your party trampled underfoot all the norms of parliamentary democracy, thus underscoring the point once more that so long as it suits the designs of your party and the vested interests it represents, norms of parliamentary democracy should be adhered to, but the moment it does not, your party does not hesitate to throw it overboard. Yet, we are asked to believe that you stand for democratic values.

The Monster You Have Raised

Having indulged in brutality and repression against the people and utilised the services of the underworld to gain certain political objectives, now you find that your party workers are

also falling victims to the very same process. It will do good to all if at times we study history again and again.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it was the prefect of the Paris police who had organised the anarchists to liquidate the Socialists of France. The anarchists had started on the job all right, but ended up by trying to kill off the representatives of the very same ruling class who helped them to organise. No wonder, therefore, that some of your party leaders and workers themselves had to fall victims to the same daggers and revolvers used against our Party workers. We are sorry for the leaders and workers of your party and other parties whom the assassins' daggers and bullets claimed as victims.

But history does not seem to have taught the Government anything. Once again, there is talk of organising resistance groups with the followers of particular parties. Thus, a legal cover is being sought to be given to the armed hoodlums. But it is time all of us should learn the lessons of history. It seems that some attempts which are being made locally by some parties including sections of Congressmen for fighting the rowdies, do not receive encouragement by some parties and their leaders.

In your letter, you have brought in other subjects to be discussed in the meeting, such as "rural and urban development, land reforms, unemployment" etc., etc. Having allowed big capital and the landlord elements to plunder the country for the last twentyfour years, and still treading the same old path and keeping intact the present relationship between the Centre and the States and without basically changing the Constitution, how exactly can you find a solution ? There can be no serious discussion about these problems in so short a time and in such a cavalier fashion.

Similarly, with regard to the problem of evacuees from Bangladesh, the entire country agrees that a lasting solution can be found in recognising the Government of Bangladesh and rendering all assistance to the freedom fighters to achieve victory, which alone will enable the evacuees to return to their country in safety.

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We take your reference to these problems as a sop meant for public consumption and also meant to refurbish the tarnished image of your party and your Government.

Why we are Attending

We are, nevertheless, attending the meeting called by you. Loud-mouthed assertions of adherence to democratic norms and forms automatically do not entitle anyone or any party to claim for itself the credit of being democratic. It is the practice that matters in the long run. The test of the pudding, lies in its eating. We are, therefore, attending the meeting to see for ourselves whether you mean what you say and what steps you propose to take which will create confidence among the people about the sincerity of the Government.

No administrative measures without the co-operation of the people can remedy the situation. We wish to make it clear that the people will never come forward to co-operate with the authorities as long as their democratic rights are suppressed by imposition of Section 144, indiscriminate arrests, deployment of the CRP and the military and the police, as well as by the use of black laws like the PVA, Maintenance of Internal Security Act, etc. Even for their own selfish reasons the Congress party and the Government should give up the dangerous game they are playing and bring about a real chance in their policies.

On Nixon's Visit to China*

Resolution of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Adopted in the Meeting Held in New Delhi from July 23 to 26, 1971

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in New Delhi adopted the following resolution on U.S. President Nixon's visit to China :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is of the considered opinion that the proposed visit of Mr. Nixon to the People's Republic of China with a view to normalising State-to-State relations between the two countries is a major shift in the policy of the U.S. Government towards the People's Republic of China. It is a big blow to the notorious U.S. policy of "containment of China" and is an open admission of defeat for the U.S. anti-China policy pursued during the last 22 years since the People's Republic of China came into existence. All progressive and forward looking forces of the world welcome this development and eagerly look for speedy normalisation of relations between the two countries

For 22 years, since the liberation of China, the U.S. imperialists have considered the People's Republic of China as their sworn enemy and the biggest obstacle to their policy of dominating Asia and the Pacific Ocean area. In the name of "containing Chinese Communism" it had pursued an active policy of aggression and of suppressing liberation struggles of the peoples in a number of countries of Asia with a view to converting them into its neo-colonies. It waged an aggressive war in Korea and continues its occupation of South Korea. It stationed its armed forces in Taiwan. Its Seventh Fleet has been deployed in the Gulf of Taiwan, in the name of protecting Chiang Kai-shek, against the People's Republic of China. It forged the SEATO

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY" , Calcutta, August 1, 1971.

military alliance aimed against the People's Republic of China and the national liberation movements. It actively helped the French imperialists in their attempt to continue to dominate Indo-China, tore up the Geneva Agreements of 1954 regarding Indo-China. It has been waging a ruthless war of aggression with more than half a million soldiers, navy and air force personnel against the people of Vietnam. It did not shrink from using chemical and bacteriological weapons on a large scale in this war. It had imposed trade embargo and tried to economically blockade China. All these years it had prevented the People's Republic of China from occupying its legitimate seat in UNO.

But the U.S. imperialists have received a shattering blow at the hands of the heroic people of Vietnam in spite of spending 200 billion dollars. In face of the mounting wave of people against this war in the United States and all over the world, it was forced to resort to the manoeuvre of peace negotiations in order to deceive its own people and the peoples of the world. Actually, however, it has continued to pursue its war of aggression in Vietnam, and even extended the war to the whole of Indo-China. But the continued victories of the peoples of Vietnam and of the other countries of Indo-China have brought the American imperialists to the verge of defeat. It is now faced with the situation of either accepting the seven-point peace plan of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam or facing an ignominious defeat. As a result of this war, the American economy is facing a serious crisis. The democratic forces in America are mounting their protests higher and higher, demanding stoppage of this war of aggression against Vietnam. The recent exposure of the Pentagon papers which clearly established the conspiracy of the United States, revealed to the people of the U.S. that they were duped by their rulers into this war of aggression against Vietnam. This has further angered the people and the anti-war movement is further rising.

During these 22 years, the Chinese People's Republic has stabilised its internal situation and grown economically and militarily. It had developed its own independent nuclear power to face the American nuclear threat. Despite the American attempts to blockade China, its economic, trade and political

relations with other countries have developed in a big way, as is evident in the rush during the last year by many countries to establish trade and diplomatic relations with China.

The U.S. imperialists, thus faced with a total fiasco of their policies, were forced to reckon with the new correlation of forces and were desperately seeking a way out of the impasse in which they had landed themselves. President Nixon had expressed his desire to visit China and sent Kissinger on a secret mission to Peking to ask for the invitation. It is on this basis that the invitation to visit China was extended to President Nixon who has announced his decision to visit China and hold talks with the Chinese leaders for normalising the relations between the two countries. He has described this visit as a "pilgrimage of peace". All these denote an open admission by Nixon of the defeat for the anti-China policy which the U.S. imperialists have been pursuing so far.

No democrat would be taken in by Nixon's deceitful talk of "pilgrimage of peace". Everyone knows that the peace talks in Paris are being dragged on by the U.S. which has rejected every reasonable proposal including the latest seven-point formula put forward by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. On the other hand, while talking of this "pilgrimage of peace" Nixon has intensified the war in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

In these circumstances, this gambit of visit to China may be reduced to another deceitful manoeuvre of Nixon to extricate himself from the mounting anti-war upsurge of the American people on the eve of the coming Presidential election. It may prove to be a device to get time to cook up other deceitful plans, to continue the war in Vietnam. The P.B. is confident that all democratic and anti-imperialist forces would be vigilant and frustrate such manoeuvres. It is fully aware that the U.S. imperialists will not easily accept the detente or a real solution in favour of freedom and democracy. Such a solution can be found only on the basis of the U.S. withdrawing its troops from Taiwan and leaving its future to be solved as an internal affair of the Chinese people, of restoring to the People's Republic of China its legitimate seat in UNO, of ending the war of aggression

in Vietnam on the basis of the seven-point peace proposals of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, of withdrawing U.S. and satellite troops from the whole of Indo-China, and of withdrawing the U.S. occupation forces from South Korea and leaving the Korean people free to work for the peaceful reunification of their country. The P.B. rejects the campaign of certain circles in our country, especially of the Right Communist Party, that this development is a ganging-up of the people's Republic of China and the U.S. against the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries and sell-out of the liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples, especially the Vietnamese people, as cheap anti-China slander. The P.B. also rejects the mischievous propaganda that this is a ganging-up against India.

The Right Communist Party by this stand, openly expressed in its resolution, not only shuts its eyes to the defeat of U.S. imperialist policies but persists in its crude anti-China campaign. In its blindness it has gone to the extent of blaming the leaderships of the Socialist countries as aiding the U.S. imperialists. The Right C.P., in fact, wants the perpetuation of the Sino-Soviet conflict. Actually, thereby, it objectively plays the game of the U.S. imperialists. The P.B. is confident that the democratic people of India will not be swayed by this campaign.

However, the P.B. cannot but remind the democratic forces that this visit of Nixon is coming at a time when there is a bitter ideological-political feud between the two biggest Socialist countries, namely, the Soviet Union and China. Each accuses the other of betraying every revolutionary principle of Marxism-Leninism and of refusing to lend support to national liberation struggles. They charged each other with the attempt to gang up with U.S. imperialism in an attempt to isolate the other. The visit is coming also when the world Socialist camp and the international Communist movement continue to be sharply divided. It is coming at a time when the U.S. imperialists and President Nixon are feverishly trying to utilise this split to further their own aggressive designs. The anti-imperialist, democratic and Socialist forces should be on their guard to

frustrate all such attempts, and not allow U.S. imperialism to escape from the utter defeat awaiting them.

The P.B. is conscious of the legitimate apprehensions among sections of the democratic and Socialist forces that these proposed Sino-U.S. talks might produce similar harmful consequences of the so-called Camp David confabulations of the year 1959-60. They are also worried and agitated over the bitter anti-Soviet tirade of the Chinese Communist Government in connection with the intervention of Warsaw Pact armies against the attempted counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia. Further, they are shocked at the continued support given by the People's Republic of China to the military regime of West Pakistan when it has unleashed mass terror and is practising genocide on the 75 million people of Bangladesh, while trampling underfoot the democratic verdict of the 95 per cent of the voters of Bangladesh and yet the P.B. is of the view that these grave errors and consequent apprehensions should not so cloud one's objective vision as to overlook the patent fact that the proposed visit of Nixon to China is a big defeat to the vicious U.S. policy of "containment of China".

The fiasco of the anti-China policy of the U.S. imperialists should awaken the Government of India to give up its policies of sub-servience to the imperialist powers, especially the U.S. imperialists, and pursue a policy of friendship with China. This should force the realisation that its policies towards China have been a dismal failure. It should therefore take immediate steps to normalise relations with China. It should take a firm stand on the question of the war in Indo-China. For this purpose it should forthwith recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam as well as Sihanouk's Government of Cambodia, and by establishing full diplomatic relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It should unequivocally demand the total withdrawal of the U.S. aggressive forces from Indo-China. It should call for the withdrawal of the U.S. occupation forces from South Korea and leave the problem of peaceful reunification of Korea to the Korean people themselves. Meanwhile, it should give full diplomatic recognition to the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea.

Resolution on Bangladesh*

**Adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in its Meeting
Held in New Delhi from July 23 to 26, 1971**

The P.B. of the CPI(M) reiterates its warning against the slogan of war between India and Pakistan on the issue of Bangladesh. It feels that it is not enough for the Government of India in this respect to warn against the protagonists of war on this issue, but it must be followed by a more active support to the Government of Swadhin Bangladesh in its fight against the Yahya military rule supported by the U.S. imperialists. The P.B. demands that the Government of India should forthwith recognise the Swadhin Bangladesh Government and help the liberation forces by all means in driving out Yahya armies. Any delay in this respect and mere propaganda and half-hearted support can lead to very harmful results for the liberation forces and will be beneficial for the West Pakistan military rulers as well as for the imperialists to hatch their conspiracies to impose some compromise at the cost of the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh. It is not in vain that the U.S. imperialists are posing it as a fight between India and Pakistan and are warning India against any 'hasty' step.

The P.B. of the CPI(M) welcomes the stand of the Government of India in rejecting the U.S. proposal to send observers to the border of Bangladesh and India, as direct interference. The U.S. imperialists are doing their utmost to help the military regime of Yahya Khan in suppressing the national liberation movement of the people of Bangladesh. The new proposal is aimed at directly helping the Yahya military forces to crush the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh. The U.S. imperialism will

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 1, 1971.

continue to hatch new conspiracies and the Indian people and the people of Bangladesh have to be always vigilant against this enemy of national liberation movements.

The P.B. notes that the Jana Sangh in the guise of supporting the cause of Bangladesh is actually arousing communal feelings in the country. In the present situation, any communal tension in our country will be of great benefit to Yahya Khan. Therefore, any association with the Jana Sangh on this issue will harm the cause.

The P.B. appeals to the Government to Bangladesh to broaden and deepen the liberation front against the military regime, by uniting all the forces pledged to fight for national freedom. Any division among the liberation forces will play into the hands of the enemy. Today, the need of the hour is the fighting unity of all the democratic forces of Bangladesh.

The P.B. appeals to all Party units to intensify the campaign for solidarity with Bangladesh by holding rallies, collecting donations and by mobilising the people. It is confident that all the democratic forces in the country will stand united behind the fighting people of Bangladesh.

Resolution on West Bengal*

Adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in its Meeting Held in New Delhi from July 23 to 26, 1971

The following is the text of the resolution adopted on West Bengal by the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in its meeting in New Delhi from July 23 to 26, 1971 :

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) condemns the Government of India and the former Government of Democratic Coalition for conspiring to dissolve the West Bengal Assembly on June 24, just three days before it had been summoned to meet for the Budget Session in utter violation of elementary principles of parliamentary democracy.

This was done because the Government had lost its majority and the Central Government was bent upon preventing at any cost the CPI(M) with its allies from forming a Government.

Congress Government's Objective

The conspiracy and its purpose become patent from the fact that although the then Chief Minister advised the Governor to dissolve the assembly ostensibly for the purpose of getting a Government with a greater electoral support and advised the Governor for the holding of elections, the Central Government refuses to hold elections, but, on the other hand, had imposed indefinite President's rule and further it took the unprecedented step of appointing a Central Congress Minister over and above the Governor to rule over the State with the help of the Congress party.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 8, 1971.

The objective of the Government is to crush the mass movement of the people which has risen to great heights in the State and those political forces which lead the masses and oppose the Congress Government and its anti-people policies. For this purpose, the Government has posted a large contingent of the CRP, police of other States, in addition to the West Bengal police. Even the army is deployed in many districts.

The administration has no hesitation in organising the anti-social elements and goonda gangs for murderous attacks on the leaders and workers of the CPI(M), the trade unions, Youth and Students' Federations and the Kisan Sabha. Although many murders have been committed in open daylight and in the presence of the police and sometimes in front of police thanas, no one is arrested, even though the names of the assailants were given and are known to the police. Many of these anti-social elements are being protected by the Congress party and the administration.

In contrast to this, many leaders and workers of the CPI(M) and their mass organisations and trade unions have been arrested on false charges of murder and when the police investigation showed no evidence against them, and they had to be released by the courts, they have been detained under the Prevention of Violent Activities Act.

In the name of combing operations, the CRP and West Bengal police have been arresting people in large numbers, and beating them up in the police lock-ups. Often murders of our comrades have been organised by the police in collusion with the anti-social elements. The GRP has resorted to indiscriminate firing on people, to which many innocent people have fallen victims. Many people have been killed in police custody.

Complicity with Anti-Socials

The Government having failed to suppress the mass movement by the ordinary methods of repression has let loose a semi-fascist regime of terror on the democratic movement and the political parties opposed to the Congress Government and its policies. This is also evident from the fact of the imposition of

ban under Section 144 CrPC in most of the districts for the past several months.

The complicity of the administration and the Congress with these anti-social elements parading as Naxalites is no longer a secret. Even the Press has carried the news that they have been taken into the Congress party in order to protect them.

And now they are used by different factions of the Congress party to settle scores by murder. They attack schools and colleges, school teachers and even women teachers. More than 500 schools remain closed and thousands of teachers remain unemployed. The education of still more thousands of students remains interrupted. These hoodlums, in many localities, threaten the people and shopkeepers and extort money. The civic life of ordinary citizens has been completely disrupted.

The most glaring example of the partisan attitude of administration was revealed in the gruesome attacks on the entire village of Ahladipur in Burdwan district by a number of armed Yuba Congress people accompanied by the CRP and the military. They went all way from Burdwan to the village and burnt all the homes and attacked the villagers and killed some of them for no fault of theirs, except that they were supporters of the CPI(M). Naturally, they resisted this attack with all their strength and courage. And for daring to resist, 40 of the victims of this wanton diabolical attack have been arrested, while not one of the attackers has been touched.

It is pertinent to point here that the dismissal of West Bengal U.F. Government in 1967, with the subsequent dissolution of the Assembly, the disruption of the U.F. Government again in 1970, as well as the imposition of the Ajoy Mukherjee Government in 1971, the dissolution of the Assembly on the eve of the Budget Session and the reign of terror during the last one year and more are part of the attempt to annul the verdict of the people of West Bengal against the Congress party and to reimpose the Congress Government by hook or by crook.

While the Government Ministers hypocritically show concern for the situation in West Bengal and talk of seeking the co-

operation of all parties to put an end to the "politics of murder", they have not moved a little finger to restrain the authorities from protecting the anti-social goondas and even maintain show of impartiality.

Govt.-Backed Employer Offensive

In the conditions of terror, the employers like the jute barons and the tea garden owners and engineering factory owners have been emboldened to go back upon agreements entered into during the period of the U.F. Government on the question of wages and emoluments. Repeated representations to the Government to get the employers to implement the agreements have evoked no response on the part of the Government. On the other hand, the Government abets further attacks on the workers' living standards and jobs. Thousands of workers have been thrown out of employment as a result of closures of over 400 factories and other establishments and rationalisation.

Moreover, attacks on the Government employees have been organised through the Chhatra Parishad. Over 17,000 appointments have been made by the Democratic Coalition Government during its last days illegally, setting at naught all rules of procedure.

The P.B. expresses serious concern that at a time when in view of Bangladesh and the growing support to the Pakistan military regime by American imperialism the undivided attention of the entire people is necessary for supporting the great struggle, the Government is carrying on such a policy of repression and acting against the interest of the people. This leaves no other alternative to the democratic people than to act in defence of their rights and liberties and change the policies of the Government through mass actions. It is precisely with this objective, in the interests of the nation and the people, that a general strike has been called on August 11, 1971.

Measures Necessary

The P.B. therefore calls upon the Government, if it is serious about restoration of normalcy in West Bengal, to demonstrate

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it by giving up its protection to the goondas and anti-socials, by withdrawing the orders under Section 144 CrPC, by stopping the arrest of leaders of trade unions, Kisan Sabha and other mass organisations and detaining them without trial by releasing all such people detained, by withdrawing the CRP and the army, and by attending to the immediate grievances of the workers and the common people.

It calls upon it to immediately announce that the elections to the Assembly will be held in November 1971.

If the Government adopts such a policy, it can be sure of the support of the democratic parties including our Party and the people.

The P.B. appeals to the Government not to be guided by narrow partisan considerations of the interest of the Congress party, but to come forward boldly to take the above-mentioned steps. It emphasises that this is absolutely necessary not only in the interest of the people of West Bengal, but also for effectively helping the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh—a cause dear to the entire people of West Bengal and of the whole country.

On Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty*

Statement issued by P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M) in Calcutta on August 11, 1971

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on August 11, 1971 :

The Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation which the Government of India signed with the Soviet Union in New Delhi on August 9 is a welcome development since it should help India to resist the U.S. imperialist pressure and blackmail and call Yahya Khan's war bluff. This has been made possible by the treaty providing for, in its Article IX, that each party "undertakes to abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other party", that the two parties "in the event of either party being subjected to an attack or a threat thereof, shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate measures to ensure peace and security of their countries".

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the treaty. The Party has always taken note of "the contradictions and conflicts that do exist between the Indian bourgeoisie, including the big bourgeoisie, and foreign imperialists" which express themselves on "the issues of war and peace, on the economic and political relations with the Socialist countries on the terms of aid from foreign monopolists, on the question of finding adequate markets for our exports, and on the question of foreign policy and defence of our national independence". (Paragraph 108 of Party *Programme*). The Party, at the same

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 15, 1971.

time, had noted that the Government of India “seeks to utilise the contradictions between the camps of imperialism and Socialism” and “has been interpreting the policy of non-alignment and neutrality differently in different phases depending upon its class interests” (Para 47).

The treaty, marking as it does a move towards the Soviet Union and against U.S. imperialism shows the realisation that has been forced on the Indian ruling classes that friendship with the Soviet Union is necessary to defend their sovereignty and resist U.S. blackmail. The CPI(M) has always stated that India should strengthen co-operation with the Socialist countries since non-alignment in foreign policy cannot and should not mean neutrality between or equi-distance from the imperialist and Socialist camps but should be directed against imperialism.

The logical line that should flow from this treaty should be to pursue an independent foreign policy and strengthen democracy—which should mean mending our fences with our Socialist neighbour, the People’s Republic of China as well. Otherwise, the existing bad relations with China will continue to be exploited by the imperialists and the reactionaries at home to force balancing tricks between the imperialist and anti-imperialist camps to the detriment of our country and our people.

Starting from the wrong thesis of a Sino-U.S. alliance and gang-up against India, the reactionary circles are already talking about the Indo-Soviet treaty as a counterpoise to the “new U.S. China-Pakistan axis”. The Right Communists have already gone on record that the treaty would help to isolate China.

Instead of rallying all the anti-imperialist forces, specially the Socialist countries for joint action against imperialism, what these “counterpoise theorists” advocate only play into the hands of U.S. imperialism. An independent foreign policy has to really mean friendship with both the Soviet Union and China and not attempts to exploit the differences that exist between the two. Friendship between the Soviet Union and China and India’s firm and close relationship with the two Socialist countries— that is what will strengthen the struggle against

imperialism and help India pursue an independent foreign policy.

While welcoming the treaty with the Soviet Union, the democratic forces have no reason to relax their struggles against the Government of India. The big bourgeois-led Government which has signed the treaty is also the Government that continues the brutal repression of the people and pursues anti-people policies. Only the development of the working class, peasant and the democratic movements can guarantee not only the winning of people's demands but also that India pursues a line of friendship with the Socialist countries.

It is also the development of the democratic movement against the ruling classes that will force them to give recognition to Bangladesh so that the fighting people there can defeat the military regime of Yahya Khan and have their own sovereign, democratic State which would maintain firm friendly relations with our country.

On the Execution of Sudanese Communists*

**Resolution Adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)
in its Meeting Held in Calcutta on August 7, 1971**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the barbarous actions of the Sudanese Government in killing and persecuting Communists and other progressives in Sudan. Democratic-minded people all over the world have expressed their anger and indignation at the execution of outstanding figures in the Communist and working class movement and Arab national movement like Comrade Abdul Khaliq Mahgoub, General Secretary of the Sudanese Communist Party, Comrade Shafi Ahmed, General Secretary of General Federation of Workers' Trade Unions of Sudan and Vice-President of WFTU and other members of the Central Committee of the Sudanese Communist Party, democrats and patriots.

These actions are a blow to the democratic movement of Sudan and harm the cause of national liberation struggles of the Arab people against U.S. imperialism and its agency, Israel. Anti-Communism is a cover for reactionary forces to operate against the forces of democracy and progress.

The present cruel repression let loose by the Numeiry Government against Communists will only please the imperialists, who are conspiring to turn the wheel of history by organising counter-revolutions in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all democratic forces in the country to raise their voice of protest against these atrocities that are being committed by the Sudanese authorities against Communists and other democratic forces. It hopes that all the

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 15, 1971.

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Communist and Workers' Parties the world over and other progressive forces will unitedly condemn these atrocities and halt the hand of repression in Sudan.

The Polit Bureau is confident that the Sudanese Communists will be able to stand against the reactionary onslaught of the Numeiry regime and lead the Sudanese people in their struggle against imperialism and local reaction. In their just struggle they can bank upon the support of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the democratic-minded people of our country.

Resolution on Detention of T.U. Leaders*

**Adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in its meeting
in Calcutta on August 7, 1971**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the action of the DMK Government of Tamil Nadu in putting under detention Comrades V.P. Chintan, P. R. Parameswaran and K.M. Hari Bhat, working class leaders and members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) as well as Sri R. Kuchelar, a trade union leader, under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. There are news of arrests under the Act also from other States like Andhra. This is being done in spite of the clearcut assurance given in Parliament that the Act will not be used against the working class and democratic movements and the political parties.

This action of the Tamil Nadu Government and others endangers the civil liberties necessary for any democratic advance and is intended to serve the vested interests. This shows that the warning given by our Party at the time of passing the Security Act, that will be used against the democratic movements, has proved to be true.

With the growing mass discontent among the working class, peasantry and other sections of the toiling people, due to the pro-landlord and pro-monoplist policies of the ruling classes, mass struggles are bound to develop. The ruling classes are arming themselves to suppress these struggles through such draconian laws.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all the democratic parties and individuals in the country to raise their voice against such laws

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 15, 1971.

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and measures and forge a united front against the suppression of civil liberties. It appeals to the working class to unite to fight this offensive.

It demands from the Government of Tamil Nadu and other Governments the release of all the trade union and political leaders detained under the Act.

Right C.P. Refuses to Fight Black Act*

A. K. Gopalan's Correspondence with the General Secretary of Right Communist Party

The following is the text of correspondence between Comrade A. K. Gopalan, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) and leader of the CPI(M) Group in the Lok Sabha, and Sri Rajeswar Rao, General Secretary of the Right Communist Party:

A. K. Gopalan's Letter of July 1, 1971

The recent passing of the Maintenance of Internal Security Bill in Parliament marks a gross violation of the fundamental rights and civil liberties of the people. I am addressing this letter to you and all parties and groups which are interested in fighting this new law, since it is an issue concerning the basic rights of every citizen.

Sometime back Sri Madhu Limaye, SSP, had sent me a letter regarding a proposed convention for the defence of civil rights, a copy of which you must have also received. Some other parties also opposed the Bill in Parliament including some Rightist parties for their own reasons.

My Party is interested in developing an agitation in defence of civil liberties to continue the fight conducted in Parliament to the extra-parliamentary level. For the success of such a move, it requires the support of all other parties actively opposed to it and their participation. Therefore I propose an exchange of opinions, views etc., on the matter about the kind of agitation, etc. This is urgent as attacks on the democratic movement have been stepped up and it will be too late if all parties do not act in unison. I want suggestions from you before

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 15, 1971.

Parliament disperses and any proposed plan. I am writing to other parties also.

The democratic forces led by the workers and peasants are daily facing ferocious attacks all over the country. Thousands are being thrown into jail and beaten. It is our duty to build a mass movement to fight these attacks. I hope you will consider this matter and act quickly.

With regards.

Rajeswar Rao's Reply of July 12, 1971

Thanks for your letter of July 1, 1971.

I am sorry I could not reply to you earlier due to pressure of work.

You know that our party opposed the Maintenance of Security Bill inside Parliament and it is carrying on agitation against it outside Parliament also.

But when you propose a joint agitation with other parties, including ours, "in defence of civil liberties", as you put it in your letter, I have to raise the following matters with you which our party has put to your leadership several times before.

One cannot forget the fact that civil liberties are also very seriously hampered in West Bengal by political murders and terroristic actions initiated and continued by your party as well as by others, against our party and some other parties. Our party unit in West Bengal wanted to know whether your party is prepared to participate in an "all-parties convention" to stop these acts of terrorism and inter-party clashes.

The convention could not be held because of the refusal of your party to participate in such a convention, though, of course, your State unit seems to have made some amends later in this regard by attending the meeting convened by Central Minister Sri Siddhartha Sankar Ray. We have read in the newspapers that your party continues its negative attitude to the solution of this problem. Your party has not yet stopped terroristic actions and threats against our party in many areas.

Secondly, what is the attitude of your party to help the evacuees from Bangladesh and the freedom-fighters inside that

country? Though your Polit Bureau resolution supports the demand for recognition of the Independent Government of Bangladesh, etc., it is not clear what you propose to do here for helping the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh and the evacuees. Statements and articles published on behalf of your State unit in West Bengal show that your party opposes the refugees being shifted to other States. We fail to understand the reason behind this.

Further, we consider the problem of Bangladesh as a national problem and the whole nation has to back it up. Your party opposes to co-operate with the Congress party and the Government of India even on this issue. Can we help the people of Bangladesh without co-operating with the Congress party and the Government of India? We are, therefore at a loss to understand your position on this issue.

The issue of civil liberties has to be seen only in the context of these issues today, and not in isolation as you seem to think. We would like to know your position on these two issues [words missing in duplicated copy—possibly “before we discuss the question”—*Editor*] of agitation against the Maintenance of Internal Security Bill.

With regards.

A. K. Gopalan's Letter of July 15, 1971

I am in receipt of your reply dated July 12, 1971, for my letter dated July 1, 1971 and am thankful for the same.

I am really amazed to read the contents and tenor of your reply to my simple appeal for a joint agitation and action against the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, which is once again imposed on the Statute Book by the Congress Government, in utter contempt of the democratic opposition voiced inside and outside Parliament.

You have written in your letter that your “party opposed the Maintenance of Security Bill inside Parliament and it is carrying on agitation against it outside Parliament also.”

I am fully aware of the first part of your above statement, though I am in the dark as far as the second part goes, i.e., your

carrying on agitation outside Parliament. I wrote to your party as well as other Opposition parties who are opposed to it, so that joint agitation and united action may prove more effective than agitation and action by each party or group separately and in isolation of one another.

Instead of readily responding to my proposal, strangely enough, you hurl some base slanders on our Party, demand clarifications of our Party's well-known position on the two issues, namely, "the political murders in West Bengal" and that of Bangladesh and refuse to discuss the issue of united action against the hated Maintenance of Internal Security Act until your demands are met.

To say the least, this cannot be a reasonable stand on the part of any responsible political party. It smacks of adopting a high and mighty attitude—with the aim of sabotaging united action on an issue on which most of the Opposition parties are united inside Parliament, during the discussion and passing of this hated law.

I can, of course, understand the dilemma in which you and your party are at present caught in. As partners and allies of the ruling Congress Party in Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar and elsewhere it might be embarrassing to your party to really build up a countrywide united action against the Congress Government and in Black Act of preventive detention. Your party might be content with the opposition that it had already registered on the floor of the two Houses of Parliament for public consumption. Otherwise, I cannot find any convincing reason for your refusal to discuss measures for united action over this vital issue of democratic rights and civil liberties of the people.

I take this opportunity once again to appeal to your party to revise your present stand on united action against the Congress Government over this Black Law and come forward to make the joint agitation and action a success.

However, I will not be doing justice to the other issues you have raised in your letter, if I leave them unanswered. Probably it might offend your party's pride also if I ignore it. Hence my attempt to clarify them.

You have written to me in reply to my letter requesting you for your co-operation in devising ways and means for joint action that “political murders and terroristic actions initiated and continued by your party, as well as by others, against our party and some other parties”, that “your party has not stopped terroristic actions and threats against our party in many areas”. These are base slanders rejected by the people of West Bengal and to go on mouthing them does not do any good to either your party or to the proletarian revolutionary movement of our country.

Since according to you, your party in West Bengal wanted to know whether our party is prepared to participate in an all-parties’ convention “to stop these acts of terrorism and inter-party clashes”, I am herewith forwarding to you two small pamphlets, one by Comrade Jyoti Basu and the second by Comrades Jyoti Basu and Harekrishna Konar, both endorsed by our West Bengal unit and Polit Bureau, for your information and clarification. These two pamphlets would tell you who the criminals are that are responsible for organising political murders and mass-scale violence against people, our Party’s proposals how to end them, etc.

You hold the view “that civil liberties are also very seriously hampered in West Bengal”, and throw the responsibility on our Party. Accordingly, your party’s struggle for civil liberties in West Bengal is chiefly directed against the CPI(M). But we hold a totally opposite view, namely that it is due to the bourgeois-landlord Congress and its machinations against the popular democratic movemnts that civil liberties are denied and terrorism is being organised and spread in a methodical manner. Hence, our Party’s struggle for civil liberties in West Bengal and the rest of the country is against the bourgeois-landlord State, its Government and its draconic laws. Instead of straightaway stating this truth, and on that ground rejecting the proposal, for united action, why adopt dilatory tactics and pretend to elicit and solicit our views on issues which are sufficiently known to you ? It is rather unfair.

You have also written to me in a rather serious and solemn tone the following : “Secondly, what is the attitude of your party to help the evacuees from Bangladesh and the freedom-fighters inside that country? Though your Polit Bureau resolution supports the demand for recognition of the Independent Government of Bangladesh, etc., it is not clear what you propose to do here for helping the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh and the evacuees.”

“Your party opposes to co-operate with the Congress party and the Government even on this. Can we help the people of Bangladesh without co-operating with the Congress party and the Government of India? We are therefore at a loss to understand your position on this issue.”

Queer logic and strange arguments !

You write to me that you are not clear of our Party’s stand on so many matters connected with the Bangladesh issue. There are enough resolutions and authoritative statements of our Polit Bureau and Central Committee on the question. Please take pains to read the pertinent material in our Central organ *Peoples Democracy* dated April 18, and subsequent issues. To put the stand of our Party in a nutshell for your benefit, the points are as following:

- I. The Central Committee of the CPI(M) pay its tributes to the heroism of the people of Bangladesh and extends its whole hearted support to their struggle.”
- II. “The G.C. demands of the Government of India to forthwith recognise the Provisional Government of Swadhin Bangladesh and render all material assistance to it so that they can withstand the onslaught of the army and defeat it.”
- III. “The C.C. appeals to the toiling people of all units of the western wing of Pakistan to support the just struggle of the people of Bangladesh. This is in their own interest and will help in their own struggle for democracy and to put an end to the autocratic military regime.”
- IV. “The Central Committee appeals to all Party units to launch a massive campaign” in support of the struggling

people of Bangladesh and “to collect aid in the form of money and material for the suffering people of Bangladesh” and “calls upon all its units to observe April 25 as solidarity day.”

If all these do not clarify our Party’s stand, how can I help you ? As regards evacuees, our Party demands their repatriation, as soon as conditions for their safe return are ensured, and until then the Government should do everything necessary to provide them with shelter and food with the co-operation and assistance of the people. Whether these evacuees are to be stationed in West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, etc., where the Bengali language is understood by the people or to be shifted, temporarily to certain other States, is not a question of any basic principle and it need not be made an issue of “do or die”.

Before closing this letter of mine, I would like to state frankly that your passionate plea for supporting the “Congress party and the Government of India”, and your consternation at our “opposition” over the Bangladesh issue are rather intriguing. Even the spokesmen of the ruling Congress party have not dared to accuse us on this account. Now let me ask you a few counter-questions, the answers to which might go a long way in meeting all your queries.

You know the issue of Bangladesh was hanging fire since the end of March, 1971, and the Government of India, for nearly full four months by now, has refused to recognise the Government of Swadhin Bangladesh. For some time, the Prime Minister argued, “where was that Government and where was their application for recognition”; after the Provisional Government was formed, it was argued that the Government of India should not be hasty and should canvass for the recognition by other Powers before it does it; and even now the issue is being burked with all sorts of evasive answers. Do you want to support this wobbly and cowardly stand of the Congress party and Government ?

The entire public and almost all the political parties in the country have been demanding that the East Bengal people struggling against the military terror rule of Yahya Khan.

should be given all political and material help which include arms to defend themselves and fight back the military. Everybody knows that nothing serious in this regard is done as the Congress party and Government dare not take the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh into confidence. The Government is really afraid of some alleged "consequences". Do you want us to ditto this policy while only shouting formal support to Bangladesh from the housetops for public consumption ?

You, in your letter, try to seriously tell us and our Party that "the problem of Bangladesh is a national problem and the whole nation has to back it up". May I inform you that we treat it more seriously than that. The issue of Bangladesh is not only a national issue but is a first-rate issue of international importance. The attitude to it of different parties, and Governments of the different countries, serves as the touchstone for their professions of loyalty to democracy and the rights of the nationalities and nations as laid down in the famous "six-point programme" of the Awami League. The whole-hearted support of such a cause demands of the Congress party and Government a more forthright approach to the issue, instead of indulging in the glib talk of "political settlement", the meaning of which might be anything from the recognition of Bangladesh by West Pakistan military regime to an imperialist cooked-up compromise with the connivance of the Yahya Government. Do you want us to be idle spectators to all this betrayal, while slavishly declaring uncritical support to the Congress party and Government ?

We are of the firm opinion that the interests of the struggle of the Bangladesh people and the composition of its armed liberation forces should be as broad-based as possible to include all the classes, strata, parties and groups interested in Bangladesh and subscribe to the "six-point programme" of the Awami League. We believe that with such broad-based popular support alone a really militant and prolonged resistance can be organised against the terror rule of the West Pakistani rulers. We do not think the Congress party and the Government are thinking along these lines, and we feel the need of mobilising public

opinion over this issue so that it might exercise a salutary influence on the fighting forces of Bangladesh and also the Government of India which has a role to play in this regard. If you are really serious about Bangladesh, can you ignore all this and go on merely demanding support for the Congress stand on Bangladesh ?

Lastly, we are apprehensive that the Congress party and Government are arming themselves with all draconic powers—all in the name of meeting the situation arising out of the Bangladesh issue. In reality, the Government is using all such powers more to crush the popular struggles of the workers, peasants, and other oppressed middle classes than to really and solidly assist the freedom struggle of Bangladesh. If your party for its own reasons abandons the duties and role of a revolutionary Opposition party, why demand the same of our Party ?

I am sorry the letter has become already too lengthy. It could not be helped because of the way you have raised and posed the issues in your reply to my letter.

Let me once again state, while concluding this letter of mine, that our Party will continue to appeal to you for unity, united action and even united front, on individual issues or against the Congress Government and its anti-people policies. This will be pursued as long as you claim to be a Communist Party playing the role of democratic Opposition, if not that of revolutionary Opposition. It is, of course, for you and your party to decide whether to respond positively or take all such opportunities to throw some additional filth against our Party, while rejecting united action with our Party on one plea or the other.

The Slaughter in Baranagar Ominous Sign of Rise in Fascism*

Statement issued by Promod Das Gupta, Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) on August 14, 1971.

The CPI(M) condemns the orgy of violence and mass killings in a small area of Cossipore on August 12 and 13, 1971 by a section of Congress (R) supporters with the active encouragement of the police.

On August 12, 1971 in Cossipore, Calcutta, a local Congress leader Nirmal Chatterjee was killed by alleged Naxalites and in Baranagar Bulu Gupta, a supporter of the CPI(M), was also murdered on the same day by anti-social elements who have been operating under the protection of the police for a long time. Immediately a call for Bandh on August 13 was given by "SANTRASH BIRODHI SARBADALIYA COMMITTEE" composed of the Congress (R), CPI(M), SUC and RSP in Baranagar. But in Cossipore a large number of people in a violent mood led by a section of the Congress (R) and encouraged by the police went on a rampage, burning shops and houses, wounding and killing people. In the name of searching for miscreants and the guilty, innocent people including relations of Naxalites or those who allegedly gave shelter to them or those who did not intervene to save Sri Chatterji when he was killed, were attacked and brutally murdered in the course of a new hours.

According to a police officer, about 1,000 people were mobilised from various places to carry out these gruesome acts. The police, however, having egged them on, stood by without trying to stop them and they were seen picking up dead bodies and throwing them in the river. It is shocking to learn that

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 22, 1971.

about forty people have been killed and many others injured. This mass massacre in Calcutta, under the jurisdiction of the D.C., North, a short distance away from Writers' Buildings and Lalbazar, the Police Headquarters, and with the army helping the police, baffles imagination.

Can it even be permitted that the police and certain sections belonging to the Congress party will adopt such methods and organise vandalism and killings in case some members of that party become victims of attacks by anti-socials ? Times without number our Party has stated that the Government and a section of the police are responsible for encouraging and protecting the anti-socials including Naxalites and we have warned against the danger of the Frankensteinian monster which has been created. The Naxalites have been killing our people with the support of the police and some other political parties. But despite this we cannot acquiesce in such methods of dealing with anti-social elements including Naxalities.

This dangerous, fascist method must be condemned by all democratic political parties and mass organisations and all right-thinking people. Our Party calls upon them to actively protest against such a conspiracy and method which if they unchallenged will be used to crush all democratic movements

A Sinister Portent for Democratic Movement*

Absolutely everything that the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has had to say about the collusion between sections of the administration and the police with anti-social elements and the responsibility of the ruling Congress for the violence that has gripped the State of West Bengal was confirmed by the happenings in the night of August 12-13.

It was a nightmarish seventeen hours, a regular bloodbath—fifty to sixty people killed in cold blood during the all-night orgy. Where the son could not be found, the father was dragged out and killed; where the brother could not be found, the sister's hands were cut. And it went on from house to house, the trail of blood getting longer and longer.

Who organised the slaughter, who went on the bloody rampage?

A senior officer of the Calcutta police, according to Press reports, said "that all the murders had been committed in retaliation of the killing of Mr. Nirmal Chatterjee".

Nirmal Chatterjee was a local leader of the ruling Congress. His assailants were suspected to be Naxalites, and the ruling Congress went on the rampage, mobilising all the anti-social elements in the area and bringing them even from outside.

About fifty houses and a few shops were attacked and the spilling of blood went on for hours. Where was the police? Remember all this was taking place right in Calcutta, a stone's throw away from Lalbazar, the police headquarters. If it had

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 29, 1971.
Refer Document under Item No. 28 of this Volume.

been the CPI(M) that had been involved, the whole place would have been turned into a police camp within minutes and firing and beatings and arrests would have followed in no time.

The picture was different in Cossipore-Baranagar. The hoodlums had a free hand for hours and the Operation Mass Murder continued undisturbed by any police force.

Here was the collusion, open collusion between the police and the Congress hoodlums, right in front of the public eye. If the police had desired it, the murder spree could have been stopped in minutes, but the police conniving with the assassins, the man-hunt could continue for hours. Let the Prime Minister and her Home Ministry stop talking about CPI(M) violence at least after this and cast their glance inside their own home for those responsible for violence in West Bengal.

Another thing became clear as the orgy went on—the clear collusion that has been existing between the ruling Congress and the Naxalites with the police making the third side of the triangle.

It was with Congress and police protection that the Naxalites and anti-social elements masquerading as Naxalites had thrived in the area. It was these anti-social elements and the police under the auspices of the ruling Congress and their Right Communist collaborators that had pushed the CPI(M) out of the area with murders and violence against its cadre. It had become impossible for CPI(M) cadre to live and function in the area.

The Congress leaders were creating a Frankenstein's monster. When they and the anti-social elements fell out, the knife was turned against them. And when one of them fell, that became the signal for the bloodbath.

And when the orgy began, the assassins knew precisely every house which was sheltering Naxalites. They went to each one of these houses, dragged out young men where they could find them or where they were not to be found, they killed others who were in the house.

It is no accident that they knew the houses, for they themselves have been sheltering the Naxalites and helping them all these

days, using them as tools for their diabolical plans against the CPI(M).

They first nurtured the Naxalites and the moment there was some friction, they organised the slaughter of the Naxalites. The Congress will never be forgiven for the ghastly crime of that black night.

What has happened holds sinister portents for the democratic movement. If the Congress crime goes unchallenged, the knife which they wielded in Cossipore-Baranagar against the Naxalites will be turned against the entire democratic movement. The violence which the ruling Congress has made its weapon and the Government-police collusion with it spell a fascist threat to the democratic movement. The parties which have so far refused to see this Congress violence and have been flinging slanderous charges about CPI(M) violence will at least now have to realise that it is the Congress and its Government that has to be fought to end violence in the State of West Bengal.

So far the CPI(M) had been the target of the Congress attack. Hundreds of our Party leaders, workers and supporters have been killed, many maimed, thousands arrested and detained under false charges. When the Party was thus being attacked, it had warned that the Congress Government would expand its attack to envelop the whole democratic movement and no democratic party would be able to escape the repression of the Government.

It is already happening and should serve to open the eyes of all the democratic parties to the danger that looms ahead to the democratic movement, if the Congress and its Government are not fought and defeated right now.

Actual Deeds of Congress in West Bengal*

In his first public address as Governor of West Bengal, Sri A. L. Dias condemned the politics of violence and assassination and warned public servants that any breach in the public servants' code of conduct or lapses in fulfilling the tasks of the administration would be dealt with firmly.

High-sounding words indeed, but the people of West Bengal will find it difficult to take the Governor seriously.

Since the imposition of President's rule, the West Bengal administration has been used by the ruling Congress to further its own interests and no public servant is punished, not even if he is responsible for fifty murders, so long as it serves the purpose of the ruling Congress.

The massacre in Cossipore-Baranagar has shocked public opinion not only because of its fascist-like method, but also because of the action of "public servants" at the highest level, who have deliberately tried to shield, not only the murderers, but also other "public servants" like senior police officers who had aided and abetted the goondas.

On August 15 at the all-party meeting, convened to discuss the Cossipore-Baranagar massacre, Siddhartha Ray was a party to a unanimous resolution to suspend the guilty police officials, to form an enquiry committee composed of all parties and to ensure government implementation of the decisions reached by it.

On August 16, Ray executed a total *volte face*, informing the political parties that the guilty police officials would be

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, August 29, 1971.
Refer Documents Covered under Item No. 20, 28 and 29 of this Volume.

transferred, not *suspended*, since according to him, it seemed unfair to make them “scape-goats”. He also scuttled the decision to hold an all-party enquiry and gave the responsibility of an enquiry to a retired judge. Sri Ray went so far as to deny that any resolution had been passed the previous day.

Without going into the details of Sri Ray’s remarkable capacity for trotting out untruths, it is worthwhile noting that even while Sri Ray backed away from his earlier stand, his own party colleague, Sri Bijoy Singh Nahar, stated that the entire responsibility of the Cossipore-Baranagar massacre devolved on the administration. Yet Sri Ray refused to punish the officers concerned. Is it not true that Sri Ray changed his stand within twenty-four hours because the guilty officers had threatened to disclose the Congress plot behind the mass murders if any action were taken against them?

Sri Ray’s abrupt *volte face* makes it crystal clear that the ruling Congress in connivance with a section of the police is following a path of murder, terror and violence and is using the administration to conceal its diabolical plan.

Let Smt. Gandhi stop shedding crocodile tears over the “problems of West Bengal”. Not many people will be fooled. More and more they are beginning to realise that it is Smt. Gandhi and her party who are directly responsible for the murder, violence and terror in West Bengal today because they are desperate to destroy the democratic movement in this State.

In a letter to Sri Siddhartha Ray dated August 19, Comrade Jyoti Basu reminded him of the all-party meeting where “unanimity was arrived at by the parties, and you also agreed with some urgent measures which were needed. But you showed scant respect for your plighted word and announced your own decisions. This act of yours cannot be taken lightly and jeopardises the efforts that were being made by all of us in the all-parties meeting to meet the situation in West Bengal. The doubts about the bonafides of the Government have further deepened.”

Whereas it is more than clear to any sane person that the Cossipore-Baranagar blood-bath was planned and implemented

by a section of the ruling Congress in collusion with the police, the shameless servitors of the Right C.P. refuse to condemn outright their Congress masters.

At a meeting of democratic parties that was called to decide on protest action against the ruling Congress, the revisionists opposed any action on the totally absurd plea that CPI(M) volunteers were also involved with the Congressites. Along with a section of the PSP, the Rightists refused to endorse the decision of other parties to call a hartal in Greater Calcutta in protest against the Congress atrocities.

It is ironical that even the Congress has not dared to try and implicate the CPI(M) and has tried to conceal its guilt by manufacturing “mass spontaneity” , “popular feeling against the victims” etc., saying that the local people had risen up in mass protest.

Instead of exposing the diabolical Congress plot, the revisionist are shielding the culprits and thus deliberately trying to conceal the grave and dangerous portent that the Cossipore-Baranagar incident holds for the entire democratic movement in West Bengal.

The ruling Congress, more and more desperate in the face of the militant resistance of the democratic movement in West Bengal, is intensifying its attacks on the people directly using anti-social elements, the police and the army to serve its purpose.

On August 17 alone, as many as nineteen people were killed in different areas by the anti-social elements-police combination. Eight people fell dead at the assassins’ hand on the previous day, four were killed on August 18—two by police at the crowded Howrah Station area, two other by goondas, seven on August 19, five on the following day, eight next day and so on the official politics of murder continues.

Kidnapping followed by maiming and murder of democratic workers and innocent people has become a law in lawless West Bengal. On August 17 four people including two employees, one a Government one, were kidnapped at Tollygunj from a taxi while going to office. The abductors, Congress gangsters in

this case, whisked away the four to a nearby refugee colony and hacked two to death. The dead bodies were thrown away at another place. Relatives of the kidnapped including a few women, when they rushed to Azadgarh colony to find out the kidnapped, were detained there for hours by the goondas. Police were informed immediately after the abduction. But no action followed. They rather particularly saw to it that the local people could not move to Azadgarh to rescue the kidnapped.

For months together at Netajinagar, Gandhi Colony, Pallisree, Sree Colony, Bikramgarh, Bapujinagar, and many other areas of Jadavpur and Tollygunj the goondas patronised by the Congress party have been holding the local people in terror. Many have been butchered to death in the recent past. Dozens of professional goondas have been imported in the area by the Congress bosses.

Comrade Sibdas Bhattacharya, a member of the 24-Parganas District Committee of the CPI(M), was kidnapped on August 18 by hoodlums engaged by the Right C.P. The intent was to murder him. But the villagers of Bhangar saved his life. This was the second time that Comrade Sibdas was kidnapped by Right C.P. hoodlums.

The Central Reserve Police snooped on Asokenagar, 24-Parganas and arrested 82 people. Among them was Subodh Biswas, a worker, who was taken to nearby Maniktala area and shot by the CRP to death.

Comrade Purnabasi Rajbhar, a leader of jute workers, was hacked to death by Congress goondas at Noapara. It is being alleged that a jute baron and a police officer plotted the murder.

Even hospitals are not being spared by the Congress thugs. A number of goondas led by a Youth Congress leader were on an expedition at Chittaranjan Cancer Hospital of Calcutta. But the assailants were repulsed by the employees. A tuberculosis hospital at Garia faced a similar raid a few days earlier.

Jorabagan area of Calcutta has been the favourite pasture for quite some time of the Congress goondas and their police and CRP backers. Recently, to make their grip on the area still stronger, some police officers led by Bibhuti Chakrabarty,

Deputy Commissioner, North Calcutta, and some Congress leaders had a secret meeting at Ward No. 19. They have chalked out a diabolical plan of attacks on wide areas in Jorabagan.

Secret plans of attacks have become the pastime of the Congressites. Recently, they plotted to employ hoodlums to kill some CPI(M) councillors of the Calcutta Corporation.

Assorted goondas led by the Congressites broke into the house at Jyotinagar of Comrade Sujit Das, a transport employees' leader, on August 13 and looted money and articles. Many other adjoining houses were subjected to similar raids.

The arrests of democratic workers and innocents are continuing as before. A leader of the employees of the Reserve Bank of India, Calcutta, has been arbitrarily arrested. Some 15 young men were arrested on August 12 in Syampukur, Calcutta, while they were taking tea in a shop. Arrests of peasant leaders in Purbasthali and Nadanghat, Burdwan, have been reported. CPI(M) leaders in different areas of Chanditala, Hooghly, were arrested on August 14 under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. Random arrests of leaders of workers' and peasants' movement have been reported from Bhangar, 24-Parganas, Kalyani, Nadia, Kumarganj, West Dinajpur and so on.

Hoodlums inspired by the Congress bosses made on August 20, a dangerous attempt at Bansberia, Hooghly, on the life Ram Chatterjee, leader of the Forward Bloc (Marxist). The assailants first overpowered the two police security men who without much ado handed over their revolver to the attackers. Bare-handed Chatterjee hit back the gangsters who were threatening to shoot him and his son. As the local people rushed there, the goondas fled. All this happened near the Bansberia police outpost. On coming to the outpost Chatterjee found his assailants exchanging pleasantries with police officers. When he expressed his amazement at this, a police officer said, young boys as they were, they must be given an opportunity of reforming themselves through humane behaviour !

Statement On The Present Situation*

Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in Bangalore from August 24 to 29, 1971.

Meeting in the background of the monetary crisis, in the USA and elsewhere, the C.C. took stock of the economic situation and its effect on India. The C.C. noted that the devaluation of the dollar, its delinking from gold, and the monetary convulsions that have seized the bigger part of the capitalist world indicate not simply the instability of the currencies but some of the deeper maladies of the world capitalist crisis.

The devaluation of the dollar in effect is an announcement that the post-war world capitalist economy completely dominated by the U.S. dollar has entered its last phase of domination. Naturally, this is leading to imposition of new tariffs, new taxes on the working class and the masses within each imperialist State, trying to capture as many markets as possible.

The order of President Nixon delinking his country's currency from gold, imposing a 10 per cent surcharge on all goods imported into the USA and the 90-day wage freeze on the workers, all point to the seriousness of the situation faced by the leading country of the capitalist world. It should be remembered that these measures were preceded by the inflationary situation and growing bankruptcies in the USA.

These developments involving the major countries of the capitalist world are bound to introduce great disturbances in international trade and in the competition for markets that is growing. The burden of these developments is likely to be

*Published in the Supplement to "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, September 12, 1971.

thrown in a big way on the economically weaker countries of Asia and Africa including India. The Finance Minister may announce heroically that the parity of the rupee with the dollar will be maintained. But he cannot get away from the fact that this crisis of American economy is going to affect seriously the foreign trade and 'aid', and, consequently, the whole of Indian economic development and plans.

Our Party has all along been demanding of the Government that quick steps should be taken to end India's economic dependence on the USA and the West, as the economies of these countries are crisis-ridden and our people are bound to suffer from their economic convulsions. The Government of India, however, instead of taking quick steps to end our dependence on the West has been increasing it by means of loans, collaboration agreements and other ways and now because of the crisis, we will have to lift part of the burden of these countries.

It should be remembered that what is crashing in the USA is the militarily dominated capitalist economy with its emphasis on military expenditure and monopolist domination. The fighting people of Vietnam have sucked the blood and resources of American militarist aggressor. They have given an irreparable blow to this structure and have contributed to the crisis of the American economy in a big way. At the same time, the laws of world capitalism, competition between world monopolists, competition for markets, all have contributed to the recent convulsions.

As a result of this crisis, quick political and diplomatic developments are taking place. Nixon's decision to visit China is not the decision of a contrite person, wanting to rectify the injustice that he has been doing. On the other hand, it is largely dictated by the interests of the crashing economy which stands in need of expanding markets and also seeks to create an atmosphere of friendliness and dialogue with self-reliant China to tide over the present difficulties. It announced the fiasco of the American policy of cordoning off and containing China,

results of its defeats in Vietnam, though it hopes to exploit the Sino-Soviet differences to its own advantage.

Nonetheless, this development will have big repercussions on the events in the coming months, as it will encourage many other nations and countries to seek closer relations with People's China.

The fiasco of American policies, the difficulties of the capitalist world, the growing rivalries among the imperialist Powers, all really constitute a good opportunity for the democratic and liberation movements to forge ahead. In large parts of the world, the fighting people are carrying on their struggle against the American imperialists in a more determined manner than before. National liberation struggles continue to gather strength. Not all the military bombings have secured for them any respite from the resistance of the people of Vietnam.

But, at the same time, the world is witnessing certain setbacks in spite of these growing opportunities. In a number of Afro-Asian countries, the democratic movements are being attacked and people's representatives imprisoned and tortured. The latest to join in the butchery of the people and the Communists is General Numeiry of Sudan. But in the UAR also, in the wake of the Defence Treaty with the USSR, President Sadat has opened a new offensive against the progressive forces threatening some of them with execution. The struggle of the Arab people against Israel is getting disrupted and the ruling junta in many States are conspiring against the Palestine commandoes.

This situation is in part due to the fact that the world Communist movement and the Socialist Camp have lost their former homogeneity, they stand divided, working at cross purposes and, in the bargain, follow policies which are a violation of Marxist-Leninist norms and proletarian internationalism. Both the big Socialist States and their big parties often take an opportunist and wrong attitude on vital questions affecting the struggle of millions. One of the recent instances is the Chinese attitude towards the movement in Bangladesh, where the entire people have risen against their

subjugation while the People's Republic of China regards it only as an internal affair of Pakistan. It is this weakness and erroneous policies of these two Socialist Governments that has today hampered in a big way the further unfolding of the struggle of the masses in the under-developed countries and even in the capitalist countries. The C.C. hopes that in the interests of the world revolutionary movement, these Communist parties would re-examine their policies and try to ensure maximum support to the developing struggle of the peoples of all countries. In the absence of this the struggle of every people including that of India is bound to face greater difficulties.

In its Election Manifesto, the C. C. had warned that the Indira Congress immediately on re-election intended to levy a new taxation load of Rs. 300-400 crores on the people. Notwithstanding all the promises of "garibi hatao" etc., the new load of taxation announced in the budget constitutes a heavy burden on the people, and vindicates the C.C.'s warning. There is no doubt that by its electoral victory the Indira Congress has enhanced its parliamentary strength in a big way; that, for the time being, it has secured the confidence vote of the people and that it has got out of the critical organisational situation in which it found itself a few months before the election.

At the same time, on the basis of its electoral promises, its "garibi hatao" slogan, its promise to secure employment and its attack on the reactionary policies of the Jana Sangh-Swatantra-Syndicate alliance, the Indira Congress not only drew the support of the voters, but also successfully dispersed, for the time being, the challenge it faced from the U.F. of the Left and democratic forces. Under its blandishments, the Right Communist Party deserted the banner of opposition, the SSP joined the Syndicate, and the effective opposition to the Congress party from the Left was, for the time being, undermined.

All this has given it a greater degree of confidence and strength, a greater capacity of manoeuvring in its dealings with the people. And yet, the economic situation is such, the hopes and expectations aroused in the people are such, that the Indira Congress Government is compelled to come into conflict with

it everyday, it is helping to remove the illusions that it has created.

True, it has restored to Parliament the right to amend Fundamental Rights. It proposes to bring constitutional amendments to make the State take-over of big properties easier. It has also taken steps for abolition of Privy Purses. Our Party supports all such measures. But these measures, whatever many be their immediate importance, do not lead to the solution of any basic problem nor to the grant of substantial relief to a people which is being economically driven to the wall. Further, we must be vigilant and fight against the Central Government misuse of these powers, keeping in mind its rejection of our amendment that freedom of speech, Press, association, is inviolable even by Parliament.

The economic situation, as given in the official documents itself, reveals that unless the basic class policies of the Government are defeated, there will be very little economic relief for the people.

The much-boosted "Green Revolution" has not resulted in greater per capita availability of foodgrains, though the gross production of these went up to 108 million tons. In fact, the total per capita net availability has in recent years not so much increased as decreased. There is also a decrease in rural consumption. The percentage of people living below starvation standards both in the urban and rural areas has increased in a big way. The "Green Revolution" has, on the other hand, further strengthened the landlords and the richer peasants, increased further the pauperisation of the mass of the peasantry and led to greater social differentiation and conflicts.

Notwithstanding the rise in food production, there is hardly any relaxation in the high prices, and prices of all other commodities are continuously rising and they have got a big spurt after Chavan's recent budget. The Indira Gandhi Government systematically uses both the weapons of inflation and taxation to rob the people, and when the people, come face to face with high prices, they are cynically told to organise consumer resistance, that is, not to purchase things at all. The

high rates of taxation only fleece the ordinary people while the big capitalists and businessmen are able to evade them to the tune of hundreds of crores. In the background of the stubborn resistance of the Government to grant adequate compensation for the rising cost of living, the real wages and salaries of industrial workers, salaried employees, Government employees, are continuously falling. In the rural areas, the promise of land reforms is yet to be realised, while the small peasant continues to be ruined. Credit continues to be monopolised by the top sections and the agricultural workers and poor peasants are continuously being thrown into the ranks of destitutes.

Finding that unemployment is steadily rising and has reached the proportion of millions, the figure for technical and professional unemployment itself reaching 14 lakhs, the Indira Government is announcing its intention of fighting unemployment by providing work in rural areas. It has announced the expenditure of a few crores of rupees to give employment to the needy families and thereby alleviate the sufferings to some extent of the common man. But all these schemes and announcements at best touch only the fringe of the problem and create more expectations than jobs.

On the other hand, under the policies pursued by the Government, new offensives are planned against the working class in the name of modernisation of factories which is bound to throw out of employment thousands of workers. The Government is also busy importing computers and other devices which will heavily reduce the employment potential so far as the middle classes are concerned. In overtaking or opening closed factories, the hard-won gains of the working class are being nullified and additional burdens are being imposed by the Government. The fact is that the capitalist path pursued by the Government cannot but lead to growing unemployment, and the ameliorative measures of the Government cannot but remain anything more than symbolic.

- The utter bankruptcy of the Government's policies is to be seen from the fact that even in the public sector it is unable to utilise the full production capacity and allow big plants to run

at a loss. The fact that under-utilisation has become a chronic phenomenon, leading to an absurd position where some plants are utilised only 20-40 per cent of the capacity, shows both the effect of recession as well as the utter incompetence and corruption of the bureaucratic management. Unable to explain this phenomenon, the Government seeks to make a scape-goat of the workers and dishonestly holds them responsible for the fall in production. Trade unions guided by our Party have on many occasions showed in a concrete manner that production was falling behind schedule because of the corrupt and bureaucratic officials, but all they got was either victimisation or other attacks against the workers.

All these ought to show that the claim of the Government that it has brought the country out of the economic recession and that the country is now geared up for a big advance, are not borne out by facts. In fact, so long as the same old policies continue and the policies of verbal denouncement of the monopolists and granting them more licences in practice, the policy of talking Socialism in words and attacking the working class living standards in practice, it will be difficult for the economy to come out of the crisis. It is the people that have to pay for these policies and suffer the consequences.

One of the recent claims of the Government for which it sought a pat on the back from the people was that Indian exports have rapidly grown, but official spokesmen conceded the fact that these exports are not so much an indication of prosperity as dictated by the growing foreign debt burden. The Finance Minister himself announced that India's foreign debt burden this year rose to 456 crores of rupees, a sum equal to the annual wage of lakhs of workers of India. The dependence of our economy on foreign loans still continues and is seen in the repeated attempts to secure more and more loans from the West. If this continues our export trade will be more and more mortgaged to the payment of foreign debts, leaving hardly anything to pay in exchange of imports.

The perilous state of our economy is directly the result of the deepening economic crisis of the capitalist path within whose

framework the Government is seeking remedial measures and therefore is unable to meet the situation. Such measures as nationalisation of banks or of general insurance, the unemployment relief scheme, or the opening of new bank branches in the rural areas or giving of export subsidies—all only touch the fringe of the problem, help some narrow sections, and by raising illusions, help the Government to tide over the immediate situation. But the discontent begins to burst out a new till it becomes uncontrollable.

Consistent with its class outlook and its caution in regard to the big imperialist powers, the Indian Government has taken a vacillating and hesitant attitude towards the vital problem of the Bangladesh struggle. The C.C. has, in another resolution, expressed itself on the great importance of this struggle to the democratic movement in India. The minimum that the Government should have done was to recognise the Bangladesh Government and unhesitatingly give all help to the fighting people there. It has failed to do so in spite of the unanimous demand from all sections of people and of democratic parties.

If this policy continues not only will the people of Bangladesh, suffer but the people of India also will suffer in a big way and the entire economy of India will be thrown out of gear. For, only the successful struggle of the Bangladesh people will be able to attract the millions of refugees back into Bangladesh. otherwise, they will have to be absorbed in India, and the economy will be strained to the utmost in providing for them.

The Bangladesh struggle has, at the same time, confirmed before the people how correct was our Party's advice in relation to the foreign policy that should be pursued by the Government of India. Our Party had repeatedly criticised the Government of India for not recognising a number of Socialist countries, for not giving forthright support to the struggle of the people of Vietnam and demanding the withdrawal of all American troops, for not taking a consistent stand of opposition to American imperialism and its machinations. Our Party has repeatedly said that the Government of India was playing between the two camps, often taking a pro-American attitude

on a number of vital issues and we warned that American imperialism was a treacherous ally, out only for its own domination, and demanded that our country's foreign policy should be oriented more and more towards the Socialist and democratic countries.

The treacherous conduct of the U. S. imperialists in supporting Yahya Khan's regime, the indirect encouragement they have given to his war threats against India, and the massacre of innocents for which they are indirectly responsible—all these prove that our Party correctly understood our national interests and gave a correct line. The Indo-Soviet Treaty also once more shows how correct we were in demanding greater friendly relations with the Socialist countries. In the Treaty, and in the joint communique accompanying it, India openly demands withdrawal of all American troops from Vietnam and extends support to those who fight against colonialism and racialism. Once again, we have warned that if this Treaty becomes an instrument for conspiracies against China, then its whole purpose will be lost and India's national interests cannot be defended.

The C.C. warns the people that though the Syndicate Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine has been routed in the present elections, they are busy resurrecting a platform so that they can approach the people. Their crude defence of the princes, of the bankers, and others have exposed them so thoroughly that they need a new garb to conceal their real intentions. The Jana Sangh, in particular, is exploiting the Bangladesh issue and giving it a communal twist, which perfectly suits its reactionary policies. The people should be aware of their intentions and their attempt to ingratiate themselves with the voters.

In the background of the deteriorating economic situation, the people of our country, the working class, employees, the peasants, and agricultural labourers, students, all are getting restive and a number of struggles are already on. Though the unity of the Left parties is disrupted, still the urge among the masses for unitedly defending their interests is so strong that trade union and other struggles often break out through traditional organisational loyalties and sweep into common actions,

bringing together organisations which would normally never come on a common platform. The big strike struggles of West Bengal and Kerala, in recent months, have often seen such diverse organisations as the CITU, HMS, INTUC, AITUC and others, coming on a common platform, working for common action and unitedly defending the interests of the workers and other sections. There have been repeated attempts on the part of some of the parties to disrupt the common mass organisations and stay away from common mass actions, but the economic discontent is so deep that more and more such disruption is being overcome and such staying away is becoming very difficult for the disrupters without exposing themselves.

The latest triumph of this urge for common resistance to Congress rule is to be seen in the West Bengal bandh on August 27. There many organisations hesitated till the last, the Union Labour Minister took a hand in disrupting the common front but what was sought to be achieved in Delhi was overruled by the mass of workers in Calcutta and elsewhere and once again almost all the mass organisations came together in support of the bandh giving another unique exhibition of working class solidarity and unity of the people of West Bengal.

It is because there is a common urge today for unity and resistance, created by the economic policies of the Government that our Party has been demanding a united front of Left and democratic forces so that the popular struggle can be raised to new heights. The Government of India after the elections has not relaxed its attack on our Party and the common man.

In West Bengal, under Presidential rule, military combings, CRP attacks, gangster attacks and murders against leaders and ranks of the CPI(M) and other democratic parties and mass organisations are intensified. The T.U., kisan and other mass leaders have been imprisoned for months on murder charges and bails have been refused. Many have been arrested under the PVA Act and other Acts. Sec. 144 has been applied to prohibit all demonstrations and mass activity. Elected Assembly is dissolved and President's rule is imposed. The Government

stubbornly refuses to hold early elections negating even parliamentary democracy to the West Bengal people. While in other States, this kind of terror is not to be seen as yet, at the same time, in any mass action, ruthless repression is resorted to.

In West Bengal, Andhra and Punjab, the police are making a habit of physically liquidating some of the prisoners in their custody, be they Naxalites or anybody else. The West Bengal happenings forecast what will happen if the people do not come together and fight the present policies of the Government.

That is why our Party wants to appeal to all other Left and democratic parties to come together and fight the attacks on the common man launched by the Indira Congress Government. What we seek is something beyond just an electoral front, what we want is that all democratic parties and mass organisations led by them should jointly sponsor mass actions against the economic burdens, in defence of the common man, so that the popular movement increases and is able to meet the growing challenge from the ruling classes. If this is not done, the discontent will be dissipated, it will be taken into reactionary channels and it will only help the ruling classes to suppress the common fight with the utmost ease.

For the present state of affairs, the Right Communist Party leaders who have deserted to the Congress camp and others who broke the Left front should be held responsible and it is our earnest appeal to all of them to retrace their steps and instead of continuing to be hangers-on of the ruling party, to take their place in the midst of the fighting people, shoulder to shoulder with all those who oppose the bourgeois-landlord regime.

The C.C. of the CPI(M) considers it as urgently necessary and feasible for all democratic parties immediately to join and launch country-wide campaigns and struggles on the following vital issues to our country and our people :

1. For the immediate recognition of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh and rendering of all necessary material assistance and supplying of arms and all other necessary help required;

2. For stopping the terror in West Bengal, withdrawal of Sec. 144 and curfew orders, withdrawal of CRP and military for stopping the murders and assassinations of cadre and organisations systematically being indulged by the ruling Congress party in collusion with anti-social elements and Naxalites, and the police. For holding elections in West Bengal not later than February 1972 and restoring democracy ;
3. For basic changes in the Consitution, to eliminate the monopolist and landlord exploitation, to ensure fuller autonomy for the States, and to ensure the right to work and full civil liberties;
4. Against Preventive Detention Acts and against all repressive measures of the Government;
5. Against heavy taxation affecting the people and against rising prices;
6. Against unemployment, and for provision of jobs and pending job provision, relief wage for the unemployed, for prevention of closing of factories and establishments and for taking over all such closed ones by the State;
7. For reduction in land ceilings, and ensuring land to the tiller, for house sites, fair wages and full employment for agricultural laboures, for fair and guaranteed prices for agricultural products of the peasantry and for provision of cheap credit to the rural poor and toiling peasantry.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M), once again, strongly urges alll democratic parties and forces to come forward for joint action at all levels, considering the serious situation facing our people and country, considering the vital importance of the Bangladesh people's struggle for the democratic movement of our country.

Our Party pledges that all our members would strain their energies to bring about such joint actions, and are ready for utmost sacrifice in the cause of our toiling masses for defence of democracy and liberties.

Resolutions Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting at Bangalore held on August 24-29, 1971*

(a) On the Execution of Communists in Sudan and other countries

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) pays its homage to Comrade Mahgoub, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Sudan, Shafi Al-Sheikh, Vice-President of the World Federation of Trade Unions, and other leaders of the Communist Party and other democratic leaders who were executed by the butcher Numeiry. The Central Committee strongly denounces these criminal and cruel murders. The C.C. is confident that the Communist Party of Sudan will overcome the serious setback it suffered from the loss of many of their experienced and respected leaders and successfully fight back the military reactionary regime. The Central Committee pledges its full support to the Communist Party of Sudan and to the people of Sudan, pledges to popularise their cause among our own people, and to extend their support to the Sudanese people's struggle.

This mass killing of Communists in Sudan is only the latest instance of such physical liquidation of Communists which has been going on in various countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It had taken place in Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. In most of the Latin American countries, the murder of Communists has become a routine practice. In Asia, in the post-war period, such massacre of Communists had taken place in Malaya,

*Published as a Supplement to "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, September 12, 1971.

Burma, the Philippines, and the last was the fascistic butchery of over half a million comrades in Indonesia in 1965.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) is shocked to note that most of these Governments have been receiving economic and military assistance from Socialist countries, which they had been using in their monstrous butchery of Communists and other democratic forces.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) strongly condemns this butchery of Communists and of other democratic forces. It appeals to the people and democratic forces of the world and all progressive Governments to voice their strong condemnation of these mass killings of Communists and take every step to prevent them. If they are allowed to continue, all progressive forces will sooner or later become victims of the same fascist terror.

(b) On the Indo-Soviet Treaty

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship which provides for mutual consultation, in case of aggression or threat of aggression on either party, and steps to remove the aggression or threat of aggression, and which forthrightly condemns colonialism and racialism. It also provides for "most favoured nation" treatment in relation between the two countries.

The C.C. notes that this Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union has come as a culmination of increase of mutual trade, economic and technical aid over the past few years between the two countries. The Treaty has been concluded in the background of the developments in Bangladesh, where following the unprecedented butchery of the mass of the people by Yahya Khan's military hordes, the people were forced to declare independence and are fighting valiantly against the military machine of Yahya Khan's dictatorship. Despite this mass butchery, the U.S. has been continuing the supply of arms to Pakistan.

In these circumstances, Yahya Khan, backed by the U.S. imperialists, has been holding out threats of unleashing a total

war against India, in case it went all out to support the struggle of the people of Bangladesh, including recognition of the Government of Bangladesh.

Coming in this background, the Indo-Soviet Treaty should have helped to overcome all hesitations and vacillations on the part of the Government of India and the Government must come forward to accord immediate recognition to Bangladesh and give the utmost moral and material assistance. In fact, the usefulness of the Treaty will be judged on this basis.

However, the joint communique of the two Foreign Ministers, issued two days after the Treaty, talks of "political solution" for the situation created by the struggle for freedom by the people of Bangladesh "in the interests of the whole people of Pakistan". This creates some apprehensions that the question of recognition of the Government of Bangladesh is sought to be by-passed.

The Central Committee is firmly of opinion that there can only be a settlement on the basis of the declared wishes of the people of Bangladesh for a free and independent Bangladesh.

In the said joint communique of the Foreign Ministers of India and the USSR, India has for the first time called for the withdrawal of the U. S. forces from Vietnam and also called for the settlement of the problem on the basis of the seven-point proposal put forward by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and to this extent it is welcome. The C.C. urges upon the Government of India to shed its hesitations and vacillations and recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and accord full diplomatic recognition to the Democratic People's Republics of Vietnam and Korea, the GDR and the Government of Cambodia headed by Prince Sihanouk.

The C.C. is of firm opinion that in order to consolidate the gains of this Treaty and to strengthen our independence and economic strength, it is urgently necessary to take all required steps to improve our relations with the People's Republic of China, a big Power lying practically all along our northern borders. This is essential to counteract the Pak-American threats and conspiracies and to follow an anti-imperialist, anti-colonial

and really independent foreign policy and not allow our country to be drawn into any reactionary group or conspiracies aimed against China.

The C.C. stresses that such treaties by themselves will not lead to the real strengthening of the defence and economic might of the country, which primarily depends upon its internal strength. It is, therefore, vitally important that measures to strengthen democracy, and to firmly combat the monopolists, both foreign and Indian, and feudal elements are taken.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the democratic forces in the country should heighten their vigilance and intensify their struggles in defence of democracy and against the anti-people policies of the Government.

(c) On Bangladesh

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) at its meeting in April expressed its deep indignation at the wholesale massacre of tens of thousands of unarmed civilians of Bangladesh by the army of the military regime of Pakistan. The C.C. further demanded that the Government of India forthwith recognise the provisional Government of Swadhin Bangladesh and render it all material assistance.

Since then, the struggle of the people of Bangladesh has reached new heights. The people have taken to guerrilla actions and armed resistance against the traitors and the military forces of Pakistan Government. No more can the regime of Yahya Khan, with the help of interested Press and radio, boast that the situation is returning to normal. The sabotage activities of the guerrilla bands, their militant resistance to army detachments and the popular support they are evoking from the people—all have compelled Yahya Khan's army to confine itself to marauding activities and armed forays against the innocent people in villages and towns. Unheard of brutalities are being perpetrated against the fighting people of Bangladesh by Yahya Khan's army, aided as it is by the military help from American imperialism which once more has kept to its title of the gendarme of world reaction. These brutalities have been

condemned all over the world and the foreign Press Correspondents invited by Yahya Khan to obtain a good-conduct certificate have also denounced the atrocities perpetrated by his army. Today, the reactionary Governments in various parts of the world are supporting clandestinely or openly the Yahya regime while the democratic forces are ranging themselves on the side of the militant Bangladesh struggle.

This international polarisation of forces is not accidental, and this struggle of Bangladesh has its own special importance far beyond its frontiers. This has been one of the most outstanding developments in the Indian sub-continent, following the imperialist-enforced division of India on communal and religious basis. The heroic struggle of the Bangladesh people in defence of their democratic rights and national autonomy strikes a powerful blow against the communal and religious animosity and hatred between the two peoples. This just and legitimate struggle of the Bangladesh people, and the warm and fraternal support that has been rendered by the democratic forces in India to this struggle, is forging fraternal bonds between the peoples of the Indian Union and Pakistan, crashing all the walls of communal and religious hatred built by the imperialists. The Bangladesh struggle by its scope and democratic character paves the way for the development of common anti-imperialist, democratic and proletarian struggles in both the Indian Union and Pakistan.

The present struggle has come as a culmination of previous outbursts and mass actions which claimed many martyrs. Since the day when the Muslim League was first defeated in East Bengal in 1954, the Bangladesh people have carried on ceaseless struggle for the recognition of their nationhood, for overcoming and ending the unequal treatment accorded to them by the military rulers of West Pakistan and even for securing the basic right for the spread and freedom of their mother tongue. In this mighty struggle, the students and toilers have played a glorious role and inside Bangladesh, they smashed communal barriers and forged an impregnable unity. It was their martyrdom that brought about the downfall of Ayub Khan; it was their

martyrdom that forced Yahya Khan to order the elections and again it was their will that routed the reactionaries in the elections and gave a vote of confidence to the leaders of their own choice.

Thus, these developing democratic struggles of Bangladesh, challenging the military dictatorship, challenging the old communal barriers which harmed the democratic movement on both sides, is of vital importance to the people of India whose own democratic struggle often gets distorted because of this communal and religious set-up. The victory of the people of Bangladesh will bring a tremendous accession of strength to the popular forces in India as well as Pakistan, and strengthen the potentialities of the democratic movement. Its victory further will enable the other nationalities in West Pakistan the Pakhtoons, the Baluchis and the Sindhis, and the people of Punjab, to wage their own democratic struggle and make it impossible for the military dictatorship to continue its reactionary rule.

The U.S. imperialism has understood the overall significance of this big struggle and it is doing everything it can to defeat it. It knows that it is not only a question of the people of Bangladesh advancing but of the democratic movement widely sweeping over the entire area and registering new successes and thereby altering the balance of forces against the reactionaries and in favour of the people. That is why it conspires through the UNO, it places arms and material at the disposal of the Yahya regime, and does everything to stifle the voice of freedom so that further developments can be prevented.

It is shocking that the Government of the People's Republic of China instead of lending full support to this struggle, presents it as an internal affair of Pakistan and thereby strengthens the hands of the military regime of Yahya Khan.

The C.C. notes that the Pakistan authorities are exploiting the Islamic sentiment to secure the support of a number of African and Asian countries that assembled at Rabat last year. It also notes with regret that a number of these and other African and Asian countries have refrained from supporting the Bangladesh

struggle and some of these have openly opined that it is only an internal problem of Pakistan. The C.C. hopes that the Governments of these countries will realise the historic importance of the Bangladesh people's struggle for freedom and democracy and will extend their full support to it.

It is in this background that people of India and their democratic movement have to judge whether they have discharged their responsibilities and given sufficient help to the cause of the Bangladesh people. The Government of India's record in this respect is one of extreme vacillation. It has failed to grant recognition to the Bangladesh Government and render all-out assistance to its fighting people. The fighting people do not require alms but arms. Every day that passes allows the Yahya regime to take advantage of the help pouring in from imperialist quarters, endangers the safety of the freedom struggle and inflicts inhuman sufferings on the fighting people. Indira Gandhi's Government has absolutely no excuse to delay recognition except its own reservations and calculations. The entire people of India and all the political parties have expressed their sympathy with the cause of Bangladesh. All democratic parties have demanded with one voice that immediate recognition be granted. Very rarely does a Government secure such unanimous support for a step which it says it is going to take. And yet, recognition has not come and the fighting people are made to live on nothing but words of sympathy and hope.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty should have helped to overcome all hesitations, and the Government of India should have hastened to accord recognition to the Government of Bangladesh.

The C.C. notes that the joint communique of the Foreign Ministers of India and the USSR talks of "political solution" for the situation in Bangladesh, "in the interests of the people of whole of Pakistan". This creates some apprehensions that the question of recognition of Bangladesh is sought to be by-passed.

The C.C. is firmly of opinion that there can be no settlement except on the basis of the declared wishes of the people of Bangladesh for a free and independent Bangladesh.

The democratic movement in India cannot disown its responsibility in this connection. If united and active, it certainly

has sufficient strength to force the hands of the Government to grant immediate recognition and open a new chapter of friendliness and camaraderie between the people of Bangladesh and the people of India. This lack of unity and steadfast action has enabled the Government to escape with promises only, which has done much harm to the fight in Bangladesh.

The C.C. is of firm opinion that because of dilly-dallying with the question of recognition of Bangladesh freedom struggle to the fullest extent necessary, already eight million refugees have sought shelter in India and it has become an urgent necessity for India not only to look after the relief of these refugees adequately, but also do everything to help Swadhin Bangladesh achieve victory so that the refugees can return to their country.

The C.C. of the CPI(M) calls upon all democratic parties and the people of India to realise that grave issues are at stake, that any setback to the struggle of the Bangladesh people will have tremendous repercussions on the democratic movement in India, the people being its victims.

The C.C. appeals to all democratic parties and organisations to unite their forces and with one voice demand of the Government that immediate recognition be granted and that every possible help is rendered to the people of Bangladesh.

The C.C. notes that demands are being made for armed intervention by the Government of India against Pakistan. Such a line, if implemented, would transform the democratic freedom struggle of Bangladesh into that very conflict between India and Pakistan, which the Yahya Khan military clique and their patrons want it to appear and will have a catastrophic effect on the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people. But, at the same time the C.C. is very clear that in case of the Government of India giving recognition and all necessary material help and arms faces an attack by the Pakistan military regime, it need not hesitate to take all necessary steps to defeat the onslaught.

The C.C. warns the democratic forces to beware of the Jana Sangh and certain other reactionary elements who in the guise of supporting the cause of Bangladesh, rouse communal feelings.

Any communal tension in our country will be of great benefit to the Yahya Khan regime. Therefore, any association with the Jana Sangh on this issue will harm the cause of the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people.

The C.C. welcomes the efforts of different fighting organisations of Bangladesh to forge unity among themselves. The C.C. is also confident that the fighting organisations of the Bangladesh people will succeed in broadening their struggle, to secure for it deep footing among the masses, and to draw the mass of workers and peasants in the common fight. Once this is done, the struggle will become invincible.

The C.C. of the CPI(M) calls upon all anti-imperialist organisations, Communist and Workers' Parties, to rally in support of the cause of Bangladesh and throw their full weight against the machinations of the imperialists and reactionaries. The C.C. calls upon all Party units and ranks to wage a persistent struggle to unite the democratic forces in the country for the cause of Bangladesh and to break down the resistance of the Government in granting immediate recognition to the Bangladesh Government and render all necessary material assistance to fight back the terror regime of Yahya Khan.

(d) On the Trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) strongly condemns the military clique of Pakistan for the trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The military junta headed by Yahya Khan is daily committing diabolical crimes against the people of Bangladesh and organising unparalleled genocide to crush their glorious struggle for democracy and freedom. But the people's resistance continues and now the attempt is being made to condemn to death the leader who was voted to power by the people of Pakistan through the elections. The Central Committee urges upon the democratic and freedom-loving peoples and Governments throughout the world to protest against this farcical trial and to compel the Pakistan military authorities to set free Sheikh Mujibur Rahman without delay.

(e) On the August 27th General Strike in West Bengal

The Central of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) greets the working class and the people of West Bengal for their magnificent response to the call for general strike and hartal on August 27, 1971, against the anti-people reactionary policies of the Government under President's rule, with regard to their urgent demands such as opening of over 400 closed factories, stopping evictions, measures against spiralling prices, steps to mitigate the unemployment problem, withdrawing of the new tax burdens that affect the people, stopping police terror and all repressive measures and methods, stopping goonda attacks and murders, granting immediate recognition to the Government of Bangladesh, announcing election dates to the State Assembly to be held not later than February 1972, etc.

The C.C. notes with satisfaction that despite the threats of the Government, the calling of the military and the mischievous propaganda of certain reactionary circles denouncing the strike as anti-national, the CITU, AITUC, the two UTUCs, Rashtriya Samgram Samiti and 12th July Committee jointly gave the call and it was supported by almost all the Left and democratic political parties and they united together to make the general strike a success.

The C.C. calls upon the Government of India to immediately take steps to accede to the urgent demands of the people of West Bengal. The C.C. further hopes that the democratic forces in West Bengal will draw the correct lessons and forge greater unity to meet the offensive of the Congress Government and the vested interests, and to struggle for their vital demands and in defence of democracy.

(f) Against the Semi-Fascistic Reign of Terror in West Bengal

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) takes a serious view of the planned butchery of democracy and the intensification of the semi-fascist rule of class terror in West Bengal by the Congress (R) rulers of our country. Military combing operations, brutal attacks by the

Central Reserve Police, indiscriminate arrests, tortures and killings by the police and the CRP, and physical liquidation of leaders and cadres of the democratic movements, especially of the CPI(M), by murder squads organised and directed by the Congress leadership—have all been co-ordinated to form parts of a single diabolical plan to crush the people of West Bengal and liquidate their democratic movements.

Since the imposition of President's rule in March 1970, brutal repression was let loose with a view to snatching away the gains achieved by workers, peasants, and other toiling people during the U.F. regime and to suppress the democratic forces. Having failed to achieve this objective, and faced with further strengthening of the democratic forces and people's resistance, the Congress rulers have intensified step by step their attack on the people which assumed the character of semi-fascist terror even before the Fifth General Elections. But in spite of such terror against the people and the treacherous disruptive activities of the leaders of the Right Communist Party and their accomplices, the ruling Congress miserably failed to win a majority in the elections and prevent the ULF led by the CPI(M) from immensely strengthening its position and emerging as the single largest party and bloc in the Assembly.

The leaders of the ruling Congress speak of democracy, but trampling underfoot all canons of parliamentary democracy, they, utilising their authority in the Central Government, prevented the single largest party from forming a Ministry, imposed on the people a Congress-League Ministry of a combination of all reactionary forces supported by the Right Communist Party, Forward Bloc, PSP, Congress (O) and Jana Sangh and, using it as a cover, further intensified the attacks on the democratic forces. But the people stood firm and it created a crisis in the Ministry which lost its narrow majority. But again violating the elementary principles of parliamentary democracy, the Congress leaders prevented the formation of a ULF Ministry, shamelessly dissolved the Assembly and have imposed President's rule again.

The Central Government has always used the office of Governors under President's rule in different States at different times to further the narrow interests of the ruling party. But in the case of West Bengal, they have become so desperate that they have appointed a Central Congress Minister to take direct charge of the administration, are refusing to hold elections, and have raised the semi-fascist terror to the present monstrous level.

The nature and ferocity of the semi-fascist terror can be understood from some glaring facts. Over one lakh people, mostly peasants, workers and their leaders, are wanted in innumerable framed-up criminal cases at the dictates of the landlords, capitalists and the ruling Congress. Warrants of arrest have been issued against them and they are being regularly hounded about. They include State Committee members like Comrade Subodh Chowdhury and many district leaders of the CPI(M). Even MPs and ex-MLAs like Comrades Robin Sen and Dilip Majumdar are implicated in false murder cases. Some tens of thousands are already arrested in such cases. Some hundreds including leaders like Comrade Benoy Konar, an ex-MLA and Assistant Secretary of the West Bengal Kisan Sabha, are rotting in jails in such false cases for about one and a half years. Since the last election, many leaders and organisers of democratic movement have been arrested under preventive detention Acts like the PVA and Maintenance of Internal Security Acts. Already about four hundred leaders and organisers of our Party have thus been arrested under these preventive detention Acts. This number is increasing with every passing day. How mischievous and malicious these arrests are, can be understood from the simple fact that many leaders who were arrested on false charges, but were released on bail by the courts, were immediately arrested under PVA. Comrade Jiban Roy, the respected leader of the Durgapur Steel workers, was arrested on such a mischievous murder charge that he was released on a bail of only Rs. 200 by the court and immediately he was arrested under PVA. Comrade Prabir Sen, a Secretariat member of Hooghly District Committee of our Party, was

similarly arrested. The nature and purpose of such large-scale arrests can be understood from the fact that all CITU leaders of Durgapur except one have either been arrested under PVA or under specific false charges or are wanted by the police. Similarly at Asansol to crush the movement of the Sen-Raleigh workers against closure and to prevent the holding of the State CITU Conference, 22 leaders of the Sen-Raleigh union have been arrested and the police is trying to arrest others.

This is only one aspect of the terror. Many thousands have been and are being rounded up by the police and CRP with the backing of the military and mercilessly beaten up, tortured and many even killed. Killing even in police custody has become a regular feature. Before the elections, the Government openly declared that there will be no enquiry if anybody was killed by the police. Actually a large number of people were killed and no enquiry was held. Though it was only for three months, this encouragement continues.

A more sinister method has been adopted since the middle of 1970 to liquidate the leaders and organisers of mass movements,—planned murder by organised gangs of murderers, wagon-breakers and anti-socials have been organised by the ruling Congress, particularly under its student and youth wings for this purpose. Naxalite degenerates were also mobilised. They are given all necessary help and protection of the police. A section of police and administrative officers—obviously under the guidance of the Congress (R) leaders—are directly involved in these activities. The usual *modus operandi* is that these gangsters murder our workers or attack different areas and whenever people come forward to resist them, the CRP and police attack the people. In many areas in Calcutta and adjoining areas and even in some rural areas, the police-CRP-military and the gangsters work together.

Already over 450 of our leaders and cadres have thus been murdered, of which 252 were murdered before the election date and 200 more have been murdered within the next five and a half months. Many more were attacked and wounded. This murder and terror has taken the most organised characters in

Calcutta, Burdwan and the industrial areas of 24-Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly.

This physical liquidation is a dangerous symptom of fascism and it bodes ill for the democracy of our country as a whole. Simultaneously with these murders, a slander campaign in the Goebbelsian type was launched by the Congress leaders and their accomplices and the big bourgeois Press accusing the CPI(M) and the democratic movement of murders and violence. That this is a lie has been and is being proved by facts.

The Central Committee wants to remind the people that during the U.F. regime there was not a single case of individual or political murder. Goondas and anti-socials were kept under check and people could move freely. It is only under President's rule, when the Government failed to suppress the people, that this murder method was introduced. It is mostly our leaders and workers who have been killed. In Burdwan town alone, 14 of our comrades have been killed and all except one, killed in broad daylight and some in front of police stations, but up till now, not a single culprit has been arrested. Similar is the case in Kalna where five of our comrades including one District Secretariat member Comrade Mahadev Banerjee have been killed within five months. The same is the picture in all districts. It has now been conclusively proved that the Forward Bloc leader, Hemanta Basu, was murdered by Congressites, but not a single one of the culprits has been arrested yet. These few examples are sufficient to expose the criminal designs of the Congress rulers.

Burdwan town, Tollygunj-Behala-Haltu area, Beliaghata-Cossipore-Jorabagan areas of Calcutta, Belgachia, Baranagar-Dum-Dum-Noapara areas of 24-Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly are the places where scores of our comrades and supporters were brutally murdered and constant CRP raids for months are continuing.

The Congress rulers are gearing up the whole administrative machinery for implementing their diabolical plan to liquidate the democratic movement. Officers with criminal records are given all encouragement. Those few police personnel who were

punished by the U.F. Government for organising vandalism in the Assembly have been reinstated and, on the other hand, about 50 police personnel against whom there are no charges have been dismissed and some of them arrested and even detained under PVA simply because they are the leaders of the Non-Gazetted Police Association. About 130 ordinary police personnel have been murdered by so-called Naxalites as well as Congressites who have received all protection from the Government. All these are intended to brutalise the whole administration.

Since the last general election, the Congress (R) leadership is desperately trying to bring all gangster groups under their single command in order to organise murder in a more planned way. This is the meaning of the Congress leaders' talk about dialogue with Naxalites. It should be noted that in the recent period, the Naxalites are joining the Congress (R) *en masse*. Those who are refusing to toe the line are being mercilessly murdered.

The Central Committee notes that finding that their slander campaign against us regarding murders and violence is being thoroughly exposed, the Congress leaders have adopted a new tactic to deceive the people by proclaiming that they are really serious to stop murders and have called all-party meetings. But instead of taking a single step in the proper direction, they are using it as a cover to further organise murders. The recent massacre at Cossipore and Baranagar in which more than 40 people have been butchered by Congress gangsters with full backing of the police and the CRP is a pointer. Recently, Congress gangster attacks have taken a more dangerous character. The mass attack against the Kisan Sabha village of Ahladipur in Burdwan where four persons were butchered and the whole village burnt down in the presence of the CRP and the military, and the massacre at Calcutta clearly show what is in store for the people in the coming days.

The Central Committee draws particular attention of the people to the fact that about 2,00,000 men of the army, CRP and other forces including the usual State police, have been

mobilised by the Government against the people of West Bengal. The Central Ministers have openly declared that these forces will stay in West Bengal and will be used more ferociously against the people. That the army and the CRP are not for stopping murder and apprehending criminals, but for attacking and murdering the democratic forces have been clear from facts. The mobilisation of this force to attack the people and to break the peaceful general strike of August 27 proves it more clearly. The use of the army to suppress the democratic movements of the people is a dangerous development. West Bengal is virtually being turned into a country under seizure by the armed forces.

The Central Committee notes that no sooner the ruling Congress has gained victory in the recent parliamentary elections, with its deceptive slogan of 'garibi hatao', than they have imposed heavy burdens on the people and, at the same time, have strengthened the repressive machinery by passing a new Preventive Detention Act. They have already started intensifying repression in all the States. They know that the people will get rapidly disillusioned and will come forward in new waves of mass struggles. Already there are symptoms of such development. The ruling classes are afraid that the continued existence of the powerful democratic forces in West Bengal able to stand up against semi-fascist brutal terror will create serious danger for the class rule of the bourgeoisie and the landlords in the country as a whole when they are joined by a new wave of mass struggles all over the country. Hence, they have become desperate and want to finish off the democratic forces in West Bengal by organising even bloodbaths, if necessary. It is for this reason that they have violated all norms of parliamentary democracy and are refusing to hold any elections in the near future. The Central Committee warns the Government that the people would not take this attack lying down. No normal conditions can be established in West Bengal till an elected Government enjoying the confidence of the people is established through an early election.

The Central Committee draws the attention of the people to the serious implications of the steps taken by the Government of India led by Sreemati Gandhi. Since 1967 within a short period President's rule has been imposed three times in West Bengal, and elected Governments enjoying the confidence of the people have been allowed to function for 22 months only in a period of four years. Now the Central Government is trying to continue President's rule for an indefinite period and is refusing to hold any elections till it can crush the people's movements and liquidate the democratic forces by brute force. As it has failed to crush and subdue the people through parliamentary methods, it is butchering parliamentary democracy itself. Fascism is raising its ugly head in our country.

The Central Committee further notes that at a time when the people of Bangladesh are fighting a life-and-death struggle for democracy and independence, and millions of refugees have come to West Bengal and when it is necessary to mobilise the whole people in support of the Bangladesh people which can only be done by an elected Government enjoying the confidence of the people, democracy is being butchered in West Bengal and semi-fascist terror is being intensified. It is a disservice to the cause of the people of Bangladesh also.

This butchery of democracy and this imposition of a semi-fascist reign of terror in West Bengal are not only a grave danger to the people of West Bengal but they are a serious menace to the existence of democracy in the country as a whole. If they are not checked in time by the democratic people of the whole country, the forces of autocracy and ruthless terror will grip the whole country. There is no doubt that the people of West Bengal will forge unity and will go on determinedly fighting against this terror and in defence of their urgent demands. But the people of West Bengal cannot be left alone to fight an unequal battle against the whole armed might of the State power. The Central Committee calls upon all people and all democratic parties and organisations in the whole country to raise their strong voice of protest and to come forward in active support to the struggles of the West Bengal people.

The Central Committee greets the valiant people of West Bengal who are defending democracy at a great cost to themselves. The C.C. greets all our Party comrades and sympathisers in West Bengal who are organising and leading the people in such a difficult situation. We pay our homage to all the martyrs. We convey our revolutionary greetings to all those who are shedding their blood and facing heroically the brutal terror.

The Central Committee demands of the Government to immediately stop this reign of terror, to stop murders and restore democratic rights of the people. In particular, the C.C. demands :

1. Immediately declare the date of elections to the Assembly to be held not later than February 1972.
2. Withdraw the CRP and the military from West Bengal.
3. Withdraw Sec. 144 and other restrictive measures.
4. Release all workers of democratic movements who are arrested under PVA or MIS Acts. Withdraw all framed-up cases and all warrants of arrest.
5. Take stern measures against anti-social gangsters, all culprits and all officers directly or indirectly connected with them. Reinstate all police personnel dismissed under Article 311.
6. Fulfil the urgent economic demands of workers, peasants and other toiling people.

The Central Committee calls upon all our Party units in the whole country to build up a powerful campaign on these demands. It requests all people and parties in the country who cherish democracy to see the danger and come forward in strengthening these demands. It urges upon all Left parties, mass organisations and their members to remember the lessons of history and join in the common struggle against the dark forces of autocracy and semi-fascist rule.

(g) On Repression

The Congress Government of Smt. Indira Gandhi and the State Governments of her own party or her allies are launching

attack after attack on the lives and liberties of the people. While these attacks have reached the most ferocious proportions in West Bengal with semi-fascist terror reigning in that State, attacks are also being made on the toiling people of many other States.

When the Maintenance of Internal Security Act was being discussed in Parliament, the democratic Opposition had warned that the Government was forging new weapons more for use against the legitimate struggles and movements of the working people than for the maintenance of any internal security. On August 1 and 2, Comrades V. P. Chintan, P. R. Parameswaran and Hari Bhat, trade union and CPI(M) leaders, and another well-known trade union leader of Madras City and suburbs, R. Kuchelar, were arrested under this Act and detained without trial. The arrests have been made on the orders of the Tamil Nadu Government which is run by the DMK, an ally of the ruling Congress. The DMK had opposed the Act while it was being discussed in Parliament precisely on the ground that it would be misused against the democratic forces, yet it is this party's Government which has first used the Act to suppress normal trade union activity and democratic rights. In Andhra Pradesh, three poets have been arrested and detained under the P.D. Act by the Andhra Government of Indira Gandhi's Congress.

Not satisfied with the draconic provisions of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, the Indira Gandhi Government is now planning to amend the Criminal Law Amendment Act to enable the Government to ban parties and organisations. It is not necessary to forecast that this power will also be abused to attack Opposition democratic parties and the militant organisations of the working class and other working people.

Already, the Government is using the Essential Services Maintenance Act to declare any industry as essential and ban strikes in them. Now there is talk of the Government taking more powers to impose blanket ban on strikes.

Orders under Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. have become a routine weapon in the hands of Congress rulers to muzzle

popular protest. While the Government is thus assuming more and more powers to suppress the people, its police is making brutal attacks on the people and aiding the exploiting classes to mount their own attacks on them.

In Andhra Pradesh, in the districts of Khammam, Warangal and Nalgonda, repression on the CPI(M) and the mass movement led by it has been a regular feature for years now. In the last year and a half alone, eight people including Comrades Mukka China Narasayya, Chandrayya and Ramnathan have been murdered either by the goondas of the landlords or shot dead by the police. Only recently, the goondas murdered Comrade Kusumba Lingayya when he stood in defence of the poor occupants of Government wasteland. Shreemati Kentamma and her son were recently burnt alive when their house was set on fire and her brother, Bagam Barayana, a Taluka Committee member of the CPI(M) who was severely burnt is still in hospital after three months. Over 3,000 people have been involved in cases under security proceedings and harassed for years. In the last three months alone, 700 persons have been involved in such cases from the one taluka of Narasampet in Warangal district and some of them were inhumanly tortured. In these districts the police always act in collusion with and at the instance of landlords and their goondas. While thousands of people, including leaders of the CPI(M) are arrested, harassed and persecuted for no reason whatsoever, landlords and their goondas, generally belonging to the Congress, who have committed all sorts of heinous crimes like murder, loot, arson, rape, etc., are never touched. Some of the areas have been declared disturbed areas and the notorious Suppression of Disturbances Act of 1948 is in force there. The CRP camps have been set up in many places to suppress the peasant and agricultural workers' movement and help landlords' oppression. The CRP, in the name of containing Naxalite activities, are repeatedly raiding Narasampet and Mulugu talukas to create terror and suppress the toilers' movement in these areas. More than a thousand innocent tribals and others from Srikakulam are being kept behind prison bars on the same pretext of containing

Naxalites, while death sentences have been imposed on three and conspiracy cases involving many are going on.

In Kerala, in the last few months, six persons have been killed—Narayan, a kisan worker of Kasargode, by landlord goondas; Vasu, killed in Vallikkad by Muslim League goondas who with police help attacked peasants who went to the defence of hutment-dwellers; Bhaskaran, an agricultural worker, who was shot and killed by a landlord in Mathur; P.C. Varkey, killed by Jana Sangh goondas in Ernakulam; Mannuel shot dead by one estate-owner in Kizhakkanchery; Socialist Youth Federation worker Madhavan Nair killed by PSP goondas in Kasargode. Innumerable attacks are being made by landlords' goondas with police help on agricultural workers in Alleppey and Palghat districts while the police themselves have been making lathi-charges on striking workers the most ferocious of which were the ones in Trivandrum and Alwaye and Kottayam. About 5,000 persons including Comrade V. S. Achuthanandan, CPI(M) MLA and General Secretary of the Agricultural Workers' organisation and Comrade N. Sreedharan, Secretary of the Quilon District Committee of the CPI(M), have been involved in cases including murder cases. Three lock-up murders—in Trivandrum, Mattancherry and Kodunggaloor—had roused all-party protests. Nine comrades—C.A. Joseph, Secretary of Pudupally Taluk Committee of the CPI(M), Vasu, Damodaran, Kumaran, Mathew all involved in the Pudupally case, Vasu of Champakulam case and three others in the Chellisery bus-burning case—are under the shadow of the gallows with death sentences in two of the cases already confirmed by the High Court.

In Bihar, combing operations by the CRP as in West Bengal have become almost a daily routine in the districts of Singhbhum, Dhanbad, and Ranchi on the pretext of apprehending Naxalites, but in reality to strike terror into the people living in these areas. Apart from these three districts, CRP has been posted also in Mokameh and Barauni. Five kisan cadres including Comrade Bhagwat Saran were murdered by landlords on July 17 at Siswania village in Champaran district. No landlord has been

arrested, but over 25 peasants have been arrested on counter-charges. Two peasants have been killed by landlords in Nath Nagar in Bhagalpur district. About 2,000 persons have been involved in over a hundred cases under various sections of the Indian Penal Code throughout the State. Warrants against 250 activists of the Party and mass movements under Sec. 107 of the Cr.P.C. have been issued in just one district. Of the 1,000 persons arrested during the protest day on August 9, 200 are still in jail. Comrade Bairangi Yadav, a member of the Bihar State Committee of the CPI(M), Nuthan Pandit, the Party's leader in Purnea district, Prem Pradip of Patna district and a dozen others have not been granted bail and have been in jail for the last eight to ten months.

Railway workers of Barauni who heroically fought a strike for a month in February-March last and withdrew it on assurances given by Union Minister of State for Labour Khadilkar, are now facing severe repression. Break-in-service has been ordered in the case of 4,000 employees, cases filed against 100 and 55 suspended. About 50 have been suspended and dozens of cases instituted in Dhanbad also where the railway workers struck work in protest against atrocities by two RPF men.

In Tamil Nadu, apart from the attack on the trade union movement using the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, under direct orders of Chief Minister Karunanidhi, of the DMK, a wanton and brutal lathi-charge was made on the students of the Annamalai University when they demonstrated demanding employment after graduation before the Chief Minister who had arrived for the convocation to receive an honorary doctorate. About 300 students were injured and one student who fell into a tank while being chased by the police was drowned. Later in the day, students were again beaten by the police who broke into hostel rooms and some of them were taken miles away and left. Textile workers protesting against closure of mills in Coimbatore, Tirunelveli and agricultural workers demanding wage increase in Tanjore, and peasants

protesting against eviction in Gudalur, Nilgiris, and other workers and peasants in similar struggles in other places for their rights were arrested.

In Assam, repression on the growing railway workers' movement has been intensified. For demonstrating in the Superintendent's office, in Lumding in the first week of July, a number of railway employees were arrested, handcuffed, roped and sent to jail, Armed policemen, CRP, etc., were sent to raid the house of every employee while a large posse of policemen was mobilised to terrorise the workers and their families. Haridas Deb, a militant leader of the Lumding railway workers, has been dismissed while a number of other leaders have been served with inter-Railway transfers as a victimisation measure. There were mass arrests of peasants in Nowgong district during an eviction campaign of 15,000 peasants by the Government and in the same district about 300 goondas organised by the landlords beat and wounded the Secretary of the District Kisan Sabha and other leaders while they were participating in a public meeting. The armed goondas then evicted occupying lawful tenants from 150 bighas of land and burnt down a number of houses. At Tihu, the police arrested 21 persons, including CPI(M) leaders, and two school teachers for demonstrating for drought relief before the Chief Minister and refused them bail for about two months.

In Mysore, there have been a series of attacks by landlord goondas on peasants. In Kemral village in South Kanara district, several peasants including women were injured, when the goondas tried to forcibly evict them. The police instead of giving protection to the peasants filed cases against 20 Kisan Sabha workers and peasants. A meeting of the Kisan Sabha was attacked at Koyyur village on July 29 by the goondas who injured the District Kisan Sabha Secretary and six others, four of whom had to be hospitalised. In Mysore district, in Kollegal taluk, harijan agricultural workers were attacked by goondas who later tried to give it the colour of a communal clash. The Gulbarga District Kisan Sabha Secretary, Comrade Kantharah, was beaten by landlord's goondas. In Shimoga, the landlords

and police are harassing Kisan Sabha workers and poor peasants by instituting false cases under Section 107 of the Cr. P.C. In Chickmagalore district, plantation owners, their goondas and police are attacking estate workers almost everyday. Union office-bearers have been arrested and implicated in cases. Similar repression is going on in the plantation area of Hassan district also. In Chithradurga district, Right Communist workers with active police help are attacking CPI(M) workers and trade union activists.

In Maharashtra, in Kharvda village, in Thana district, when peasants resisted the efforts of the Forest Department staff to evict them, they brought a big police party which went on a rampage. One woman was raped, many men were beaten and their meagre belongings were taken away, fifty peasants were arrested and jailed and criminal proceedings were launched against them. When the mass satyagraha against evictions was launched, Sec. 144 was imposed on an area within five miles radius of the village where the action was to take place.

In Uttar Pradesh landlords opened fire on agricultural workers in Chandauli tehsil of Varanasi injuring fifteen workers for refusing to work on the landlords' land leaving work in their own fields. In Chakia tehsil, of the same district, activists of the CPI(M) and the Kisan Sabha were taken to the police station at the instance of a ruling Congress leader, beaten and then implicated in false cases.

Even more sinister is the method of physical liquidation of the cadre of the CPI(M) and other political opponents which Congress rulers are now resorting to. The armed forces of the State, the anti-social elements and the so-called Naxalites have all joined hands in organising these political murders. Not a day passes in West Bengal when such murders do not take place. Barasat, Beliaghata, Salt Lake area, Diamond Harbour, Sinthee—these are places where young men had been dragged out of their homes, lined up against the walls and shot. The latest and most shocking was the all-night orgy in Baranagar-Cossipore during which at least forty people were killed by Congress hoodlums. The police were actively helping them.

The Press of West Bengal and elsewhere including Congressite papers are full of stories of the open collusion between the police and the Naxalites and anti-social elements. Mahadev Banerjee, CPI(M) Kalna Local Committee Secretary, was murdered when he alighted from a train at Kalna Station. The assailants had been given the information by the police that he was travelling by that train.

Even more monstrous have been the murders that have been going on of the people taken into police custody.

In the Srikakulam and Khammam-Warangal areas of Andhra Pradesh alone, about 800 persons had been taken into custody, tortured inhumanly and then murdered and the story put out that they had been killed in encounter.

In Punjab, about thirty persons have been killed in the same way, some even taken out from jails.

In Kerala, one person was tortured and killed in a similar fashion.

In addition are the killings in jails, a bare list of which is shocking, Midnapore Jail : eight under-trial prisoners; Berhampore Jail : seven; Howrah Jail : five; Dum Dum : 18; Asansol : nine; Hazaribagh Jail : 16; Patna District Jail : five. Every time, the authorities have put out stories of escape attempts or clashes with warders and every time it has been known that they were cold-blooded murders.

The list gets longer and longer—of those killed by the police, landlords, anti-social elements, inside jails and every new addition to the list marks another step towards fascism.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the Congress rulers for the repressive laws they are enacting to suppress the people, for using their repressive machinery to kill and maim the working people, for sending their police to the help of the landlords and employers, the merciless killings of persons in police custody, or kept behind prison-bars.

The Central Committee appeals to all democratic forces to raise their mighty voice of protest and defeat the Congress policy of drowning the movements of the common people in blood.

(h) On Anti-Press Monopoly Bill

The reported move of the Congress Government at the Centre to amend the Company Law with a view to 'diffuse' the ownership of the monopoly-controlled Press has been seized upon by the vested interests, their newspapers and the reactionary parties like the Congress(O) and the Swatantra Party to raise a hue and cry about danger to 'freedom of the Press'.

The big monopoly houses such as the Jains, Birlas, Tatas, Goenkas and others today own and control group newspapers and newspaper chains which have more than 80 per cent circulation in metropolitan cities and more than 56 per cent circulation of papers in the country as a whole. It is again these six or seven monopoly houses who control the news agencies such as PTI, UNI. With the reins of all channels of mass communication in their hands, these reactionary vested interests suppress and distort all news and opinions of democratic movements and toilers' struggles and try to mould public opinion in the country in favour of the reactionary vested interests.

The ruling Congress party also makes use of the All-India Radio and also the monopoly Press to carry on a systematic campaign of slander and distortion against the democratic Opposition. Thus, the so-called 'freedom of the Press' in the country has in reality been reduced to an unfettered licence for reactionary vested interests to utilise mass communications media like the Press, radio, etc., in defence of the status quo.

Progressive democratic parties and organisations in this country, the organised section of the newspaper employees including the working journalists have always felt deeply concerned about growing monopoly control of the Press during the post-Independence period. They have from time to time raised the demand for divesting the Press from the ownership and control by the big monopoly houses. Recently, during the period of struggle between the Indicate and Syndicate wings of the Congress, and more especially during the mid-term election to the Lok Sabha, the Indicate wing led by Smt. Indira Gandhi was piqued by a certain amount of hostility from this monopoly

Press, particularly in those States where she did not face a strong democratic Opposition such as in Kerala and West Bengal.

It should be noted that it was in these circumstances that spokesmen of the ruling Congress including some Ministers began to talk about taking 'radical' steps to curb the monopoly control of the newspaper industry. It is also reported that the Law Ministry has prepared a draft of the Company Law Amendment Bill, a summary of which has already appeared in the Press.

The proposed Bill exempts newspapers owned by political parties, co-operative societies or trusts or owned by individuals, irrespective of circulation. Partnership firms owning papers, the circulation of which does not exceed one lakh, and publishing not more than one paper are also exempted from the operation of the Bill. The Bill only provides that no person or his agent can have more than 5 per cent of the share-holdings in a newspaper company. The Bill does not make any provision for divesting the monopoly houses of their major share-holdings in the newspaper companies. On the contrary, the Bill prescribes an extension of time in the case of individuals to retain the control of the newspaper company for a period not exceeding six months from the commencement of the Act.

The proposed Bill while providing for reduction of share-holding of an individual to 5 per cent and that of a corporate body to 20 per cent in a newspaper company also provides that no person holding shares in a newspaper company shall in respect of any shares held by him exercise voting rights on a poll in excess of one-half per cent of the total voting rights of all the share-holders of the company. Further, the Bill also prescribes that voting rights of all share-holders in excess of one-half per cent of the total voting rights shall cease to be exercisable and shall be exercisable by the Public Trustee and that any resolution passed by the general body meeting if not agreed to by the Public Trustee shall be void and inoperative.

Finally, the Bill prescribes that 25 per cent of the Board of Directors of the newspaper company shall be working journalists

and 25 per cent will be non-journalist employees of the company other than those holding managerial or supervisory posts.

It should be noted that this proposed Bill has not yet been approved of either by the concerned Ministry or the Law Ministry and the Central Cabinet.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) being aware of the pro-monopolist proclivities of the Government of India and after taking into consideration various clauses of the Bill cannot but come to the conclusion that the Central Congress Government is neither serious about taking effective steps for curbing monopoly control of the Press nor are the half-hearted measures suggested in the Bill likely to break the monopoly stranglehold over the newspapers. The manner in which the Bill is being given advance publicity and the immediate background in which the Bill is being brought forward show that the other objective with which this measure is being proposed is to make the Press subservient to the ruling Congress party. The provision for Government-appointed public trustees having veto powers and the manner in which directors other than working journalists and newspaper employees are appointed by the Government go to prove it.

The Central Committee is firmly of opinion that ganging up of the reactionary forces against the proposed Bill and their cry of 'freedom of the Press being in danger' is a motivated campaign to retain the control of the Press in their hands and to continue to utilise this mass communication media to further their own selfish interests. The Central Committee hopes that no one will be deceived by their false cry of danger to freedom of the Press.

The Central Committee, at the same time, thinks it necessary to warn all people that in their desire for freeing the Press from the control of monopolists, they should not be led into the trap of making the Press subservient to the ruling Congress party.

The Central Committee appeals to all democratic parties, trade unions, organised sections of working journalists, newspaper employees and progressive individuals to organise a joint campaign for making radical improvements in the proposed

Anti-Press Monopoly Bill so as to make it an effective instrument of divesting the big monopoly houses of their ownership and control over the newspapers and news service agencies.

The C.C. is of opinion that it is only by freeing the Press from the shackles of monopolists as well as the ruling class and by bringing it under the control and direction of democratic organisations including the organisations of working journalists and newspaper employees that the Press can be transformed into an instrument in the service of the people and genuine freedom of the Press for the people can be ensured.

(i) Statement On Cauvery Waters Dispute

[Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad, on behalf of the Kerala State Committee, Comrade P. Ramamurti, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu State Committee and Comrade Krishnappa, on behalf of the Karnataka State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) have submitted the following statement on Cauvery Waters Dispute to the Central Committee. The Central Committee having approved it, authorises them to release it. The C.C. also directs the Tamil Nadu and Kerala State Committees to meet and submit a similar agreed statement on the pending river water disputes between Tamil Nadu and Kerala States.]

We are seriously concerned with the attempts that are being made to fan the feelings of bitterness between the peoples of Tamil Nadu, Mysore and Kerala over the distribution of the Cauvery waters.

In February, 1924, an agreement was entered into between the Governments of the then Madras Presidency and the then Mysore State for the extension of irrigation from the Cauvery waters in both the States. The main provisions of that agreement were :—

1. The Madras Government was to limit the extension of irrigation from the Cauvery-Mettur project 3,01,000 acres.
2. The Mysore Government was entitled to extend irrigation from the Krishnaraja Sagar to 1,25,000 acres.

3. In addition to this, the Mysore Government was entitled to extend irrigation up to 1,10,000 acres by building reservoirs across the Cauvery and on its scheduled tributaries of a capacity of 45 TMC. The Mysore Government was entitled to build reservoirs on non-scheduled rivers also, provided the total capacity in the scheduled and non-scheduled rivers was limited to a capacity of 45 TMC and the extension of irrigation was limited to 1,10,000 acres.
4. The Madras Government was entitled to build reservoirs across the tributaries of the Cauvery in Madras Presidency, the Bhavani, Amravati and Noyyil, and if the Madras Government built such dams, then the Mysore Government was entitled to build, as an off-set, reservoirs whose capacity would be limited to 60 per cent of the capacity of the reservoirs built by the Madras Government.
5. Provided that the limitations and arrangements specified above, shall, at the expiry of 50 years, be open to reconsideration in the light of the experience gained and on an examination of the possibilities of extension of irrigation in the respective territories and to such modifications and additions as may be mutually agreed upon on such reconsideration; and if the negotiation failed the dispute was to be referred to arbitration and a mutually acceptable arbitrator or to an arbitration by the Central Government.

The limitations and arrangements specified above would continue till February 28, 1974, when a new agreement has to be renegotiated, for such modifications and additions as may be agreed to.

During this period, the Madras Government has built in addition to completing the Cauvery-Mettur project, dams on the Bhavani and Amravati.

On the other hand, the Mysore Government has not built any reservoir apart from the Krishnarajasagar which was negotiated and permitted by the 1924 agreement.

In 1964, Mysore had planned the project of a reservoir across the Hemavati, a scheduled tributary of the Cauvery in Mysore and sent details of the project to the Madras Government satisfying itself that it was within the terms of the 1924 agreement.

According to the statements made by the Chief Minister of Madras (Tamil Nadu) on the floor of the Assembly, Sri M. Karunanidhi, the engineers of the two States had met in 1967, and later the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu (Madras) agreed to the Hemavati project in a meeting convened by the Union Minister for Irrigation of the Ministers of the two States in 1968.

The Mysore Government had later started building two other dams across the Kabini and Honahele (Suvarnavathi), two scheduled tributaries of the Cauvery in Mysore State.

The Tamil Nadu (Madras) Government since started objecting to the building of all these dams on the ground that they would affect the irrigation of some of the lands under the irrigation of the Cauvery waters in Tamil Nadu.

On the other hand, allegations have been made by the Mysore Government that the Madras (Tamil Nadu) Government had been exceeding the limit of the extension of irrigation that had been agreed upon in the 1924 agreement.

These allegations have not been refuted by the Madras (Tamil Nadu) Government.

After the formation of Kerala State, the catchment area of the Bhavani lies in that State and the river flows for about 50 miles before entering Tamil Nadu. Also the Kabini flows for a long distance through Kerala before entering Mysore State. Now Kerala has plans for projects across the Bhavani and Kabini for generation of power and for irrigation. As such, the Kerala State has to get immediate clearance for building of its proposed projects, the amount of water required is well within its share.

The role of the Central Government in this whole controversy is reprehensible.

It is in a position to investigate and refute or confirm the allegations made against Tamil Nadu of violating the 1924

agreement. It has not cared to do so, thus allowing bitterness to grow between the two peoples of the two States.

Secondly, while allowing the Mysore Government to build the three dams by providing budgetary funds, it formally has not given clearance for the projects, which was its duty to do within the 1924 agreement.

Nothing else seems to have weighed with the Central Government than the narrow partisan interests of its party and not the interests of the people of the three States.

We condemn this attitude of the Central Government which harms the unity of India and helps disruptive forces.

We demand the formal sanction to the building of the Hemavathi project which had already been agreed upon in 1968 between the Chief Ministers of the two States, and also to the other two dams, well within the terms of the 1924 agreement, which provides for reservoirs of capacity of 45 TMC (1,10,000 acres) and besides Krishnarajasagar, up to 60 per cent capacity of the Amravati and Bhavani reservoirs.

We would like to point out that this question cannot be satisfactorily solve by any party claiming all riparian rights to the exclusion of the riparian rights of the other States through which the Cauvery and its tributaries flow.

We demand that the three State Governments, viz., Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Mysore, should immediately enter into negotiations, on the question of sharing of waters available, in a spirit of mutual accommodation taking into account the interests of the people of the three States, without waiting till February 28, 1974.

This should not affect the prescriptive rights of Tamil Nadu ryots as they existed before 1924 and the water made available under the 1924 agreement for Madras (Tamil Nadu and Malabar area of Kerala State), to the extent of 3,01,000 acres under Mettur; and the water used by projects so far constructed on the Bhavani and Amravati tributaries; as well as the proposed projects by Kerala State on the Bhavani and Kabini; and also the water allotted in 1924 for Mysore State, for Krishnarajasagar

(1,25,000 acres), and other project agreements (1,10,000) plus 60 per cent off-set of the Amaravati and Bhavani projects, as per the 1924 agreement.

We appeal to the people of all the three States not to fall a prey to the chauvinistic propaganda, which will only harm the common democratic movement of the toiling people of the three States.

(j) On Floods and Drought

This year, vast areas in our country have been ravaged by unprecedented floods and drought, and loss of life and property is colossal.

The floods in Bihar are the fiercest in living memory. Two crores of people are affected and 10 out of 17 districts were ravaged by them. Various estimates of the loss are made, ranging from 150 to 200 crores of rupees.

In U.P., excessive rains started as early as April, causing serious damage to Rabi crop. Floods in Deoria, Gorakhpur, Kanpur, Unnao, Allahabad, Varanasi, etc., have caused immense damage to Kharif crop.

The West Bengal unprecedented floods in the Ganga, Mahananda, Hooghly, Damodar, Ajay, etc., rivers, due to excessive rains and release of waters from the DVC and Mayurakshi reservoirs devastated vast areas in Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia, Burdwan, Hooghly, Howrah, Birbhum and Midnapur Districts, affecting more than 50 lakhs of people and destroying crops.

While North Kamrup and adjoining areas in Assam are hit by acute drought conditions, wide areas in Lakhimpur and Dhemaji have been ravaged by floods.

While some States are thus being ravaged by floods, several other States are experiencing serious drought conditions. The entire State of Andhra Pradesh is declared by the State Government as drought-affected; 25 lakh out of 75 lakh acres of irrigated land, and 60 lakh out of 180 lakh dry acres have been sown by the end of August and sowing and transplantation in lakhs of acres were not done and crops in many lakhs of acres have withered away.

In Maharashtra 15 districts are in the grip of serious drought, said to be the worst in the last one hundred years. Food for the people and fodder for the cattle have become scarce, and drinking water also in several areas is not available.

In Mysore State, severe drought conditions prevail in almost all the districts, excepting the coastal belt, resulting in scarcity of foodgrains, high prices and unemployment.

While the calamities are colossal, the relief undertaken by the Governments is negligible. Token grants are given and in some cases, only postponement of collection of land revenue is made. Even this little help is not completely reaching the poor people, due to corruption and nepotism and bureaucratic bungling.

In the flood and drought-affected area, conditions are very serious. Food is not available, prices have abnormally shot up, fodder is scarce, drinking water is also not available in many places, and work is not found. Having their houses washed away people are without shelter and epidemics are apprehended.

These calamities are mostly man-made. If the reservoirs were constructed or flood banks properly maintained, the rivers could have been tamed, but the Congress Governments have not undertaken any such large-scale construction of irrigation and water conservancy works. As such periodic floods or drought are visiting, causing immense damage and loss to human life and property. As permanent remedies to these calamities, long-range measures like construction of reservoirs, flood banks, soil conservation etc., have to be undertaken and the Central Committee of the CPI(M) calls upon the Central and State Governments to undertake schemes for such construction work.

As immediate measures to give relief to scores of millions of people who are suffering from these calamities, the Central Committee demands the following :—

1. Rushing food to the affected areas and opening up of cheap grain shops where foodgrains and other necessities of life are sold at subsidised rates and distribution of the same free for those who are unable to procure them even at these cheap subsidised rates;

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2. Providing work by undertaking large-scale land reclamation work, soil conservation works, construction of repairs of irrigation works, etc.;
3. Grants and loans on a liberal scale to purchase food, reconstruct dwelling houses and purchase cattle;
4. Supply of medicines to people and fodder for cattle free of cost;
5. Allowing the toiling people to get timber, bamboo, fuel, palm-leaves, etc., from forests, and governmental *porambokes* free of cost;
6. Full remission of land revenue and rents in the affected areas;
7. Suspension of collection of *taccavi* loans, co-operative loans etc., and
8. Recognition of popular relief committees to supervise relief work.

The Central Committee calls upon all Party units and members to throw themselves into this relief campaign, and agitate for the Government undertaking adequate relief work. It appeals to all parties and organisations to join hands and organise relief work and simultaneously carry on agitation for permanent remedial measures.

Unbridled Repression Against Peasantry In Andhra Pradesh*

Statement issued by A.K. Gopalan M.P., President of All India Kisan Sabha (*)

"The Congress Governments of Andhra Pradesh and at the Centre have been voicing tall claims about effecting land reforms and distributing land to the poor, while, at the same time, news appeared repeatedly in the Press that all agitation and efforts of the agrarian poor to get fair wages and land have been brutally suppressed by the landlords and the police."

This was said by Comrade A. K. Gopalan, President of the All-India Kisan Sabha, in the course of a statement issued by him in Hyderabad on August 20 after a three-day tour in Andhra at the invitation of the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Labourer Association. The statement continues :

Ibrahimpur

First, I went to Ibrahimpur. There was a gathering of about 5,000 poor peasants and agricultural labourers there and from various reports I gathered that the land problem and the wage problem remain where they were. Of the 40,000 acres of cultivable forest land only about 6,000 acres or so have been made available for distribution. The land for which *pattas* were given is still under occupation of the landlords and some land which was being cultivated by the poor for long has been actually assigned to the landlords, too.

Even the land distributed by Sri Vinobha Bhave under Bhoodan amounting to 300 acres is reported to have been re-occupied by the landlords after evicting the poor.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, September 1971.

(*) A.K. Gopalan was also the Leader of CPI(M) Group in the Parliament of India.

Thousands of acres of land which were once reserved as hunting ground for the Nizam have now been converted by the Government into regular forest land although people have been demanding its distribution for cultivation.

While the minimum wage fixed by the Government is itself lower than existing wage in many places, even that is not implemented here and consequently the wages paid here is the lowest in the State, i.e., about 50 paise and sometimes lower still.

But it was painful for me to know that many cases were filed against peasants while the aggressors always were the landlord goonda sections. Two of the poor peasants were brutally murdered by the landlord goondas in 1969 and the case against the culprits was quashed immediately while the peasants who handled them over to the police were harassed for long under security proceedings and rioting cases.

Narasampet

The second place I visited was Narasampet taluk in Warangal district. I visited three villages, namely, Reballe, Lakhnepalli and Thimmampet. In the first village the leader of the agricultural labourer movement, Sri Kusumba Lingaish, was recently murdered by the landlord goondas when he went along with some labourers to cultivate Government wasteland which had been under their cultivation even before. Cases were filed against both the culprits and the victims here and the goondas have been scot-free on bail since the police itself recommended bail for them.

The second village I visited was Lakhnepalli and here the Sar Panch of the village, Sri Radhakrishan Rao, told me how he had been manhandled by the S.I., while terrorising the entire people of the village with a posse of policemen for demonstrating on August 3 for fair-price rice shops.

The third village I visited was Thimmampet. The entire village was looking like a deserted village. Men and women were looking grave and terror-stricken. Here two demonstrations by Congressmen were held and goondas gathered from all over

the taluk, and under the direct protection and presence of the police and CRP (there is a CRP camp here), the demonstrators went about raiding houses, beating men and women and looting their property on August 4 and 6, 1971.

They raided about 160 houses. Thirteen men and six women including a pregnant lady were severely beaten and kicked by them. Maize crops were destroyed, and grain from many houses were looted. Almost all the CPI(M) members and sympathisers and builders of the kisan movement in this village, including the Sar Panch and the village officer, have either been arrested by the police or have left the village because of this terror. An old woman of over 70 told me how she had been kicked by the police all over the body and showed me the bruises on her legs and hands. Other women sobbed and murmured how cruelly they had been abused, beaten and terrorised in the absence of their menfolk. Servants of the peasants were threatened not to attend to their duties as a result of which cattle tied to the stakes could not be let out and given fodder for three or four days.

A group of five or six villages, all around Thimmampet, have been made special targets of attack both by Congress goondas and then by the police since they happen to be the strongholds of the kisan and agricultural labour movement. They want to break the morale of the villagers in view of the coming election to the State Assembly.

I had a public meeting at Narasampet with about 10,000 people attending. Earlier there was a 3000-strong demonstration decrying police repression, goonda attacks and atrocities.

About 15 families and their servants and attendants have been staying out of Medepalli village for the last three months, leaving their houses, cattle, fields, etc., at the mercy of the Congress goondas. There is a police camp here, too. For about two months at the harvesting time in 1970 the same people were beaten and thrown out of the village and their paddy crops burnt and looted.

I heard that this type of repression and attacks have been going on in this taluk since 1965 and every time before and

after elections. A boy of seven was thrown into the flames of a burning house by goondas but no action was taken. One youth named Channa Reddy was shot dead by the police and a reign of terror was created. A peasant woman who was watching here maize field was murdered by goondas in Budharaopet village and no action was taken.

Same thing is continuing even today after the elections, perhaps more atrociously than before as obvious from the happenings in the last fortnight.

Since the agricultural labour and kisan movements and the tribal movement are strong in this taluk, there were innumerable instances of the poor gaining so many of their demands. Naturally the landlords rallied round the Congress and tried to suppress these movements by mobilising goondas. The police had been always acting as the servants of the Congressmen.

Four murders had taken place and there was no serious case against anybody. At one time, people enraged by so much terrorisation resisted the goondas in the village of Upparapalli and two notorious goondas were killed. For that, about 60 villages were raided and looted, 4,000 people were tortured, cases against 66 people were filed, 34 got convicted and as a result of High Court decision finally 26 of them are undergoing imprisonment even today. In many cases, entire taluk and district leadership of the CPI(M) was involved and non-bailable sections were foisted on them, while no Congressman at any level was ever arrested despite many heinous crimes of these people.

This taluk was declared a disturbed area and nine CRP camps were set up in order to help the landlords, Congressmen and goondas. About 20 villages were repeatedly raided and people tortured on many occasions. Sub-Inspector Narasinga Reddy who was recently promoted to that post has foisted about 13 cases against 426 people coming from 20 villages in the last three months. Altogether about 20 cases are pending against 626 people now.

Khammam

The third place I visited was Khammam. About 5,000 people demonstrated for fair-price shops at 75 paise per kilo of rice; and 15,000 attended the meeting I addressed. After talking to many people the following facts came to my notice.

Khammam taluk is a place where the agricultural labour and kisan movement were strong. In many villages agricultural labour and kisans, by means of their organisational strength could achieve many things. Wages went up, salaries of farm servants went up and even bonus and annual leave days were won. Rack-renting and exorbitant rates of interest were brought down, and wages in kind could be collected with correct measures. Banjar land under occupation of landlords was taken possession of by the agrarian poor in many places.

Unable to win over the people politically, the landlords, under the name of the Congress, mobilised the goonda elements and began brutal attacks. Sri Vengal Rao has been the Police Minister, his brother was till recently District Parishad Chairman and his follower, named Upendraiah, is President of the Samiti. Upendraiah began the offensive against the people before the Panchayat elections of May 1970 with the help of police, the goonda force and Congressmen in order to ensure his re-election as Samiti President. About three people in Pammi and Banapuram villages were brutally murdered by landlord gangs. Police killed another by opening fire at the instance of goondas.

Another agricultural labourer was shot dead after the recent general elections by a notorious landlord with an illegally-procured pistol. At Banapuram itself ten houses of Harijans were set on fire. At Mallepalli, the houses of all those who opposed the Congress Sar Panch were raided, looted and people were beaten. In a village, Mootapuram, the house of an agricultural labour leader's sister was set on fire, and his sister and nephew were burnt alive and killed. Comrade B. Narayana who rushed to the rescue of his sister himself got serious burns all over the body. He is still in hospital, maimed and crippled even though it is almost three months ago that this ghastly

crime was committed. I had seen him in the hospital at Khammam.

At Teldarupalli the man who sheltered notorious goonda gangs and decoits of the village died at the time of a clash. For that one death of a rowdy, for almost a year till now the police have repeatedly attacked and tortured the people and goondas left scot-free to terrorise and loot people as they like. In September last a woman raped, and on August 8 of this year an entire Harijan family was attacked. All of them including women were seriously injured while an old man in the house who was the main target died in hospital the next day. The police did not care even to take his complaint. Despite eight murders taking place, no Congressman has ever been arrested and no serious case with proper evidence has been filed by the police against goondas.

So, I find now that in all the places I visited police camps are set up not to restore law and order and bring about normalcy but to disturb normalcy and create terror in the minds of the people. So these police camps should be withdrawn as a first step to restore law and order.

Innumerable cases have been filed against almost 2,000 innocent people in these areas while the real aggressors and oppressors have been left free. So all cases filed against agricultural labourers and peasants in connection with land disputes and strikes should be forthwith withdrawn.

Notorious police officers like Narasinga Reddy of Narasampet should be summarily dismissed to create confidence in the people.

And, finally, it should be realised that land and wage question can never be solved with the entire repressive machine of the State poised against the very sections of the people who require protection. The ceiling which is the highest here in the whole country should be brought down immediately and surplus land should be distributed. Hitherto exempted land should be immediately distributed.

In my talk with many of the tenants I found out that the Tenancy Act passed in the State in 1970 is wholly useless,

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protecting none and enabling all landlords to escape. Proper and real Tenancy Act is to replace this bogus Act if the claims of the Congress leaders have any meaning in practice. Exemption of temple lands is to be given up.

Wages are to be fixed in accordance with the high prices prevailing and any Act passed in this connection should be made effective.

Now that the famine is very severe, all effective measures for creating employment and giving food to the people should be taken up and rice should be made available at 75 paise a kilo.

West Bengal State Committee to Launch United Mass Movements*

Report of the meeting of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) held in Calcutta on September 6-8, 1971

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met from September 6 to 8, 1971. Comrade Kamal Sarkar presided.

After hearing the report of the CC meeting from Comrade Promod Dasgupta, the Committee reviewed the political developments in the State during the last two months. It noted that the political situation has changed more against the ruling Congress and in favour of the democratic forces. Our Party has improved its position politically.

While intensifying their reign of semi-fascist terror and gangster attacks on our Party and other democratic forces, the ruling Congress and their accomplices continued their slander campaign against us as being responsible for murders and violence, and hatched a new conspiracy to isolate us from other parties on the plea of stopping murders, thus making it easier for them to attack us in isolation, and at the same time, making it more difficult to initiate united mass struggles against the Congress Government. Events have proved that this was the objective behind the move for all-party meetings convened by Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray.

Our Party pursued the correct tactics of concretely exposing the criminal activities of the ruling Congress and their administration of putting forward objective proposals for stopping murders and, at the same time, of forging links with other Left and democratic parties for united moves. We took the people into confidence at each stage of development. More

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, September 19, 1971.

than one lakh copies of our memorandum were sold among the people. The actual experience of the people about the increasing gangsterism of the ruling Congress, backed nakedly by the administration, and our campaigns turned the table against the ruling Congress. Instead of being able to isolate us from other parties, they themselves are getting more isolated. The conspiracy to forge an anti-CPI(M) front has also suffered a set-back.

The mass massacre at Cossipur has further exposed the ugly face of the ruling Congress. More and more people are realising the truth that the Congress Government is the main enemy of the people. It is they who have organised gangster squads under their student and youth wings, had forged links with the Naxalites, and organised murders. It is they who are intensifying all the problems faced by the people.

The Committee noted that the developments have opened up the new opportunities for initiating united struggles against the Congress Government on common political and mass issues. We did our best to forge links with other organisations for united struggles, while strengthening our efforts for independent mass mobilisation.

The General Strike of August 27 jointly called by different T.U. and other mass organisations is a significant development. The frantic efforts of the ruling Congress leaders failed to sabotage the united struggle. It is also significant that the issues on which the General Strike took place related to various aspects of the Government policy ranging from urgent economic demands of the people like unemployment, closed factories, evictions, educational crisis etc., to political demands like stopping of police terror, defence of democracy, early election and recognition of the Bangladesh Government. The Committee further noted that not only the people magnificently responded to the strike call, but that workers of different organisations also came forward to work unitedly with us at many places.

While welcoming these positive developments, the Committee found no reason to be complacent. It noted that the all-sided attacks of the ruling classes and the Congress Government against the people and their semi-fascist terror are getting

fierce. Hence the Committee decided that the task of exposing and isolating the Congress Government and the organising powerful mass struggles and strengthening united actions will have to be carried forward in the coming days. Mass campaigns and struggles will be further developed on urgent economic and political issues. The Party will patiently pursue the policy of building united struggles at different levels on these issues.

The Committee noted with concern that the Congress Government is nakedly intensifying the semi-fascist terror. The ruling Congress is taking over the Naxalite anti-socials and is consolidating all gangster groups under their control. Those refusing to toe the line are being mercilessly dealt with. At the same time, the Congress Government and the ruling Congress party have become more desperate and have mounted their attacks further including murders.

A new dangerous feature of Congress gangsterism is being noticed. On the line of Ahladipur and Cossipur attacks, they are moving in truckloads backed by the police and CRP and launching sudden attacks on us and the democratic forces. Simultaneously, police and CRP attacks have been intensified especially in the rural areas. Mass-scale arrests on false charges, and more brutal police attacks on the plea of arresting so-called wanted persons are being organised. The ruling Congress gangsters, who are committing murders even in broad daylight, are given more open and naked support and encouragement. In many places local police officers are seen to work as directed by the ruling Congress murderers. Legal defence is being made more and more difficult by the combined terror of the Government and the Congress goondas. Detention without trial under the PVA and MIS Acts has been given a new spurt. Larger number of workers of democratic movements are being detained. Even persons released by courts are being immediately detained under the MIS Act. The motive behind the enactment of the MIS Act is becoming more clear to the people. Police terror has gone to such a length that even peasants who have formally received surplus land from the Government are attacked by the police to help jotdars to snatch away the lands. The

struggle against such intensified terror and for defence of democracy will have to be strengthened.

The Committee heard reports about the unprecedented and devastating floods in the major part of the State. The people never saw such floods, neither did they see such criminal callousness on the part of a Government. Little rescue and relief operations are undertaken and whatever little relief is given, it is nakedly used in the Congress's own party interests. From their own experience, the people are realising that in contrast to the criminal negligence of the Congress rulers, the U.F. Government showed utmost concern for the people in distress and undertook big relief operations in spite of the handicaps placed by the Central Government.

The Committee noted that our workers everywhere are with the suffering people. Broad-based movements are being organised for relief and rehabilitation. The devastating flood has shown that the Government did nothing during the last 24 years to control floods. Adequate flood-control measures demand many crores of rupees which only the Central Government can provide. But the Government has persistently refused it. The last U.F. Government prepared some master plans which are not implemented in the same way. The Party has decided to organise powerful united campaigns and struggles for flood-control measures and for immediate adequate relief and for post-flood measures like supply of seeds, credit, grants, house-building materials, rent and debt remission etc.

The Party will intensify the movement of the unemployed for employment or relief. It is a serious problem. The ruling Congress is utilising this issue in the usual fascist way to create an army of gangsters. Our Party will strengthen the mass democratic movement on this issue. Mass campaigns on urgent problems like opening of closed factories, stopping evictions, saving education etc., will be intensified, broader sections of the people will be organised.

All the problems have further exposed the discrimination against West Bengal by the Central Government. The Party will continue the campaign against this discrimination.

The Congress Government is, on the one hand, shelving the issue of recognition of the Bangladesh Government and on the other, utilising the struggle of the Bangladesh people as an excuse for attacking the people here. The Party will continue to intensify the campaign of solidarity with the heroic people of Bangladesh and for recognition of their Government.

All the problems enumerated above, the utter callousness of the Government to the sufferings of the people and the criminal terror let loose by the Government and the gangster groups organised by it have further highlighted the urgency of having an elected Government in West Bengal enjoying the confidence of the people. The Party will naturally run continuous campaigns for an early election.

The Committee decided to run campaigns on all these issues in the month of October and hold a Central Rally at Calcutta on November, 7. The Party will simultaneously keep friendly contacts with other Left and democratic parties and organisations and develop united struggles. The forms of such struggles will be decided in due course.

The Committee discussed the state of the Party and mass organisations. It noted with pride that in face of increasingly brutal attacks, our Party has stood firm and is getting more steeled and strengthened. Our Party and the mass organisations have registered a steady advance. The Committee decided to further strengthen the organisations and raise the political level of our workers further.

About Party Conferences, the Committee decided that local Conferences will be held in October and District Conferences in November. The State Conference will be held in Midnapore from December 15 to 18, 1971. Four hundred delegates will attend the State Conference.

Bangladesh Let Down*

Statement of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) issued in Calcutta on October 2, 1971

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on October 2, 1971, on the Indo-Soviet Joint Statement :

In the background of the grim struggle of the Bangladesh people against the military regime, the courageous fight of the guerrillas against overwhelming odds and the growing unity and determination of the people of Bangladesh to win their freedom, the Indo-Soviet Joint Statement comes as a big let-down.

In the resolution passed by our Central Committee in Bangalore in the last week of August, the Central Committee had stated, "the Joint Communique of the two Foreign Ministers issued two days after the Treaty...creates some apprehensions that the question of recognition of the Government of Bangladesh is sought to be by-passed".

Back-Sliding

Unfortunately, these apprehensions have come true. The Polit Bureau warns the people against the complacent attitude that is being spread by the drum-beaters of the Government. The Joint Statement carefully conceals the back-sliding under a verbiage of phrases, so that the people can be misled into believing that a new turn in the right direction is being made.

In the midst of a lot of wordy expressions and mutual compliments, the Joint Statement badly lets down the people of

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, October 10, 1971.

Bangladesh by refusing to accept their inalienable right to self-determination and by pleading with Yahya Khan for what is described as a political solution. The people of Bangladesh having inscribed on their banner complete freedom for their motherland and total withdrawal of all forces of occupation have brought the struggle to a point at which there can be no return to compromise or accommodation with the Yahya regime. In place of the specific right of self-determination and freedom for which tens of thousands are already risking their lives and for which millions are suffering, the Joint Statement talks vaguely about "urgent measures to reach a political solution of problems arising there, paying regard to the wishes and the inalienable rights and lawful interests of the people" of Bangladesh, etc. This is a direct appeal to the butcher Yahya Khan to take measures to secure the inalienable rights of the people. How will matters look if somebody were to appeal to "President" Thieu of South Vietnam to take urgent measures to secure the inalienable rights of the people of South Vietnam? The mode of expression as well as the appeal to Yahya Khan are indicative of a compromise settlement with the military regime and run contrary to the demand for the freedom of the Bangladesh people or the recognition of the Bangladesh Government.

It was thought that the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship would enable the Government to overcome its vacillations on the question of granting recognition to the Bangladesh Government. But things have shaped otherwise. It is therefore not accidental that in his speech before the UNO, Sri Swaran Singh, India's Foreign Minister, did not support the demand for the freedom of Bangladesh nor referred to the existence of the Bangladesh Government. If formerly political settlement meant the freedom of Bangladesh, now the Foreign Minister suggests that a political solution with the elected representatives could be found within the framework of Pakistan itself, that the settlement need not necessarily be one between the Yahya Government and the Bangladesh Government.

Monstrous

It is monstrous that the Joint Statement has literally not a word to say about the inhuman atrocities perpetrated by Yahya Khan's military regime in Bangladesh. From the Statement it would appear that nothing much of consequence has taken place in Bangladesh except the trek of refugees into India. This is callousness beyond limit. "The Soviet side appreciates India's humane approach to the problem created by the influx of the refugees from East Bengal; the two sides express their concern over the grave situation which has arisen on the Indian sub-continent as a result of the recent *events* in East Bengal." To the two signatories, the genocide in Bangladesh on which scores of bourgeois Correspondents have written so much is only a recent event. Thus, in the Statement there is absolutely no effort to fix the responsibility for atrocities on the Yahya regime because the undertone of the Statement is one of seeking a political solution with the aid of the Yahya regime to the 'events' of Bangladesh.

One-Sided

Besides, the Statement presents the entire question from a one-sided angle, that of maintaining peace. The main question, the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people, is by-passed and it is suggested instead that the main question is stopping further aggravation of the situation between India and Pakistan. This exactly suits the book of Yahya Khan, who seeks to divert the attention on Indo-Pakistan tension by claiming for himself the right to decide the future of the Bangladesh people, declaring that it is an internal problem, to be settled by the Pakistan authorities.

It is therefore not strange that Mr. Kosygin in his reported speech has laid stress on the Bangladesh problem being an internal problem of Pakistan and virtually declared that India can be legitimately interested only in the return of the refugees from East Bengal. And it is significant that Mrs. Gandhi has virtually endorsed this position, a position which the Government had not openly taken so far, though they had rightly suggested that if there was to be a settlement it should be with the

Bangladesh Government. Thus the India Government is virtually being asked to concern itself only with the refugees. By implication, it is being asked to withdraw all support for the success of the freedom struggle of Bangladesh.

Step by step the Government of India is being compelled to give up its position of supporting the freedom struggle of Bangladesh in favour of which the Indian Parliament and the State Legislatures have passed a number of resolutions. The Joint Statement virtually goes back on all these and also reveals that the Government of India has no serious intention of recognising the Bangladesh Government.

To hide the slide-back, the Joint Statement underplays the freedom content of the Bangladesh struggle and presents it as a question of maintaining peace in the sub-continent. Our Party attaches valuable importance to the maintenance of peaceful relations between the two countries and has warned against the advocates of war against Pakistan, but we cannot be a party to strangulate the freedom movement of Bangladesh, under the pretext of preserving the peace in the sub-continent.

It is strange that while the Joint Statement very correctly demands the withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam, it does not even condemn by a word the American arms supplies to Yahya regime which is on a mission of rampage and genocide in Bangladesh. Why are the two parties so shy of mentioning and condemning this act of American aggression against the people of Bangladesh ?

Fake Compromise

Mr. Kosygin's speech which had been publicised by interested parties as a new orientation of Soviet policy on Bangladesh reveals the same content as the Joint Statement despite some sharp phrases here and there. It uses some sharp words against the rulers of Pakistan ; even refers to 'atrocities' in one place and expresses sympathy for the democratic forces of Pakistan—not Bangladesh. But it does not mention the freedom struggle of Bangladesh.

It appeals to the butcher Yahya Khan to take most effective steps for the liquidation of this hot-bed of tension in the Indian sub-continent and speaks about a political settlement which would take into account "the legitimate interests" of the people, but does not mention the demand for freedom.

It is clear that there is every danger of all-round international pressure to have some kind of fake compromise, sacrificing the freedom interests of the Bangladesh people. The British imperialists themselves are talking about a civilian rule in East Bengal and are not satisfied with the appointment of only a civil Governor. The imperialist Powers realise that in the present state of world opinion, an impressive facade is required to conceal a treacherous compromise and they are urging Yahya Khan to provide one.

Recognise Now !

At this stage, when the struggle of the Bangladesh people is reaching a decisive point, it will be nothing short of treachery and betrayal if the Government of India under whosoever's pressure begins to go back on its previous stand and lets down the valiant struggle of Bangladesh. The democratic movement in India is committed to the defence of Bangladesh and to see that freedom is ensured for this valiant people. It has with one voice demanded recognition of the Bangladesh Government. While there is no doubt that it is the people of Bangladesh who have to decide their own future, it is the duty of the democratic movement in India to help them in their objective and their struggle. A Government which calls itself progressive has to lend its support to all struggles against all manifestations of neo-colonialism. The democratic movement in India will not tolerate any going back on the promises held out to the Bangladesh people and will demand immediate recognition of the Bangladesh Government and full support to the cause of the people there.

The Polit Bureau warns the people against the danger of a compromise settlement at the expense of the people of Bangladesh and calls upon all sections of democratic forces to be vigilant against such an eventuality.

China in the United Nations*

The U.N. vote to accord the People's Republic of China its legitimate place in the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly, replacing the Chiang Kai-shek rump which all these days had usurped that place, is a big welcome development which gladdens the anti-imperialist and Socialist world. The anti-imperialist and Socialist forces which have been fighting for this outcome for over two decades rightly consider it a significant victory of theirs.

It is, at the same time, the acknowledgement of the magnificent advance which backward China has made in just twenty years, the tremendous strength People's China has acquired in the economic, political and military fields, a recognition, though belated, of the fact that People's China is a world Power and none of the problems concerning the world can be solved without its participation.

For over two decades, the imperialists, with the U.S. imperialists taking the lead, have been blocking People's China's entry into the United Nations, refusing to accord it its rightful status as a world Power. They had tried to ignore this mighty nation of 750 million people, they had blockaded it hoping to strangulate it in its infant years, they had tried countless military provocations against it. Everything of this has come to nought, they could no longer prevent China walking into the United Nations and occupying its rightful place. It is a crushing defeat inflicted on the imperialists.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, October 31, 1971.

The United Nations, since it was born and today also, has in-built limitations. But despite these limitations, China's entry as a permanent member of the Security Council is sure to make for a radical change in the decision-making and functioning of the world body.

Of the five permanent members of the Security Council, with People's China's entry, two now belong to the Socialist camp. This gives confidence to the people of newly-independent countries struggling for economic emancipation and coming up against imperialist opposition on many questions in the course of this, to the people still fighting for their independence, to those who are oppressed by racist dictatorships that they can draw on the support of another mighty Socialist Power in the Security Council for the advancement of their just cause.

Jarring notes will, of course, be struck by those who are incapable of looking at China except through their jaundiced eyes. They will try to scare the innocent with motivated slanders about how China will collude with the imperialists, take anti-Soviet postures in the United Nations and endanger the cause of world peace and national liberation. These malicious detractors of People's China are not discouraged by the fact that every nasty bit of slander they had cooked up about China has been proved to be unmitigated lies. Let them, at least now, learn the correct lessons from the course of development of the world today—which has led to the defeat of the imperialists and victory of the anti-imperialist and Socialist forces—and assist that process if they want to remain in the mainstream of humanity.

There is a lesson in what has happened to certain other quarters, too. For years, many nations had raised their hands like obedient puppets at U.S. bidding to block People's China's entry into the U.N. Even they should be able to see today that that is not a game which can be played for ever. The writing is on the wall for those who still want to play the role of imperialist stooges at a time when the people of the world are inflicting death-blows, one after another, on imperialism.

The vote for the entry of people's China into the U.N. long before President Nixon's proposed visit to Peking should have a chastening effect on the U.S. imperialists who even after admitting their defeat—when they asked for an invitation for their President to visit China—were still hoping they would be able to manoeuvre their way out of the blind alley into which their policies have led them. As such, it should lead to a more positive outcome of the U.S.-China talks for normalisation of relations between the two countries which Nixon has declared is the purpose of his visit.

People's China's entry into the United Nations, it is certain, will be another major turning point in the fast-developing international situation in the present period. Let us join the anti-imperialist and Socialist forces the world over to hail the great event!

Bangladesh Must Win*

Central Committee of CPI(M) Calls for All-Out Support

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting in Calcutta held on November 3-6, 1971

The following is the text of the resolution on Bangladesh, adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at its meeting in Calcutta from November 3 to 6, 1971:

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) at its Bangalore Session expressed its deep indignation at the wholesale massacre of tens of thousands of unarmed civilians of Bangladesh by the army of the military regime of Pakistan. The C.C. further demanded that the Government of India forthwith recognise the Provisional Government of Swadhin Bangladesh and render it all material assistance.

In the intervening months the struggle of the people of Bangladesh has reached new heights with growing unity in the ranks of the people and the Mukti Bahini forces and guerrilla bands inflicting heavy damage on the military forces of the Pakistan regime. The C.C. sends its warm greetings to the Bangladesh patriots who are carrying on a heroic freedom struggle against heavy odds.

The C.C. strongly protests against the failure of the Government of India to recognise the Bangladesh Government and render it full assistance. It is the duty of the entire democratic movement to see that this great struggle is carried to victory and the people come out triumphant against the dictatorial regime of Yahya Khan. The Government of India, however, continues its policy of uttering brave words doing

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 14, 1971.

very little in practice. The External Affairs Minister's speech at the Simla session of the AICC cannot but cause concern to all democratic sections.

Meanwhile, Yahya Khan, increasingly armed with American military and financial aid, is preparing to launch a further brutal offensive against the freedom-fighters with the end of the monsoon. Every effort is being made to crush the movement and at the same time, present facade of a civilian Government to mislead world opinion.

The imperialist Powers of the world while pretending sympathy for the lot of refugees in India and hypocritically praising India for the 'restraint' shown by her and pressurising her not to help the freedom struggle, are carrying on a rescue operation to save the Yahya regime. The American imperialists are openly supplying arms to the dictatorial regime; Britain and other countries are working for a despicable compromise which will throw the freedom-fighters on the mercy of the dictator.

The C.C. calls upon the people to be vigilant against these international machinations and pressure for an unconscionable compromise bartering away the rights of the Bangladesh people. The Indian people will have to pay a heavy price if they allow this conspiracy to succeed and allow the Government to vacillate further. The success of the Bangladesh struggle will immensely strengthen the secular and democratic forces in the subcontinent, enabling them to march to further victories. Its defeat will mean the triumph of reaction and strengthening of imperialist conspiracies against the people of Bangladesh, India and West Pakistan.

This danger lurks today because of the failure of the democratic forces in India to mobilise their full strength in support of this cause of the Bangladesh people. The democratic forces and parties have got the requisite strength to overcome the Government's vacillations and pressurise it to render all necessary aid to the freedom struggle. Indifference and apathy will lead to a heavy price being paid by the Indian people. It will mean that India will have to carry the burden of the refugees permanently,

as it will be impossible for them to return to Bangladesh without the guarantee of freedom and safety. The C.C., therefore, calls upon all democratic parties and elements to unite to defend the cause of the Bangladesh people and to demand of the Government that it gives immediate recognition to the Bangladesh Government.

The C.C. takes serious note of the fact that war clouds are gathering over India and that the armies of the two States are now in a state of mobilisation, facing each other, across the border. The C.C. is of the opinion that efforts must be made to avoid war.

The C.C. notes that a number of foreign Powers seek to exploit the people's desire for peace to undermine all help being given to the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people. In the name of preserving peace, they suggest a compromise or a virtual betrayal of the fighting people. The C.C. warns the people against these tactics. The C.C. while it stands for avoiding war, is firmly of the opinion that the Government should grant immediate recognition to the Bangladesh Government and render it all aid. If as a result of such assistance, war is imposed on the people of India, the C.C. is confident that the Indian people will rally to a man to defeat the imperialist conspiracies, frustrate all attempts to find reactionary solutions, and ensure the victory of the Bangladesh people.

The C.C. warns that official policies of imposing additional tax burdens on the common man in the name of meeting expenditures on refugees while allowing the monopolists, big industrialists and the rich landed interests to escape, the policy of dismissal of State and Defence employees in West Bengal and the monstrous repression against the democratic movement in West Bengal only disrupt the common effort and will to meet the serious situation created by the war danger. The C.C. strongly feels that the Government must forthwith cease its attacks on the civil and democratic liberties of the people in the interest of mobilising their full strength to meet the new situation. The C.C. further demands that an end must be put to the present campaign of mass terror in West Bengal and there

must be complete restoration of the democratic liberties of the people.

The people of India cannot give up their democratic rights or their right to support the freedom struggle of other peoples. They cannot be cowed down by threats of war. They cannot do justice to the millions of suffering refugees whose woes know no bounds if they relax their efforts in the cause of the Bangladesh people because of the threat of war.

Kerala Boiling Over With Mass Actions*

Chief Minister Achutha Menon of Kerala wails that even some of the ruling parties are backing agitations and strikes of the various sections of the people in the State. The Congress Home Minister K. Karunakaran demands that the youth and student wings of his Ruling Congress Party should be disciplined.

The Right Communist Chief Minister and the Congress Home Minister have both reasons to do this wailing, for Kerala at the moment is boiling over with mass protests and actions. The immediate provocation for their statements was the strike of the private college teachers which began on September 15 and is continuing with growing mass support.

The main demand of the teachers is a very simple one— they are facing great difficulties in getting their salaries from the private managements regularly and the Government which meets about 80 per cent of the budgets of these private institutions must make direct payments to the teachers.

The Chief Minister's party is committed to this demand of the teachers. In fact, no one can deny the justice of the demand or object to it except the private college managements who see in it the beginning of the end of the lucrative business into which they have converted college education. And these interests are so powerful the ruling parties cannot afford to ignore them.

The private colleges are mainly run by Christian churches and institutions, the SNDP Yogam, an organisation of the Ezhava community, the communal Nair Service Society and

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 14, 1971.

some Muslim educational institutions. And all of them have tremendous hold over the ruling parties specially the Ruling Congress and the Muslim League.

The SNDP leader R. Sankar, who has come out vehemently against the demand of the teachers, is a former Congress Chief Minister of the State and at present an ex-officio member of the Pradesh Congress Committee. His opposition to the teachers' demand has brought the demand from the Youth Congress that the Ruling Congress Party should take disciplinary action against him. Muslim League Minister C. H. Mohammed Koya has denounced the teachers' demand and declared that it can never be accepted.

The Right Communist Chief Minister has adopted what he thinks to be a clever tactic to deny the teachers' demand in effect, he has said that the Government has no objection to making direct payments to the teachers provided the managements agreed to Government control in the matter of appointment of teaching and non-teaching staff of the colleges and also admission of students. This cannot be done without an amendment to the Constitution and Sri Achutha Menon knows this very well—it was at the time of the first Communist-led Government in Kerala that a legislation to take over these powers of appointment was struck down by the courts after the managements sought protection under the guarantees given to minorities. By mixing up the two things, the Chief Minister is refusing to do what is within the powers of the State Government—that is, to make direct payments to the teachers.

Sri Achutha Menon's offer to the teachers has now been made in the form of a proposal by the Government. The teachers' leaders have already said that it is unsatisfactory although they have suspended the picketing of the Secretariat and other Government offices which they began on October 19 in the second stage of their struggle, till November 9 when the General Council of the Teachers' Associations is holding emergency session.

What has angered the Ministers most is that the student and youth organisations of the ruling parties except the Muslim

League's and the Right C.P.'s— the latter deciding to join the Joint Council of Students only belatedly, not only gave full support to the teacher's demand but went into action in support of their strike.

The Students' Federation of India organised picketing before the Secretariat and all district Collectorates on October 17 in support of the teacher's strike and called for a students' strike on the 28th. The Indicate led Kerala Students' Union was organising its own programme of support with picketing of Government offices, etc. A Joint Council of Action of Students was formed with the SFI, KSU, the student organisations led by the RSP, PSP, etc., and they called for a strike of students to begin on November 3. The panicky Government closed the educational institutions on the day and the next day, but the students went through their programme as scheduled.

As was expected, after the Government's proposal to the teachers which they have already termed unsatisfactory, the KSU—and the Youth Congress which was to begin its programme from November 7—have withdrawn from the agitation and are repeating Chief Minister Achutha Menon's slander that the continuation of the strike would be politically motivated.

Govt. Employees To Strike

Another target of Sri Achutha Menon's Government is the State Government employees who are poised to go on an indefinite strike from this week. The strike has been forced by the Government's own vindictiveness.

Sri Achutha Menon, as usual, has lost no time to brand the proposed strike as politically motivated. And he has made his usual effort to isolate the employees from the people.

Addressing a Press Conference on November 7 in Trivandrum, he said that the proposed strike did not aim at the furthering of the interests or organisational freedom of Government employees, that the NGOs' Union in its strike notice had mentioned the two Government circulars regarding "no work

no pay” and “no grant of *en masse* casual leave for strike” as being an attack on freedom of organisational work, and that the Government would not resile from its position in respect of the two circulars as public money could not be paid for idling during office hours.

What this means is that the hard-won facilities of the leaders of the employees’ organisations for doing their organisational work are taken away from them, the right of the employees to resort to any protest action like mass casual leave is denied and the Government wants to make the employees’ organisations into clubs which will meet on holidays and pass resolutions of loyalty to the Government.

Employees’ leaders, State Service Organisations Joint Council President E. J. Francis and NGO Union Secretary E. Padmanabhan have rightly said that these are part of the grave inroads which the Government has been making into the hard-won rights of the employees to organise and agitate and their proposed strike is to counter this.

General Strike to Back Striking Birla Workers

To back the workers of Birlas’ Rayon Pulp Factory in Mavoor near Kozhikode, who have been on strike since the beginning of September, over a lakh and a half workers of Kozhikode district went on a general strike on October 26 in response to the call of the CITU, AITUC, HMS and the Muslim League led Union.

The entire scavenging staff of the Corporation joined the strike. With all the porters on strike, loading and unloading work in the goods-shed, bazars, port, Food Corporation etc., came to a total standstill.

All the cashew factories, saw mills, coir factories and tile factories were strike-bound and workers of Government owned units like the Kerala Soaps and Oils and Kerala Friseries Corporation, and of Ice and Cold Storage, Industrial Estate, etc., joined the strike. Thirtyfive thousand workers in tea and coffee plantations and 15,000 workers in the rubber estates in the district joined the strike.

The striking workers demonstrated in various centres demanding an immediate settlement of the bonus dispute in the Birla Factory.

The latest round of talks between the representatives of the workers—the CITU union is the representative union in the establishment, and the management in the presence of three Ministers of the State including the Labour Minister did not yield any result because of the adamance of the employers. And to encourage them one of the Ministers who attended the talks, RSP's Baby John, said that the talks did not succeed because of political considerations which weighed with the workers' representatives. In fact, in every strike big or small, in the State, Ministers of the Kerala Government have these days begun finding political motivation.

But the 4,000 workers of the factory are continuing their strike.

Bala Rangam Conference

It was a unique demonstration that Cannanore town in Kerala saw on October 10 when ten thousand boys and girls marched with disciplined steps through the streets of the town to conclude the regional conference of the Deshabhimani Bala Rangam. The one slogan which was heard again and again was, "We are marching onward for a better tomorrow which will wipe away the tears and sorrows, starvation and sufferings, pain and misery of today." Tens of thousands of the elders of the town had lined the streets to greet their kids and wish them success.

The Deshabhimani Bala Rangam came into existence about four years ago in the pages of the week-end edition of the CPI(M)'s Malayalam daily, *Deshabhimani*. When the weekend edition was converted into a weekly, efforts began to organise units of the Bala Rangam. Units were set up in many places, Cannanore having the maximum number today. While in Palghat and Kozhikode districts, organisational work is still in its infancy, in the Travancore-Cohin area there are a large number of members but no organised units.

The Regional Conference in Cannanore in October 10 was for the four districts of Cannanore, Kozhikode, Malappuram and Palghat. Nine hundred and six delegates from these four districts were present at the conference which began with the hoisting of the flag by Kasturi Chandran. A Presidium of P. D. Pankajam, N. Prabhakaran, V. K. Sureshbabu, K.V.R. Krishna conducted the proceedings of the conference which was inaugurated by Patyam Gopalan.

The manifesto adopted by the conference said :

“We are totally opposed to all types of reactionary thoughts and ideologies. We will fight them and defeat them. We are the future promises of the revolutionary movement. We will hold as high as possible the torch of progress.”

The programme they adopted in the Manifesto called for developing scientific thinking, learning and understanding of Marxism-Leninism, fighting against all superstitions, developing courage and bravely fighting against all injustice, learning to discharge one’s responsibility, to be good at studies, organising discussions and debates, cultural programmes and sports, building up children’s libraries, cooperating with the genuinely revolutionary party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and so on.

Sixty of the children participated in the debate on the Manifesto before it was adopted.

The open rally at the end of the conference was addressed among others by Comrade A. K. Gopalan.

Despite Ferocious Repression CPI(M) in West Bengal Has Grown Tremendously*

Press Conference following meeting of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) held in Calcutta on November 8-10, 1971

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in Calcutta from November 8 to 10, 1971, Comrade Abdullah Rasul presiding. Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Party, attended the meeting.

Replying to questions at a Press Conference on November 11, where he released a communique on the meeting, Comrade Promod Dasgupta said that the CPI(M) was the only party in the country which had been demanding a peaceful settlement of India's disputes with China from the very beginning. It was for this "crime" that its leading cadres all over India had to suffer jail incarcerations in 1962 and again in 1964, and the Party was dubbed in the national Press as "anti-national". But the Party was happy that good sense had prevailed on the Indian leaders even at this late hour. The Party had no solution to offer, all it wanted was that both sides should sit across the table without any preconditions and settle the outstanding disputes.

Questioned as to whether the Party would be happy if Aksai Chin was ceded to China, Comrade Harekrishna Konar, who was also present at the Press Conference, said that any settlement arrived at through bilateral talks would naturally take the objective reality into consideration and it would be one of satisfaction to both the countries. Comrade Promod Dasgupta added that it was probable that the parties would agree on a settlement according to the position each one held at the moment on the borders.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 21, 1971.

Growth of the Party

Regarding the increase in the membership of the Party Comrade Promod Dasgupta said that figures for the districts of 24-Parganas, Burdwan, Howrah, Hooghly and Calcutta were particularly impressive. In 24-Parganas, Calcutta and Burdwan the increase has been more than double. The new members have mostly been drawn from the working class and the peasantry.

In reply to another question, Comrade Promod Dasgupta said that about 500 members had been expelled from the Party in 1967-68 in West Bengal for Naxalite leanings. He did not see any likelihood of their coming back to the CPI(M) consequent upon their ideological vacillations and disruption of their party. A good many of them are in jail, a considerable number has been murdered by the police and most of the rest have found shelter within the ruling Congress party and the Right Communist Party.

Asked to comment on the internal dissensions of the ruling Congress party in West Bengal, Comrade Promod Dasgupta said that what was being witnessed now had been inherent in the policy and practice of the party. Or else why was the party riven by dissensions instead of consolidating itself in the wake of its massive victory all over India? We were not fostering the contradictions in their organisation. They were, however, frantically trying to disrupt our rally in Calcutta on November 7. Sri Siddhartha Ray was even reported to have advised the meteorological office to forecast severe storm and rain in the hope of minimising attendance at our rally !

Working people all over India were getting disillusioned with the Indira Gandhi Government, Comrade Promod Dasgupta said, the recent instances of which could be found in the textile strikes in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. At the very moment when the Right Communist Party was adopting resolutions of co-operation with the ruling Congress party, the workers under that party's influence came out in strike in Bombay.

Defining the Party's attitude towards other democratic parties of the opposition, Comrade Dasgupta said, our efforts to forge

the widest possible unity against the anti-people policies of the Government as also other issues would continue. Even though some parties of the Eight-Party Combine have chosen to cast their lot with the ruling Congress party, notably the Right Communist party, the masses led by them had not failed to join the struggle. We are sure that the high tide of struggle will sweep all party barriers aside and bring the masses together.

Text of the Communiqué

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met from November 8 to 10, 1971. Comrade Abdullah Rasul presided. Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Party, was present.

The Committee heard reports of the recent C.C. meeting from Comrade Promod Dasgupta. Comrade P. Sundarayya reported about Socialist construction in Cuba which he recently visited along with Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet on the invitation of the Cuban Communist Party. Comrade H. Konar reported about the meeting of the Trade Union International of Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation Workers, recently held in Rome.

The Committee discussed the draft report to be placed before the ensuing State Party Conference to be held from December 15 to 19, 1971, at Midnapore. Most of the comrades took part in the discussion. While agreeing with the general formulations, they gave suggestions to improve and strengthen the report. The Committee authorised the Secretariat to finalise the report on the basis of the summing up speech of the State Secretary, Comrade Promod Dasgupta.

The report noted that the economic crisis has become more intensified. Notwithstanding big promises, nothing is done to mitigate the crisis. More taxes and burdens are imposed on the people. Prices are rising. Unemployment is growing. This crisis has taken the most acute form in West Bengal.

Repression Being Intensified

The report noted that after the big parliamentary victory, the Congress Government is intensifying repression all over India,

as corollary to its policy of imposing more heavy new burdens on the people.

Frightened at the prospect of growing disillusionment of the masses and increasing tempo of mass struggles, the Congress Government have become more afraid of parliamentary democracy, particularly in the case of West Bengal. They feel that in the context of growing mass struggles, the existence of a powerful democratic movement in West Bengal led by the CPI(M) and its allies may eventually endanger their class rule. Hence semi-fascist terror accompanied by police, CRP and goonda attacks and backed by military combing operations is being intensified in West Bengal with each passing day. This has placed a heavy responsibility on our Party in West Bengal, as the front-rank detachment of the democratic forces of the country.

The report noted with pride that since the last Conference three years ago and specially since the last Plenum session about two years ago, the Party in West Bengal has tremendously and steadily grown in strength and influence. In the context of the increasingly ferocious attacks of the Congress Government and disruptive pro-ruling Congress orientation of some of the old constituents of the U.F. headed by the Right Communists, our Party followed correct policies at each stage. It has correctly followed united front tactics keeping always in mind the supreme need of uniting the masses and carrying forward their struggles against the reactionary ruling classes. It has enabled more and more people to understand the character of Government attacks by piercing through the cloud of slanderous campaigns launched by the Congress, Right C.P. and some other parties. All mischievous attempts to isolate and weaken us have miserably failed. By defeating all disruptive attempts of the Right C.P. and their friends we have succeeded in uniting more and more people in common struggles against the ruling classes and their attacks. That is why we have become the target of increasingly ferocious semi-fascist attacks. We have lost more than 530 of our valuable cadres. But all attacks have failed to weaken us or cow the people into submission.

Our Party has significantly grown in strength and fighting character. Its membership has increased from 16,000 to more than 34,000. The number of activist group members stand at nearly 50,000. The Party has become more steeled. The political level and effectiveness of our comrades have markedly grown. Our Party has become the biggest mass force in West Bengal. The T.U., kisan, youth, student and women's front organisations in which we work have acquired biggest mobilising capacity. The role played by CITU and trade unions of employees and allied organisations in politicalising the working people and uniting them in common struggles is very significant. Our kisan movement is strongly based on millions of poor peasants and agricultural labourers. They have emerged as a great organised militant force. Our workers, peasants, youth, students, women, etc., stand as the bulwark in defence of democracy against the growing danger of semi-fascist barbarity. The circulation of our papers has almost trebled.

Trying Period Ahead

The report concluded that the coming period will be a more trying period for us and the people of West Bengal. Standing on the great advances made by us during the last three years we are confident that we shall creditably discharge our responsibility in uniting the working class, the workers and peasants and around them the people in general in common struggles, in defeating the increasing semi-fascist onslaughts and in blocking the road to fascist autocracy.

The report also noted that our Party played a great role in popularising and helping the struggle of the Bangladesh people. It noted with concern that the Government of India is still hesitating to recognise the free Government of Bangladesh and to render it all necessary help. While warning the people against the danger of any betrayal of the cause of Bangladesh from any quarter whatsoever, the report expressed our determination to firmly stand by the people of Bangladesh.

After concluding the discussion on the report, the State Committee discussed the present situation. It noted that having

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failed to suppress the democratic movements the Congress Government has become more naked and raised its semi-fascist attacks to a new dangerous level. Police, CRP and Congress (R) gangster attacks have become more co-ordinated and have taken the character of mass attacks, mass murders and arson, as is seen in some parts of Calcutta, 24-Parganas and Burdwan. The Committee has decided to warn the people about this type of attacks and unite them more firmly against it.

The Committee noted that the Prime Minister has expressed her desire to normalise India's relations with China and has, instead of the old rigid attitude, expressed willingness to discuss about Aksai Chin and the whole border question. This approach should have been taken much earlier. This proves the correctness of the stand taken by us from the very beginning on this question. However late, the Committee appreciated this changed attitude and expressed its support to any positive step taken in this matter.

Hold Elections In West Bengal*

Statement of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) issued on November 16, 1971

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press on November 16, 1971 :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the decision of the Government of India to deprive the people of West Bengal of their right to hold general elections in February, 1972 along with the peoples of other States in India. This blatant discrimination has been resorted to because the Congress party, despite the massive repressive measures against the people and particularly the CPI(M), does not yet feel confident to face the electorate.

The Polit Bureau calls upon the democratic parties and people of West Bengal to protest against this discriminatory treatment and attack against elementary democratic rights of the people. It further calls upon the democratic forces all over India to stand by the people of West Bengal and raise their voice against this decision of the Government of India. The P.B. demands that the Government of India must revise its decision immediately and hold elections in West Bengal in February 1972.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 21, 1971.

Critical Stage In Bangladesh Struggle*

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Warns of Yahya Khan's War Gamble

The Polit Bureau of Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement on November 19, 1971 :

The struggle of Bangladesh has reached a critical point. The forces of freedom struggle are forging ahead on all sectors. The situation has become desperate for the ruling junta.

It is therefore not surprising that border clashes between Indian border forces and the Pakistani forces have increased. Casualties are mounting everyday. Villages are being shelled and many innocent citizens have fallen victims in this exchange of fire and shelling. These developments reveal that danger of war is increasing everyday. The military regime of Pakistan may try its luck with the last throw of the gambler in the shape of a war.

The Polit Bureau warns the people of this imminent danger and be prepared to meet it. It is clear that Yahya Khan continues to be helped by the American Government whose openly inimical attitude towards India is now well-known. Had it not been so, Pakistan's military rulers would not have defied world appeals to them to enter into negotiations with Bangabandhu Mujibar Rahaman. If war is thrust on India, it will be the joint conspiracy of Pakistan and American Governments.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 28, 1971. General Yahya Khan was the Military Dictator of Pakistan after General Ayub Khan was removed by him from Military Dictatorship in Pakistan which combined West Pakistan (now Pakistan) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh)

If the situation ends in war, the issue involved will be the right of the Bangladesh people to freedom, an issue which cannot be the concern of the Government alone. It is an issue which directly concerns the democratic movement of the people. It is also of vital importance to the people's movement in West Pakistan. It is therefore the responsibility of our people to see that everything is done to help the struggle and see that the war ends in a victory of the people of Bangladesh and the liquidation of the military rule at their hands.

The Polit Bureau is confident that the people all over the country, the democratic parties, the trade unions, kisan and student organisations all will unite their efforts for this single cause. The Polit Bureau calls upon the Government to grant immediate recognition to the Bangladesh Government.

It also warns the Government that its anti-people measures like the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal, increased taxation on the common man, victimisation of Government employees and attacks on civil liberties are anti-national and disrupt the much-needed unity required to meet the emergent situation. The Polit Bureau demands that these measures be withdrawn and proper conditions be created to enable our people to throw their full energy in the task of ensuring victory for the Bangladesh freedom struggle.

Headmaster Burnt Alive*

Congress Barbarities in West Bengal

Bimal Dasgupta, Headmaster of the MAMC Higher Secondary School of Durgapur, is no more. Did he die a natural death? According to the standards set by the ruling Congress in West Bengal, perhaps yes. Comrade Dasgupta, a leading worker of the democratic teachers' movement, was tied hand and foot by some Youth Congressites to a chair in his room in the school on November 15, petrol was sprayed on his body and the furniture inside the room, the room was then securely locked from outside and set on fire. To further sure that Comrade Dasgupta was killed, the school laboratory adjacent to the headmaster's room was also set on fire. Both the rooms were gutted.

The students rushed to the scene, chased the Youth Congress gangsters and got hold of two of them. The charred body of Comrade Dasgupta was transferred to the hospital where he soon succumbed to his severe injuries. Alpana, a girl student of Class XI, was injured in the laboratory explosion and is now in hospital in a critical condition.

One of the gangsters apprehended was snatched away by the Congress bosses and the other was handed over to the police by the students. The students and teachers of all academic institutions in Durgapur went on a strike. A big protest procession was taken out. All the seven persons arrested by the police in connection with Comrade Dasgupta's murder are known as ruling Congress workers.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 28, 1971.

In the Rural Areas

An entire village in the district of Birbhum was set on fire to burn all the villagers alive sometime ago.

Kasipur, a tribal hamlet in the jurisdiction of the Elambazar Police Station has of late been the target of an attack by the CRP and Congress storm-troopers. At dead of night they entered the village, locked the houses from outside and then one after another set fire to them. In a grim battle for survival the villagers could save their own lives. But what now remains of the village is only a collection of charred walls of the houses. The villagers' stock of foodgrains, simple furniture, utensils, cattle, clothings and all the rest of the belongings were either gutted or looted. All trees and plants were uprooted. And the only tubewell catering drinking water to the villagers was broken into pieces. The campaigners then attempted to outrage the modesty of young girls but all the women together resisted the beasts.

For weeks together prior to the above expedition, the villagers were being subjected to continued harassment. The CRP would chase away the poor peasants from the paddy fields. In the combing operations by the army, men and women were indiscriminately tortured.

There is not a single male in the adjoining villages who does not carry scars of CRP and army brutalities on his person. The men were being hung heads down from branches of trees and then beaten for hours. Bairab Kora, Sorman, Faiju Seikh, Idris, Sabedin, Balak Majhi and many others of Kasipur and adjoining villages were thus tortured. The Sultanpur camp is the place where the men are taken and barbarities perpetrated on them.

The CRP also beat up many women including Sankari, Khaudu, Manbari, Pani and others. The expedition of loot, bodily attack and razing houses to the ground are being carried on at Higalpur, Amladihi, Hazratpur and other villages.

Comrade Saradish Roy, Lok Sabha member from the area, went to Kasipur to enquire into the barbarities. A CRP gang, only one among them in uniform, carrying rifles, spears, rods, etc., blocked his way and started searching the person of

Comrade Roy's companions, all the time hurling filthy abuses. Even after production of his identity card as M.P., Comrade Roy was taken to the CRP camp where the officer-in-charge refused to permit him to enter Kasipur, not a prohibited area.

But Comrade Roy entered Kasipur and was told by the men and women of the barbarities against them.

As the harvesting season draws near, police and goonda attacks on the poor peasants in all villagers, in the fortresses of the *benami* land-occupation struggles in particular, are being intensified. But everywhere as the villages of Chandrakona of Midnapur, Sonarpur of 24-Parganas, Bijra of Burdwan and so on the poor peasants and agricultural workers are heroically resisting the armed attackers set on them by the jotdars and are carrying their harvest home.

Tollygunj, Jadavpur

In the first week of November Congress goondas, CRP and police conducted a massive raid at Netajinagar. Houses were ransacked, cash and ornaments looted, household articles thrown in the ponds and men and women beaten indiscriminately. Seventythree including some prominent citizens were arrested. A young girl, Krishna Datta, was dragged to the police van by her hair. A seventy-year-old woman was injured. Many were said to be missing.

Smt. Maina Chakrabarti, an office employee, was returning home in a bus at 9.30 p.m. from her work. Some Congressite goondas kidnapped her from Moor Avenue and dragged her away to Azadgarh Market, Tollygunj. She was subjected to unspeakable brutalities. Contacted over the phone by the local people, the police came. And the police arrested none else but Smt. Maina Chakrabarti. The local Mahila Samiti organised a demonstration and forced the release of Smt. Chakrabarti.

Some weeks ago, the CRP shot dead Comrade Bablu Sinha of Bijaygarh, Jadavpur, while he was in their custody. They came again on November 11 to Sinha's house at Shri Colony, this time to kill his brother, Subrata Sinha. At the house-door, the CRP was resisted by the mother and sister of Subrata. The two

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women were inhumanly beaten. As Subrata protested loudly, he was shot and killed. The CRP then opened fire at random around the house.

Rajen Roy, a villager of Dhanirampur, Jalpaiguri, was performing the last rites of his deceased father when the police and jotdar hirelings appeared on the scene and took him to the thana. Rajen did not return. While looking for him, the local people found his mutilated dead body by the roadside.

Stop These Inhuman Killings !

It has happened too many times, it is happening too often—this burning and killing of Harijans and tribals, this massacre of defenceless prisoners inside jails. Every day of the Congress regime is adding to the list.

Mahatma Gandhi wanted a Harijan to be the President of Independent India, all that the Harijans want is that they be allowed to live—just live—in Independent India. That the Congress regime which talks so much about the uplift of the downtrodden, “garibi hatao” and what not, cannot ensure twentyfive years after Independence.

Chandwa-Rupaspur

In this village in Purnea district of Bihar, on November 22, landlords and their hirelings attacked Santhal share-croppers and when they took shelter in a house, locked it from outside and set fire to it. Then the entire near-by village of the Santhal tribals was set on fire and those who tried to escape from the burning houses were fired on and killed.

How many were killed ? Official reports have given out the figure of fourteen killed—six burnt to death, eight shot and killed. Socialist Party leader Karpuri Thakur has said that at least thirtyfive had been killed. Right Communist leader Jagannath Sarker has said twenty had been killed. All the reports agree that more had been trapped in the burnt-down huts, so no exact estimate of the ghastly toll is possible.

This is the most gruesome incident that has happened in Bihar during the present harvesting season—but by no means the only one. In many places in Bihar, particularly in Purnea district, incidentally the district from which Chief Minister Bhola Paswan Shastri hails, there have been a number of cases where the landlords have attacked and killed share croppers and agricultural workers because they asked for their due or asserted their rights.

Haraura

In this village in the Chakia tahsil of Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh, at least six agricultural workers have been killed and the fate of another five is unknown.

Landlords, their hirelings and the police together attacked the agricultural workers inhabiting the village and started beating up everyone—men, women and children. When they protested the police set fire to their homes. The people had no other go but to defend themselves. There was a clash. The police report said that two landlords two policemen had been killed in the clash.

This was the pretext for the terror against the agricultural workers of the village. Three of them were murdered in cold blood in the police lock-up. Two who had been wounded in the police firing in the village were being taken by the villagers to the hospital when they were snatched police, taken to the Chakia police station and there shot dead. The District Magistrate and Senior Superintendent of Police were reported to have been present and witnessed the murders. Another villager who had been named in the First Information Report about the clash in the village was arrested by the Chandauli police on November 11—and beaten to death in the lock-up. Five others arrested by the police on the day of the incident are still untraced. All that is known is that they have not been sent to jail. The villagers firmly believe that they have been killed in police custody and their dead bodies disposed of secretly.

Agricultural workers of the village have fled in fear. Their properties have been looted by the police. Even the near-by

villages are targets of police raids. Near about twenty people have been arrested and continuously tortured in lock-ups.

Kilvenmani in Tamil Nadu where fortysix women and children of agricultural labour families were burnt alive in December 1968 was neither the first of the atrocities committed on Harijans, nor will Chandwa-Rupaspur and Haraura be the last as long as the Congress regime exists—where the rich landowners know they are the political power in the rural areas, where officialdom, part of the high-caste hierarchy, close their eyes to whatever the upper-caste landlords do to the Harijan agricultural workers. Thundering statements in the Lok Sabha have not broken any landlord bones nor will they until democratic opinion and the democratic forces assert themselves and change the present Congress policy of support to the rural oppressors against the rural poor, against the Harijan agricultural workers and backward communities.

Alipore Jail

Six under-trial prisoners were killed—beaten to death—and 172 others were injured in Alipore Jail on November 26 in one of the most inhuman attacks made on defenceless prisoners by jail authorities. The prisoners belonged to various political parties.

The Congress rulers have been arresting people indiscriminately, on trumped-up charges, and crowding them into jails which have no accommodation for such large numbers. They themselves have admitted that there is overcrowding in jails. And every problem created by this overcrowding is used as the pretext for political vendetta, for shooting and killing. In the present instance, over four hundred prisoners are reported to have been kept in a cell which can hold just over a hundred or so.

Since December 1970, in less than a year 55 prisoners have been killed in West Bengal jails : eight in Midnapore Jail in December 1970, nine in Berhampore Jail in February 1971, five in Howrah Jail, 18 in Dum Dum Central Jail in May 1971, six in Alipore Special Jail in July 1971 and nine in Asansol Jail

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in August 1971. In Bihar, in similar incidents, sixteen were killed in the Hazaribagh Jail and five in the Patna District Jail.

While blood has thus been flowing from under the jail walls, blood has been flowing outside, too. Nobody knows how many have actually been killed in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, how many in Punjab in the name of containing the “extremists.” The official versions have always talked of them as having been killed in encounters, but in every case it is known they were nothing but cold-blooded murders. It is known that in the name of campaign against the “extremists” cadres of other parties, specially of the CPI(M), have been made targets of police attacks.

After such shocking killings of prisoners behind the bars, the Congress rulers even refuse the demand for a public enquiry or enquiry by Parliament Members. All others enquiries in the past have been just to whitewash the criminals responsible for the murders of prisoners.

Congress rulers have to be made to accept the demand for a public enquiry into the latest Alipore Jail murders, they should be forced to release the political prisoners who are being held just to harass them and to cripple activities of opposition democratic parties, they should be forced to stop the killings of prisoners inside jails, the most barbarous method of liquidating political opponents.

Rally To a Man to Frustrate the Aggression

Call given by Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on India-Pakistan Conflict in 1971

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on December 7, 1971, on the India-Pakistan conflict ;

Not satisfied with mass killings of lakhs in Bangladesh, Yahya Khan aided by U. S. arms has imposed a war on the people of India because of their solidarity with the fighting people of Bangladesh.

The people of India have to rally to a man to frustrate this aggression, foil the game of its imperialist inspirers, ensure the success of the Bangladesh freedom struggle, and enable the refugees to go back. It is the duty of the people to contribute their best efforts to achieve these aims.

Vigilance About Objectives

The Indian people have to be vigilant and ensure that every step taken in connection with the present conflict conforms strictly to the high objectives for which they are prepared to undergo sacrifice and sufferings.

The P. B. notes in this connection that the Prime Minister has made an unequivocal statement that India has absolutely no territorial ambitions on Pakistan.

The Government of India has at last recognised the Bangladesh Government. Thereby the responsibility of the Indian people to help in achieving the declared objective of democracy and freedom in Bangladesh has become all the greater. They must accept full responsibility for defeating the imperialist

conspiracies for a treacherous compromise within the framework of Pakistan and exercise supreme vigilance against any attempt to water down the content of the objective under the increasing pressures from abroad.

The P.B. expresses its feelings of friendship and solidarity with the toilers and people of West Pakistan, the common people who have been dragged into an unjust and unholy war by the military junta. It is confident that the people there will soon see through the appeal to rouse religious frenzy and realise that the war is inimical to their interests and raise their voice against it.

Imperialist Treachery

Events in connection with Bangladesh have revealed U.S. imperialism to be the worst enemy of the Indian people. This gendarme of world reaction, in pursuit of its dream of global domination, openly supports Yahya's dictatorial regime and supplies him with abundant arms and weapons to maim and kill Indians.

Our Party has been consistently warning against the treacherous character of U.S. imperialism and demanding firm and friendly relations with the Socialist countries. But it is the ruling Congress which has been following a foreign policy of balancing between the imperialist and Socialist camps. The Jana Sangh, the Swatantra, the Congress (O), though now they are singing a different tune, had virtually converted themselves into an American lobby working for the undermining of friendly relations with the Socialist countries.

The USA, turning a blind eye to the Bangladesh struggle, did its best to condemn India in the U.N. Security Council, equate it with Pakistan and cover up the orgies of massacres perpetrated by Yahya Khan.

The P.B. welcomes and appreciates the role of the USSR in defeating the treacherous game of the U.S. imperialists by vetoing the reactionary resolutions. The veto has served the cause of democracy and freedom. The P.B. also appreciates the

strong stand taken by the USSR in warning outside Powers against intervention in the present conflict.

It is monstrous that the Government of People's China, whose entry into the U.N. was hailed by all democratic and anti-imperialist forces, is supporting the Yahya regime against a people fighting for their liberation. It is amazing that the Government of People's China does not see the genocide, the trek of ten million refugees across the border, the total deprivation of all democratic rights, but echoes all the excuses and lies invented by a military dictator to screen his own crimes. It is to be hoped that the Chinese Government will soon rectify its stand and raise its voice in support of the Bangladesh people.

Warning Against Conspiracies

The P. B. warns the people that greater conspiracies are afoot to break the will of the Indian people to support the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people. Not satisfied with arming Yahya Khan, the USA has taken a decision to stop all economic "aid" to India, to create a critical situation, thereby revealing that aid was meant to finance submission to U.S.

The P. B. calls upon the Government to reply to this crude pressure against its sovereignty, by declaring a complete moratorium on all U. S. debts. It also calls upon the Government to nationalise all U. S. firms and concerns, especially the oil companies which are known for their hostility to India and are not above organising the sabotage of oil production. It calls upon the workers in these concerns to demand immediate nationalisation. The P. B. also urges the Government to take steps against various American agencies which act as the hidden arm of the CIA.

The P. B. warns the people that with imperialist aid pouring for Pakistan's rulers, the conflict may be prolonged and demand heavy sacrifices, steadfast devotion and vigilance to see that the objective is not blurred and that anti-Pakistani sentiment does not overcome it. The battle is being fought not so much for

inflicting a military defeat on Pakistan as a country, but for the triumph of the democratic forces in Bangladesh.

While it is the duty of all citizens to contribute their best efforts for securing the success of the Bangladesh struggle, and rebuffing the military attack, it is the responsibility of the Government to create favourable conditions for people's initiative and efforts.

Govt's Narrow Considerations

It is the duty of the Government to overcome all narrow considerations, draw all patriotic sections in the common task, abandon the ways of bureaucracy and ensure the enthusiastic participation of the people.

The Government, however, proceeds from a distrust in the common man and undertakes measures which restrict his initiative and dampen his enthusiasm, The P. B. cannot but protest against the provisions in the Defence of India Rules which attack civil liberties, democratic rights including the workers' right to strike. Previous experience has shown that such provisions have been grossly abused to repress the people and hindered the creation of a common will for resistance.

A war for the freedom of a whole people cannot be fought by arming the bureaucracy with enormous powers against the people. The vigilance of the people cannot be exercised if it is the bureaucrats who are to determine what is good and bad for the people.

The P. B. attaches vital importance to defence and other production in the present circumstances. It, however, thinks that the Government totally fails to understand the importance of securing the co-operation of the workers in the common task. On the eve of the war thirtytwo defence employees—most of them trade union leaders—were dismissed from Ichapore and other factories. Thirteen leaders of State employees of West Bengal were similarly dismissed without any valid reason. The bureaucrats and the Government will make a complete mess of the production endeavours if the people leave all initiative to them and do not control their anti-people bias.

End Terror, Release Political Prisoners

In the vital area of West Bengal, where every person must be roused for the common cause, semi-fascist terror continues unabated. In many areas, where the people voted for our Party in the last elections, goonda gangs protected by the police are unleashed against the people, union offices are occupied by anti-social hirelings and individual citizens murdered with impunity. Hundreds of active cadres of the trade unions, kisan, student and other democratic organisations are kept in detention. Thousands have been implicated in false cases.

The P. B. demands an end to this terror, release all the detained persons and withdrawal of cases against the thousand falsely implicated, to secure the widest participation of the people in face of the common danger.

In the public sector, the Government can secure the co-operation of the workers by holding talks with their leaders and by meeting their reasonable demands and assuring them that their vigilance against corruption and sabotage will not be rewarded with victimisation and arrests.

All over the country the Government and employers must ensure favourable conditions for production, by meeting the pressing demands, doing away with fears of victimisation, adopting a democratic attitude towards the trade unions and workers' grievances. Besides, the Government must put a stop to the everrising prices, check the speculators, black marketeers, guarantee minimum prices for toiling peasants and supplies of essential goods to the people at cheap prices. The Government should assure its own employees that they will not be singled out for victimisation in the name of the emergency.

The P. B. draws the attention of the Government to the partisan measures it is taking in the name of meeting the necessary expenditure. Necessary sacrifices must be distributed equitably, i.e., according to the capacity to bear them. Taxes on the common man without taxing all the resources of the upper strata are abhorrent, unjust and do a distinct disservice to mass enthusiasm and create a suspicion that it is a rich man's conflict. The taxation measures of the Government fleece the

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common man and allow the rich to escape. Its recent measures have been universally condemned because of this. The P.B. wants the people to realise that what is at stake is the liberty of the Bangladesh people and their own future. It is, therefore, their privilege to see that every effort is made to carry the struggle to a successful conclusion. Determined to mobilise all sections, the people must at the same time see that bureaucrats, employers and the Government do not adopt anti-people ways and disrupt the common effort.

Hail Bangladesh !

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in Calcutta on December 17, 1971.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on December 17, 1971 before the military junta of Yahya Khan had accepted the cease-fire offered by the Government of India :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) hails the victory of the Bangladesh people over the occupation regime. The surrender of the occupation army, before the joint assault of the Mukti Bahini and the jawans of the Indian forces frees the soil of Bangladesh from two decades of military domination. The blood of Indian jawans has flown freely along with that of the courageous Mukti Bahini fighters to liquidate the tyrannical regime.

The agony and travail through which the people of Bangladesh went in the last nine months has few parallels in recent history. Razing of villages to the ground, mass rapings of women, murders of lakhs and eviction of ten million—those were the weapons used by a brutal regime to hold back the tide of freedom. It was against these odds that the young students, youth of all sections, workers and peasants courageously fought and added a glorious chapter to the freedom history of this subcontinent. They fully deserved the support of the people of India. The Government of India after initial hesitation did give them support. And now they are triumphant with the help of the Indian jawans.

They have triumphed not only against Yahya Khan's occupation regime; they have triumphed against the diabolical game and intimidation of the most sinister force—U. S. imperialism. In this, they have been consistently helped by the Soviet Union and a number of other Socialist countries. The Polit Bureau strongly disapproves of the stand of the Chinese Government in the U. N. in support of the military regime of Pakistan and against the interests of the freedom-fighters in Bangladesh. It hopes that even now it will recognise the reality.

The initial triumph should not lead to a sense of complacency. Both the people of Bangladesh and the people of India must remain vigilant lest the sacrifices of so many people are exploited for selfish purposes. The imperialist agents are there to woo certain selfish elements and again cheat the people. Offers of economic aid are already coming from official sources in the USA. Besides, the people of India must scrupulously see that neither the Indian army nor any Indian personnel remains in Bangladesh more than is considered absolutely necessary by the people of Bangladesh. The assurance given by the Prime Minister can be implemented only through the vigilance of the people.

In this connection, the Polit Bureau disapproves of the reported proposal to send civil officials from India ostensibly to help the Bangladesh Government as there is no dearth of officers in Bangladesh.

The Polit Bureau calls upon all democratic parties and the people of Bangladesh to be vigilant and see that the message of freedom and democracy reaches every village and city; that national freedom leads to the complete freedom for the movements of the working class and the peasantry and other sections of the people.

The Polit Bureau welcomes the promise of a democratic and secular constitution. Such assurances and their implementation will no doubt create conditions for the speedy return of the millions of refugees.

The Polit Bureau welcomes Smt. Indira Gandhi's offer of cease-fire on the Western Front and earnestly hopes that the

Government of West Pakistan will respond to it in the interest of the people of the two countries. Further continuation of the war is senseless, will enable the American imperialists to harm both countries and bring economic disaster to both sides, apart from sacrifice of the valuable lives of the young men of both countries. The Polit Bureau also urges the West Pakistan Government to release Sheikh Mujibur Rahman so that he can take his place by the side of his people.

The Polit Bureau finally sends its warm greetings to the men and women, to the young fighters of Bangladesh and is confident that they will be soon in a position to take their destiny in their own hands and reconstruct their great and beautiful land, hitherto outraged by the occupation troops.

Ensure Democracy at Home

Press Statement Jointly Issued by Promod Das Gupta and Jyoti Basu in Calcutta on December 17, 1971 on behalf of West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M)

At a Press Conference on December 17, 1971, where they released a Press Statement, Comrades Promod Dasgupta and Jyoti Basu clarified the Party's stand on a number of issues, in reply to questions. They made it clear that denying minimum democracy to opposition parties in India would not help lift India's image to the people of Bangladesh.

Asked about acceptance of foreign imperialist "aid", Comrade Dasgupta said that we had all along been advocating against accepting such "aid". No newly independent country can develop with imperialist aid. The recent events glaringly showed how imperialists tried to blackmail our country. Without depending upon them—refusing their "benevolence"—, such countries as India should nationalise all foreign monopoly concerns, abolish privy purses and take other such measures to develop their economies.

Replying to another question, Comrade Dasgupta said that the Bangladesh people were capable enough to rehabilitate their economy. In this they would get neighbourly help from the democratic people of India. The Indian army should pull out of that country as soon as possible.

Comrades Promod Dasgupta and Jyoti Basu made it clear that they saw no necessity of sending administrative personnel from India to Bangladesh. The Indian officers not only did not know the people there who had come of age since Partition, they were also incapable of understanding the spirit of the people of Bangladesh. Such bureaucrats would help foster

misunderstandings in the people in Bangladesh, where an able and young administrative cadre was also reared. In a country where the occupation forces of Pakistan could not find a single judge to administer the oath of office to the Governor, where from the judges to the lowest administrative officer sided with the liberation struggle, there can hardly be any dearth of administrators.

Comrade Jyoti Basu said that our jawans have carried out their mission commendably. It was time now to set examples before the people of Bangladesh. If democratic functioning in public life, in dealings between the ruling party and those in opposition were absent in India, what example could we set before them? He demanded release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman.

Press Statement

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in an emergent meeting on December 15 and 16, 1971, to discuss the immediate tasks in support of the freedom struggle of the people of Bangladesh in the context of the war imposed on India by the Pakistan military junta because of India's support to the freedom struggle. Comrade Kamal Sarkar presided.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta highlighted the main points of the Polit Bureau's statement and placed the State Committee Secretariat's suggestions about concrete tasks. Comrade Jyoti Basu reported about the work of our representatives in the Citizens' Council. The Committee approved the measures taken and the tasks suggested by the Secretariat.

Party's Proud Record

The Committee noted with justifiable pride that from the very beginning the Party had understood the great significance of the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people. On March 26 itself, the Secretariat came out with a statement urging upon the Government of India to accord immediate recognition to the free Bangladesh Government and all kinds of help including arms to the freedom-fighters. The Party subsequently declared

that if any war was imposed on India because of its active support to the freedom-fighters and recognition of Bangladesh Government, the whole people would stand united for the defence of the country and the victory of the Bangladesh people irrespective of the attitude of the ruling classes towards the people and in spite of the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal. The victory of the Bangladesh people will not only mean freedom to themselves, but will also strengthen the forces of democracy and give a blow to imperialist conspiracies in this sub-continent.

Our Party ran a continuous campaign among the people on these issues and organised mass support to help the freedom struggle. The Committee welcomed the decision of the Government of India to recognise the Bangladesh Government and supported the military measures in defence of our country and in support of the freedom-fighters in Bangladesh against the West Pak military forces.

In spite of our differences with the Soviet Union on many other issues, the Committee fully appreciated and welcomed the steps taken by the Soviet Government on this question both within the U. N. and outside. These steps have played an important role in frustrating U. S. imperialist designs and strengthening the struggle in Bangladesh. It was shocked at the continued support given by Socialist China to the Pakistan military junta. It is unfortunate that the Chinese leaders have refused to understand the reality of the 75 million people of Bangladesh fighting for their freedom and democratic rights with arms in their hands.

Threat Posed by Imperialism

The Indo-Pak war and the Bangladesh struggle have fully exposed the reactionary neo-colonialist character of the so-called U. S. "aid" about which our Party warned the people from the very beginning. The stopping of U. S. "aid", the sinister movement of the Seventh Fleet in the Bay of Bengal, the U. S. steps in the U. N. show how the imperialists pose a grave danger not only to the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people, but also a threat to our independence. The Committee

urged upon the Government of India to immediately stop repayment of U. S. loans and to nationalise all U.S. concerns in India, particularly the oil companies.

The people of our country are solely guided by the noble aim of helping the Bangladesh people in their struggle for freedom and democracy. In the interest of their own democratic development the people of India cannot but be opposed to any hate-Pakistan campaign or any direct or indirect military or economic domination over Bangladesh. The Committee noted that the Prime Minister of India had again and again declared similar objectives before the world. We shall continue to educate our people about this ideal.

The Committee hailed the liberation of Dacca, the capital of Bangladesh and the unconditional surrender of West Pakistani military forces. Sovereign Bangladesh has become a reality. The sooner the Pakistani military junta accepts this reality, stops war on all fronts and releases Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman, the better it will be for Pakistan as well as for all others. The Committee has urged upon all countries especially the Socialist States, to accord immediate recognition to the Bangladesh Government. It hoped that the heroic people of Bangladesh would themselves be able to consolidate their victory, establish their own administrative machinery and take measures to build a secular, democratic State. It also welcomed the declaration of the Prime Minister of India about India's decision to declare unilateral cease-fire in the western sector from 8 p.m. on December 17, 1971.

But the Committee noted with apprehension that the Pakistan President has refused to accept the reality and has declared his decision to continue the war. The Seventh Fleet is still there in the Indian Ocean. Imperialist conspiracies are continuing. In such a situation the Committee calls upon the people not to be complacent.

Intensified Terror

The Committee, however, noted that the Congress Government and the ruling Congress party are creating serious obstacles in

the way of uniting and mobilising the people. Reports from all the districts have revealed that the semi-fascist terror organised by the Congress Government to crush democracy in West Bengal and terrorise the people has been further intensified during this period. Co-ordinated and organised police and gangster attacks have taken a naked mass character in many places. Indiscriminate arrests, beatings, mass murders and burning of houses are taking place. By these brutal attacks, hundreds of our supporters, as well as peasants and workers who dared to fight against jotdars and capitalists are forced to vacate areas after areas. Even our processions in support of Bangladesh are being attacked.

Harvesting is going on in all districts. Instead of helping the bargadars and actual cultivators to harvest, the police in many of the districts are reported to be openly helping the jotdars to loot the paddy. In Burdwan, Hooghly, 24 Parganas, Bankura, Malda, West Dinajpur, Cooch-Bihar, Midnapore, etc., the police and CRP have in many cases gone into the fields and as dictated by the jotdars forcibly taken away the paddy. The so-called report about less harvesting clashes only means that the actual cultivators have been terrorised by the police not to approach the fields. A large number of bargadars have been arrested under the MISA. Such attacks are being launched when land reforms are being promised.

All these facts prove that the Congress Government and the ruling Congress party are not interested in doing everything possible to mobilise and unite the people. They are utilising the emergency to destroy whatever democratic rights are still there and crush by terror the biggest party and the biggest democratic mass movements in West Bengal.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is seriously perturbed at this attack, because it means not only a negation of democracy, but a disservice to the nation. Attacks on democracy provide weapons to the Pakistani military junta and their supporters to question the bona fides of India's intentions. It will rouse suspicions even in the minds of the freedom-fighters in Bangladesh.

Our Party cannot but oppose and expose this semi-fascist brutal attack. We shall stand by the people and defend their interests against landlords and capitalists.

The task of mobilising the people in support of the Bangladesh freedom struggle and national defence is intimately connected with continuous campaign against the machinations of U. S. imperialism on the one hand and the struggle in defence of democracy and the rights of workers and peasants on the other.

Our State Committee has urged upon the Government to stop this terror and brutal attacks, respect democracy and help forge greater unity. It has urged upon all parties and organisations to come forward in supporting this cause. It has decided to intensify the campaign against U. S. imperialism and the Pakistani military junta, to mobilise the people in support of the Bangladesh freedom struggle and national defence and at the same time organise the people in defence of democracy and their rights. It will also carry on the campaign for the recognition of the Bangladesh Government by all countries, particularly the Socialist countries.

Ninth Party Congress of CPI(M) Postponed

Decision of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

Due to the grave situation in the country created by the war,* the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has decided to postpone the Ninth Congress of the Party scheduled to be held from December 28, 1971, to January 2, 1972, in Madurai. The new dates of the Congress will be announced later.

Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, December 12, 1971.

* The postponement of the Ninth Congress of CPI(M) was due to India-Pakistan Conflict of 1971.

Ninth State Conference of CPI(M) in Kerala

Strongest Party in Kerala takes Stock of Situation

The Ninth Kerala State Conference of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), held in Quilon from December 9 to 12, 1971 and the open rally which concluded the conference were a demonstration of the strength of the Party in the State—that the toiling masses look on it as their party, the only party that uncompromisingly fights for their interests and aspirations, that the Party, deeply rooted in its basic classes, has become the most powerful political force in Kerala.

The report submitted to the Conference by the State Committee, the discussions on the report, the decisions that were taken were all permeated with the feeling of the tremendous responsibility which the Party as a whole and everyone of its members have to shoulder in the present situation.

The Delegates

Two hundred and eighty of the 290 delegates elected attended the Conference. From the credential forms submitted by 278 of these comrades it was seen that the class origin of 77 of the delegates was working class, of 14-agricultural labour, of 178-middle class (including middle peasants) and of nine-landlords.

There were ten delegates below the age of 25, 120 were between 25 and 40 years, 103 between 40 and 50, 37 between 50 and 60 and eight above 60.

None of the delegates was illiterate, 105 had education up to the seventh standard, 117 up to secondary school, 25 were undergraduates, 13 graduates, and 18 post-graduates.

Twenty-nine of the delegates had joined the Party before 1940, 52 between 1941 and 1947, 28 in 1948-50, 102 in 1951-56, 31 in 1957-59, 11 in 1960-64, 17 in 1965-68 and eight in 1969-71.

Ninety-four of the delegates worked on the trade union front, 56 on the kisan front, 37 on the agricultural labour front, 21 on the youth front, six on the student front, 13 on the women's front, 11 on the teachers' front, 28 on Party organisation and 12 in Party publications.

There were fifteen women delegates.

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Party, unfurled in front of Krishna Pillai Nagar, the venue of the Conference, the Red Flag, the flag of the working class, the flag that is being dyed more and more red everyday with the blood of the mounting number of martyrs to the cause of the toiling people. And with that the Conference began.

Support to Bangladesh

Comrade Sundarayya inaugurating the Conference said that nothing should be allowed to come in the way of all support to the struggle of the Bangladesh people for freedom and democracy. He said that party had the twin task of mobilising all support to the Bangladesh struggle and at the same time fighting the anti-people policies of the Government like putting more and more burdens on the toiling people, suppression of democracy, etc.

The Political-Organisational Report of the State Committee presented to the Conference by Comrade E. M. S. Namboodirpad reviewed the international and national developments in the three years since the Eighth Conference of the Party and in that background analysed the political situation in Kerala, the struggles of various sections of the people and the advance made by the Party and mass organisations of the toiling classes. A special conference of the Party in Tellicherry in December

1970 had reviewed the developments till then and made proposals for streamlining the Party organisation to shoulder the tasks facing the Party. The report submitted to the Ninth Conference dealt mainly with the developments since then and how the organisational changes made by the Party at the Tellicherry conference had contributed to the improvement of the functioning of the Party and of its role as leader of mass struggles.

Disillusionment Grows

While the split in the Congress gave the opportunity to the Right Communists to remove their mask and openly come out as camp-followers of the ruling Congress, and to the RSP, Muslim League and the ISP to form an anti-CPI(M) front under the leadership of the right C. P., it also gave the opportunity to the people of Kerala to see the real face of the various parties which had earlier joined the CPI(M) in the non-Congress United Front.

When the Communist Party split in 1964, the Rightists had said that the Party split because of our “pro-China” positions and theirs was a “patriotic” stand against it. Many people at the stage were not able to decide who was correct.

In the 1965 mid-term elections, also, they were able to cover up their pro-Congressism by saying that their opposition was to the Kerala Congress and the Muslim League. And, in 1967, when they came into the non-Congress United Front they sought to create the impression that they were correcting their earlier mistake and whenever their attempts to disrupt the united front were exposed, they declared that they were not pro-Congress but were only fighting the corruption of the CPI(M), its bossism, etc. Some people at least believed this also.

Today all this has been blown up. The Right Communists have openly declared that their “Left and democratic front” is a front with the Congress and the formation of a Government of this front is the path of the “National Democratic Revolution”.

They have also made it clear that the coalition with the Congress in Kerala is a first step towards this.

The RSP which used to claim to be more Marxist-Leninist than the Communist Party even left the all-India organisation to become the Kerala RSP for the only purpose of being a constituent of a coalition with the Congress.

As for the Muslim League it never had any pretences to any ideological basis.

The result of the activities of all these parties since they disrupted the united front is that even those people who had some faith in them are fast losing it, more and more people are realising that the leaders of these parties are only concerned with the sharing of the loaves and fishes of office.

The CPI(M) stood firmly by its principled policy and despite all this ganging up against it, it was able to show the growing support it has among the people in both the 1970 mid-term State Assembly elections and the 1971 March Lok Sabha elections.

There is a deep discontent among the people and this is having its impact also on the ranks of the minifront parties as also of the ruling Congress. On the one hand they are using deceptive phrases to cheat the people, on the other they are using the repressive machinery at their command to suppress the struggles of the people.

The contrast between their professions and practice is helping their own ranks to see the reality and liberate themselves from the illusions created by their leaderships. The ranks of these parties are moving away from their parties towards the democratic movement and the possibilities have tremendously grown to broaden the democratic movement on a very big scale.

Party's Role

These changes in the Kerala situation did not come about automatically, they are also not mere reflections of the developments on the international and national planes. The

CPI(M) and the mass movements under the leadership of the Party have played a big role in bringing about these changes.

A consistent political campaign against the mini-front parties combined with mobilisation of the rural poor in mass struggles enabled the Party to organise the masses against the betrayers after October 1969. Without falling into either the deviation of confining the struggle within the four walls of the legislature or of giving calls for sectarian anti-Ministry struggles, the Party concentrated all its attention on mass issues, agitations and struggles and the legislature was used as a forum to reflect this movement developing outside.

With the understanding that only through mass campaigns and struggles can changes be brought about in the political situation, the Party developed a broad front of mass activity. And the changes necessary for this in the Party organisation were also made.

Big struggles have been fought and campaigns conducted under the leadership of the Party since the mini-Front Government took over in November 1969.

To mention a few—

The struggle of the hutment-dwellers, beginning January 1, 1970, to establish their rights conferred by the law their own organised strength raised the Party to the status of the leader of the rural poor.

—The strikes and struggles of the agricultural workers and the building up of their organisation under the Party's leadership gave big impetus to the democratic movement and filled a gap which had existed so far.

—Because of the working class struggles under the Party's leadership, the CITU began growing fast and began to be more and more considered by the working class as their revolutionary trade union organisation. Worth mentioning among these struggles are those of the plantation workers' Statewide strike, the prolonged strike of the workers of Birla's rayon factory in Mavoor which galvanised the situation in the whole of Kozhikode district, the struggle against the victimisation of State Transport employees, etc.

—In this period also developed close links between the middle class employees and the trade unions of the workers. Among the actions of the middle class employees are the teachers' strike of June-July 1970, the strike of the teachers and Government employees in February 1971, the recent strike of private college teachers, the agitation of the NGOs which almost reached the point of a strike. The working class and the middle classes have begun to rally jointly behind the demand for need-based minimum wage and dearness allowance to compensate the rise in the cost of living.

—The tremendous response the people gave to the call of the Party to oppose the new taxation measures of the Central and State Governments. Demonstrations, rallies, jathas, etc., organised against these taxation measures were big successes culminating in the Statewide bus picketing of November 10, 1971.

Powerful Mass Movement

The efforts made by the Party to consolidate these campaigns and struggles in organised movements. The Mahila Federation, the Socialist Youth Federation, the Students' Federation of India took up the problems of the sections they represented and organised their struggles and grew as mass organisations. The strengthening of the trade union, kisan, agricultural worker movements helped the growth of the students', youth and women's organisations and in turn received their help in their own campaigns and struggles. Thus all these mass organisations supporting each other are now together building a powerful mass movement against the anti-people policies of the Government.

—The class struggle which the Party fought on the ideological and cultural fronts—with study classes, literary seminars, organisation of study circles around the Party's daily, *Deshabhimani*, Pamphleteering, etc.

The CPI(M) has demonstrated in the 1971 elections that it is the party with the biggest mass base in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, but the ruling classes know that it is the party of

the revolutionary opposition and even in the States where it is weak today, its impact will be felt. Hence the ruthless repression and the attempt to suppress it today itself as has been seen in West Bengal and to a less extent in Kerala.

Tasks of the Party

The report then laid down the tasks of the Party :

Basing on the economic problems arising from the capitalist path of development, the Party should concentrate all its attention on organising agitations on the day-to-day issues facing the people. In doing this the Party should take into account the feelings and consciousness of the people and not subjectively impose forms of struggle on them. Try to win as many of the partial demands as possible from every struggle and agitation and simultaneously conduct a political campaign among the people that the winning of these partial demands is only a link in the chain of struggle against the path of capitalist development itself. Only if both these tasks are combined can we make the mass movement a part of the revolutionary movement.

The ruling classes will unleash all types of attacks on this developing revolutionary mass movement and the Party has to be prepared to face all such attacks including the attempts at physical liquidation of the Party's activists and cadre.

To effectively counter the political offensive of the ruling classes, it is necessary to conduct a continuous political campaign to expose the bankruptcy of the basic policies pursued by the Congress rulers for about a quarter of a century linking them with developments taking place every day.

Broadening the Movement

If the State leadership of the Party and its lower units implement the policies the central leadership of the Party evolves and tackle the problems of Kerala in line with the general approach indicated in this report and taking into account the changes that are likely to take place in the situation, the party and the mass movement under its leadership will rapidly gain strength. Many who now follow other parties will be ready

to break with their leaderships and work jointly with us because the political and economic developments in the country are such as to convince them more and more that only our policy is correct while all the others are wrong.

Moreover, hundreds of people who today do not belong to any group or party are getting ready to fight the anti-people policies of the ruling classes and co-operate with us. The Party has to consciously make efforts to draw them all into this struggle and with all of them build a mass front of struggle.

If this front, taking part unitedly in elections, wins a majority, it will form the State Government where it wins, but it is not a front forged only to fight elections; it is forged to organise mass campaigns and struggles and conduct them successfully.

The report then dealt with the organisational position of the Party in each district—noting the achievements, pointing out the weaknesses and laying down the broad tasks for the immediate future.

The report also gave details of the activities on the trade union, kisan, agricultural labour, youth, student and women's fronts and of the Deshabhimani Bala Sangham (children's organisation).

The report was unanimously adopted by the Conference.

The Rally

The rally in Quilon on December 12 came as a fitting climax to the Conference. Without exception, it was the unanimous opinion of the Press and the public that it was an unprecedented political event in Kerala. And that also blew up the claim of the Kerala RSP and Right Communists that Quilon was their pocket-borough.

The Party had given instructions that the mobilisation for rally should be only from the three districts—Alleppey, Quilon and Trivandrum. Later everybody had to commend the wisdom of this decision. And December 12 proved that there is no town in Kerala with a maidan big enough to accommodate Statewide rally called by the CPI(M).

Demonstrators from the three districts had been asked to gather in three different places on the outskirts of the town and instructions were that the Alleppey demonstrators would march first, those from Trivandrum will be next and the Quilon contingent would constitute the rear.

But when the demonstrators began to arrive from early in the morning on foot, by buses and trucks, by canoes and boats, it was obvious that the space allotted to each district would not be sufficient even for a fraction of those who had that day only one destination : Quilon.

Specially so from Alleppey. It was a march of whole families of agricultural workers—father, mother, children, holding each other's hands, shouting slogans.

When the demonstration began, it was in neatly arranged rows of six. But within minutes it was evident that if it went on that way not even the whole of the Alleppey contingent would be able to reach the maidan before next morning.

Then it became just a tidal wave. The whole width of the roads was covered by the demonstrators and it just roared forward. When the front row of the demonstration reached the Cantonment Maidan not even 25 per cent of the demonstrators had been able to move out of their places. The rest were still waiting for their turn. Many of them decided that it would be wiser to give up the idea of participating in the demonstration and go straight to the Maidan to participate at least in the meeting.

The whole town was a milling crowd of people. And even those who could fight their way through that multitude towards the Maidan could only see from far away the Martyrs' Gate which was the entrance to the Maidan and the inscription on it : "I will rise again and permeate the land, I will rise again giving a new life to the whole land."

Like phoenix arisen from the ashes, the martyr has risen and permeated the land. Here in Quilon were the people determined to fight for a new life.

Party Conference of Maharashtra State Committee of CPI(M)

Held in Bombay on December 3-6, 1971

The Ninth Maharashtra State Conference of the CPI(M) met in Bombay from December 3 to December 6, 1971.

Comrade B. T. Ranadive, member of the Polit Bureau of the Party, inaugurated it and addressed session on completion of the discussion on the Political Report.

The total Party membership, including 517 candidate members, was 2,128. Of the 113 delegates elected, the attendance was about 110.

Unfurling the flag of the Party, Comrade Ranadive paid homage to the martyrs who had laid down their lives in the cause of the working class and peasantry. He called on the delegates to assess the Party's line and work during the last three years, more so in Maharashtra.

Briefly reviewing the events in India and abroad, he showed how our Party, along with four other parties in the world, based itself firmly on Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. Because the Party struggled to rally the Left and democratic forces against the policies of the ruling classes, the latter used every weapon to isolate it, breaking the U. F. Governments as in Kerala and West Bengal, disrupting election unity, and now murdering, in true CIA style, our cadre by the hundreds, employing goondas, Naxalites, police and the like for it.

The Left debacle in the mid-term election—though we won 25 seats—did not make us happy. Rather it is a setback for the

Left. The deepening crisis, he hoped, should make these parties come together again as the only way out. Here in Maharashtra, we of the CPI(M) talk of revolution but have yet to go beyond struggles for bonus and wage increase. And so, we fight the economic battles, while Indira Gandhi takes away the votes on political issues. We have to expose her caricaturing of progressive measures like bank nationalisation which, even if they do not help any individual capitalist, do help the class.

He particularly called on all members to work their hardest for Bangladesh, the great democratic struggle on our borders.

Political Report

The Eighth Congress of the Party had warned how the ruling classes, unable to solve any basic problem of the people, thanks to its path of capitalist development, would try to disrupt the people's unity and struggles against the growing burdens of the crisis. It had called for every effort to build a front of the Left and democratic forces and also to lead independent mass actions of the Party. The Political Report of the Conference assessed the Party's work in this regard during the past three years.

The Party in Maharashtra, more so in Bombay, had to face during this period the bitter opposition of the Shiv Sena (S. S.), a CIA outfit backed by the rulers and owners, engaged in breaking strikes, assaulting political opponents, whipping up racial and chauvinist hatred. Its success in the 1968 Municipal elections so shook the Left, that they would not even have the May Day meeting. The CPI(M) alone undertook it with a massive morcha and a joint meeting restoring the confidence of the Left ranks.

The February 1969 riots by S. S. saw the revisionists' call for a supporting strike, the SSP going in for a satyagraha, while some leaders of the Peasants' and Workers' Party (PWP) offering to lower the Red Flag before the S. S. saffron flag! The CPI(M) alone exposed the true face of the S. S. riots and opposed them.

The next move by the S. S., backed both by the owners and the Government, for a Bombay Bandh on March 2, in so-called defence of the border struggle, was successful. But within 48 hours the Party hit back by organising a massive morcha of agricultural workers and the city's working class, turning the tide in favour of the Left. Though at first hesitating, the Left parties co-operated in this morcha.

By way of independent action facing bitter opposition of the S. S., was the CEAT strike for about four months, which inflicted the first defeat by us on the S. S. in the T. U. field. The Party cadre, before and after this, faced S. S. goonda attacks, till in June 1970, when the S. S. murder of Comrade Krishna Desai, Right Communist MLA. sent a bitter protest wave among the textile workers. Thousands downed tools spontaneously. Had the PSP not opposed the Party's move for a one-day Bombay Bandh unitedly by the Left, Bombay would have turned the tables against the S. S. earlier.

An effective exposure of the S. S. as strike-breakers was during the State Government employees' strike in November 1970. Our active work in supporting the strike prevented the reformists and revisionists from isolating us from this section, while the S. S. was successfully exposed and isolated as open strike-breaker, when it called for 'go back to work unconditionally.'

Struggle of Landless

In the struggle of the adivasi landless, the Party secured the support, even if halting and formal, of the Left parties. In June-July 1969, the Congress rulers sought to evict the adivasis in Thana district from the 40,000 acres of forest land they had cleared and brought under the plough. We sought to rouse the democratic consciousness of the people, the Press fully backed the adivasis and condemned the Government for its outrageous attempt to destroy the ploughed lands. Even the Thana District Congress Committee opposed the Government's move, the Opposition staged a walkout in the Assembly and the Government had to beat a retreat.

The Party now decided to plan a mighty morcha of the landless and poor peasants, inviting the Left parties for common action. This was our first organised effort at coming out of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti rut on a class issue and rally the democratic Left. The PSP would not co-operate, the revisionists hesitated at first, but later joined. The PWP had its differences over the issue of struggle of the landless. Only the SSP and Lal Nishan group co-operated. The Shrirampur Conference jointly framed the demands.

The March 4 morcha was a success beyond all expectations. For the first time, the Party placed the issue of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants on the political map of Maharashtra and succeeded in getting thousands of the city's workers to join it, a living instance of worker-peasant unity. Working class response to the call for food packets and funds was excellent, and thousands attended the mass meetings conducted during the campaign.

The morcha played another role. Coming as it did barely 48 hours on the heels of the S. S. Bombay Bandh, its militant hugeness swept away whatever effect the Bandh gave for S. S. strength and roused all Left ranks to a sense of their strength. The Government was once again isolated and had to be on the defensive on the issue of land to the landless and the forest plots.

Another noteworthy effort by the Party to be in the forefront of mass actions was the case of State Government employees' strike. Party units all over Maharashtra where the Government had its offices lent their support, while in Bombay the main centre, the Party succeeded in beating back the reformists' efforts to isolate the CITU, by taking the initiative to address these employees and also rendering them other help. It was the united support by all central T. U. s and their decision to have a Maharashtra Bandh that forced the Government to climb down and negotiate. While the S. S. by its strike-breaking efforts was further isolated, the Party and the CITU came before these sections as champions of their struggle, which raised the Party's prestige in a section where we had not much work to our credit before.

Trade Union Front

The formation of the CITU during this period came as a very useful lever to break through reformist and revisionist betrayal of class struggles. In the textile area in particular, after six years of our joint working in the AITUC-led Girni Kamgar Union (GKU), and despite the urge of their ranks for united work, the Dangeite leadership excluded us from the union. The consequent formation of the Lal Bawta Mill Mazdoor Union (LBMMU) led, in barely four months, to make its impact in the last general strike, the first in six years. It was the work of the LBMMU that forced the GKU leadership to call for the general strike, and even when Dange refused to have united action with us, a jointly-led strike did come about. The LBMMU has come to stay and grow in the textile industry.

On the eve of the conference, out of the 25 strikes then being fought in Bombay, 16 were led by the CITU, some prolonging for over 2½ months. And this not only in Bombay. In Nagpur, the striking textile workers were led unitedly, including the CITU union. Bonus strike took place in Sholapur. Among the powerloom workers, numbering thousands, the CITU union at Ichalkaranji made notable headway organising a State conference and framing their demands and but for the Emergency, a powerloom workers' strike was in the offing.

The Conference met in the background of these efforts for united front of the Left forces. The delegates seriously discussed the political and T. U. reports, more than 40 participating in each discussion.

The very first day of the Conference saw Pakistan declaring war because of our people's support to the Bangladesh struggle. The first resolution condemned the attack and called upon all people to accept the challenge. It also condemned the Government's use of Defence of India Act, when all democratic parties had fully supported it. It called on the Government to take the people into confidence and not rely on the bureaucracy. It extended its fraternal greetings to the toiling people of West Pakistan and hoped they would soon realise that the war was against their interests.

By another resolution the Conference condemned the semi-fascist rule in West Bengal and warmly greeted the democratic people there who were fighting heroically against the murderous attacks of the Congress rulers.

Among the other resolutions passed was one on the proposed ceiling on land in Maharashtra. The Government's previous boast about distributing land to the landless proving sham, had led to an increase in number of agricultural workers by nine lakhs and to a fall in the number of farmers by 22 lakhs in ten years. Now only seven per cent owned 40 per cent of the land. The Conference exposed how the Government, in its bid to save rural rich, announced months ahead its intention to lower the ceiling by ordinance, a crude trick to help the landlords to forestall the legislation. Only the unity of the Left forces which had accepted the family as a unit and a lower ceiling for distribution of the surplus land to the landless, could mobilise the kisans through joint struggles, and not make them look to the Congress to have one more hoax on the Statute Book.

The T. U. report showed how unemployment had worsened, increasing by 23 per cent in 1970-71 as against 0.3 per cent in the previous year. Both the number of factories and efficiency of workers had increased and yet the total employment had fallen. The cost of living had risen everywhere (it was 444 in Bombay with 1960 = 100) and real wages had fallen by at least two per cent, all of which opened the possibilities for further struggles.

Weakness of Party

The Conference noted that while the Party had generally adopted a correct political line and direction, it had not grown in proportion. There was a serious organisational lacuna; the Party had yet to take up political campaigns, although it was leading the economic struggle of the working class and the peasantry. The Conference noted these weaknesses and called upon the new State Committee to draw up the organisational tasks afresh.

Noting that though the S. S. hold had weakened, it had not yet been finished and that the ruling classes would again use it to side-track the issues and disrupt the people's ranks, the Conference called for a determined struggle against linguistic and regional chauvinism inside the working class.

The Conference held that the State Congress rulers essentially represented the big bourgeoisie and feudal landlords and that there was a possibility of a rift occurring on the issue of ceiling, where an open revolt was being staged. It called for a fight against such deceptive slogans and organs like congress Socialist Forum, *garibi hatao sanghatan* and *morcha*, the INTUC calling for a day's general strike in the textile industry, tactics aimed at retaining their hold over the people. Against this the need of the hour was united struggles of the Left and democratic forces, independent mass actions by the Party and the CITU.

Unfortunately the Pakistani attack, coming on the very first day of the Conference, overshadowed its work and deliberations. The series of meetings fixed for Comrade Jyoti Basu, and which had evoked very keen response, had to be cancelled because of the total black-out. The Conference too had to end its deliberations earlier than scheduled.

The new State Committee of 18, elected a Secretariat of seven, with Comrade S. Y. Kolhatkar as the Secretary.

Restore Normalcy To Ensure Fair Election

Jyoti Basu addressed a letter to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on January 2, 1972*

Comrade Jyoti Basu has addressed the following letter to Prime Minister Gandhi on January 2, 1972 :

It was learnt some time back that elections in West Bengal were going to be held along with elections in other States of India. At a time when the struggle for freedom was going on in Bangladesh and a threat was posed by the military rulers of Pakistan because India stood by the people of Bangladesh, elections were announced for all States of India except for West Bengal. Our Party protested against this unfair and discriminatory decision. I myself expressed our resentment to the President on November 17, 1971 when he was in Calcutta and you will remember that I raised the question with you on November 30, 1971 in Delhi. But despite our protests you stood by the decision and stated that in the near future no election could be held in West Bengal and Tripura as lakhs of refugees (22 lakhs in West Bengal) have got mixed up with the local population and proper election rolls could not be prepared.

About the same time, the Election Commission gave some other reasons for his inability to hold election in West Bengal in the near future. He stated in a letter dated November 29, 1971 to Sri Jyotirmoy Bosu that (1) "Election Commission acquired jurisdiction to hold elections in a State under President's rule only when it received a request and an intimation from the Central Government that elections be held in that State"; (2) "While almost throughout the whole of India the electoral rolls

*Published in "PEOPLES DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 9, 1972.

have been revised in an intensive manner, in accordance with the new system of electoral card, such revision has not been possible in West Bengal in spite of my sincere desire and efforts to undertake such intensive revision"; "and only three days back the State Chief Electoral Officer informed the Commission that the undertaking of intensive revision of electoral rolls in eight border districts of West Bengal was well nigh impossible at this time in view of the refugee problems and the extremely tense situation along the entire border between West Bengal and Bangladesh". "Therefore", he stated, "even if I receive intimation just now from the Central Government with a request to hold elections in West Bengal, even then I shall require some time for carrying out an intensive revision of electoral rolls in accordance with the new system of electoral cards. The Commission is asking in the course of a day or two, the Chief Electoral Officer of West Bengal to send a programme for the intensive revision of electoral rolls in the districts other than the eight border districts so that revision work in those districts may start as soon as may be after the commencement of the new year and if by that time the situation improves, then the revision will be taken up in the eight border districts also".

After the victory of the Bangladesh struggle and the end of the war with Pakistan the Congress has revised its earlier decision and is of the opinion that early elections in West Bengal will be advantageous to it. Therefore, overnight the 22 lakh of refugees are no longer in the picture and up-to-date electoral rolls are unnecessary.

The Election Commission which is supposed to be an independent body has all of a sudden also changed its stand and stated in a letter to Sri Jyotirmoy Bosu, M. P., on December 24, 1971, that "the Commission may hold the same on the existing rolls which have been recently revised by reference to 1st January, 1971 as the qualifying dates as in other States". If in eight districts no electoral rolls had been revised even in a summary fashion by reference to January 1, 1971, how is it being now stated that revised rolls are ready for all districts? Similarly, in other districts of West Bengal what kind of

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revised rolls were prepared—summary or intensive? I wonder whether 22 lakhs of refugees were taken into account whilst the electoral rolls were prepared—a point mentioned by you.

From all these the only conclusion possible is that democratic processes are of no significance and the interests of the ruling party must get precedence over the rights of the votes. I am writing to you not in order to oppose the election now but to register our protest against the attempt to nullify elementary democratic processes. At the moment what we desire is a little peaceful atmosphere for the election, the withdrawal of patronage by the administration to the Congress, the release of our people detained without trial, withdrawal of Emergency and DIR and an end of violent attacks being perpetrated by the Congress hoodlums with the support of the West Bengal police and CRP. At the moment armed attacks are being organised by the Congress against its opponents with the support of the police in many areas in order to prevent free elections and to terrorise our supporters.

Bihar State Conference Of CPI(M)*

The Ninth Bihar State Conference of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was inaugurated at the Ramna Maidan of Bettiah (Champan district) on December 3 with the hoisting of the Red Flag by Comrade Umashankar Shukla. Champan district has long been renowned for its militant peasant struggles and it was very befitting that the headquarters of this famed district was chosen as the venue of the State Conference. The venue was named after Comrade Bhagwati Sharan of Sathi, a kisan organiser, who became a martyr to the combined attack of Congress goondas and landlords.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, member of the Polit Bureau of the Party, set the tone for the deliberations when he inaugurated the proceedings with an address to the delegates. A Presidium consisting of Comrades Chandi Prasad, Krishnakant Singh, Taqi Rahim, Tarini Yadav and Hari Krishna conducted the proceedings of the Conference which was attended by 164 out of 176 elected delegates and 13 observers. None of the delegates was illiterate, 51 of them were graduates. The overwhelming number of delegates was between 30 and 50 years of age, the eldest being 60 and two of 21 years.

Need For Unity

While presenting the Political Report, the Secretary of the State Committee, Comrade Siavar Saran Srivastava, said that the path of capitalist development pursued by the ruling Congress

*Report published in 'PEOPLES DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, January 9, 1972.

party was making the poor people of the country poorer still. The problems faced by the people can never be solved unless the anti-people policies pursued by the Government are defeated. The CPI(M) in Bihar had appealed to the Right Communist Party and the Socialist Party to forge a united front to struggle against the anti-people policies of the ruling Congress, but these parties had spurned that appeal. The Right Communist Party, which today has completely gone over to the camp of the Indira Gandhi Congress, was responsible for the victory of the ruling Congress in Bihar in the last elections.

A great responsibility has now devolved upon the CPI(M) and, conscious of the role the Party has to play, it will again and again appeal to these two parties to join hands with the CPI(M) and lead the struggles of the workers, peasants and the toiling masses who are more and more taking to the path of struggle under the oppressive burdens thrown on them by the Congress rulers.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, in his address to the delegates, said that the touchstone of a party's activities today lay in its attitude towards the mass movements springing up everywhere in the country. The real test of any party which forms a Ministry today is whether it has assumed office to take the popular struggles forward or just to become Ministers.

However glittering it is, the slogan of "garibi hatao" could not deceive the people of West Bengal, where the Congress got defeated. Now, as a reprisal for the defeat at the polls, the ruling Congress is continuing the worst repression on the toiling people of West Bengal. But the militant people could never before be subdued nor will the Congress rulers be able this time to bring them to their knees, he said.

The call of struggle of the Party has to be carried to every village of Bihar. Tearing the mask off the ruling classes' conspiracy, the people have to be made conscious and organised, concluded Comrade Promod Dasgupta.

More than 60 delegates took part in the discussion of the Political Organisational Report.

Concluding Rally

A huge rally on December 6 under the presidentship of Comrade Umashankar Shukla rounded off the four-day Conference. The whole of Ramna Maidan was decked in red for the occasion. Peasants in numerous colourful demonstrations marched to join the rally from distant villages, each with its own music squads. At 1-30 p.m. a big demonstration passed through the streets of Bettiah, the like of which the town had never seen before.

The working population of Bettiah decorated the whole town in honour of the Conference. But for the active help of the rickshaw-pullers, beedi workers, masons, porters—all of whom are organised in unions affiliated to CITU—as well as the small shop-keepers and greengrocers in addition to the help given by the poor peasants, the conference could not have achieved the success it did.

The Central Calcutta and Kalakar units of the Indian People's Theatre Association of Calcutta as also local artistes staged Hindi and Bengali plays on all the four days of the Conference during the evenings. Despite the severe cold hundreds of people sat through them and enjoyed the stirring themes of the plays and songs.

The Conference elected a 21 member State Committee with Comrades Siavar Saran Srivastava, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Taqi Rahim, Krishnakant Singh, Bhagwan Sharma, Peetendra Srivastava, Girdhari Ram, Akhilan and Sinha, Suajuddin, Subodh Roy, A.B.S.N. Rao, Tarini Yadav, Ramanand Singh, Satyendranarayan Mitra, Bajrangi Yadav, Hari Krishna, Umashankar Shukla, Nandkishore Shukla, Peejus Shastri, Chandrakant Pathak, Chandi Prasad. Comrade S. S. Srivastava was reelected the Secretary of the Committee.

The Conference also elected 11 delegates to represent Bihar at the ensuing Party Congress. In addition two observers from Bihar were chosen for the Congress.

Goa State Party Conference of CPI(M)*

The Fourth Goa State Conference of the Communist party of India (Marxist) was held at Parvath-Chandranath (Paroda) in South Goa on December 14, 15 and 16, 1971. The Conference which was presided over by Comrade Gerald Pereira was inaugurated by Comrade M. H. Krishnappa, Secretary of the Karnataka State Committee of the Party. The deliberations of the Conference were guided by Comrade S. Y. Kolhatkar, member of the Central Committee and Secretary of the Maharashtra Committee of the Party.

A resolution adopted by the Conference extended support to the national liberation war of the Bangladesh people.

Another resolution passed on the situation in West Bengal called upon all sections of the people to realise that what was happening in West Bengal would be repeated in other States as well, the moment the people's movement gained momentum. The resolution called upon the people to be vigilant to safeguard their democratic rights and to condemn the anti-democratic moves of the Indira Congress Government.

The Conference in a resolution, greeting the freedom-fighters in Portuguese African colonies who are today leading armed guerrilla warfare, called upon the people and the Government of India to extend their fullest support to the anti-colonial struggles. The resolution further greeted to Communist Party of Portugal which is waging a long struggle to overthrow fascism against heavy odds. "It is significant that the Communist Party

*Report published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 16, 1972.

of Portugal true to its internationalist duty has declared that it stands for the liberation of all the Portuguese colonies, for full national freedom for Angola, Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau), Cape Verde, San Tome and Prince Islands.”

The report to the Conference analysed the political situation in Goa and noted the Party's organisational weaknesses. The report charged the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Government for its failure to solve the problems of the people. The report called for struggles on specific issues affecting the lives of the people. An appeal was made to the democratic forces and progressive individuals to come together on these specific issues to launch struggles. The report noted the possibility of drawing into these struggles sections of the followers of the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party, the United Goans Party and even Congressmen.

The report, however, is quite clear that the MGP, UGP and the Congress party are bourgeois-landlord parties and that the people have nothing to choose among any of these three parties. The specific issues listed include struggles by the working class for higher wages and cent per cent neutralisation of price rise, for protection against eviction of *munddkars* and other homestead tenants by *bhattkars* (landlords), for full proprietary rights for cultivators, for reduction in prices of essential commodities, and against unemployment.

The report demanded the nationalisation of the mining industry which earns over 55 million dollars annually and development of the mines and the Marmagoa port for development of Goa.

The Conference elected a seven-member State Committee consisting of Comrades George Vaz, S. V. Rao, Sitaram Manzrekar, Peter Fernandes, John Pereira, Caetano Alvares and Gerald Pereira. The Committee elected Comrade Gerald Pereira as its Secretary who together with Comrades George Vaz and S. V. Rao will comprise the Secretariat.

The Conference ended with an open session on December 16, 1971 at Quepem Town, which was addressed by Comrades Sitaram Manzrekar, George Vaz, M. H. Krishnappa, Gerald

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Pereira and S. Y. Kolhatkar. The public meeting greeted free and swadhin Bangladesh.

On December 17, 1971 after declaration of the cease-fire on the western front a mass rally was held at Sambhaji Nagar (Vasco da Gama), which was addressed by Comrades S. Y. Kolhatkar, Sitaram Manzrekar and Gerald Pereira who presided over the rally.

CPI(M) Central Committee's Resolution On D. R. V. Mission Status

Adopted in Calcutta meeting on January 12-15, 1972*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the decision of the Government of India to raise the status of the mission of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to ambassadorial level. The significance of this decision is all the more pronounced in view of the confrontation with U.S. imperialism over the question of Bangladesh and resumption of bombing on North Vietnam. It enhances the prestige of our country in the eyes of anti-imperialist forces the world over.

Our Party since long has been demanding this. But the Congress Government under pressure from U. S. imperialism and surrendering to its dictates had been refusing to do this. Even as Chairman of the International Control Commission, India was not taking a forthright stand against American aggression in open violation of the Geneva Agreement. Similarly for years, it was hesitating to raise the demand of withdrawal of American forces from South Vietnam though of late it has been supporting the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam for the solution of the Vietnam problem. But it is regrettable that the Provisional Revolutionary Government has not been accorded recognition so far.

The Central Committee strongly denounces the U. S. imperialists for their blatant interference in the sovereignty of India.

*Published in "PEOPLES DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 16, 1972
D. R. V. means Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

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The Central Committee calls upon the Government of India to stand firmly and rebuff this interference by recognising the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and the Government of Cambodia led by Sihanouk, by raising the status of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the German Democratic Republic to ambassadorial level, by exchanging ambassadors with Cuba and by developing trade relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Cuba and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Central Committee condemns the attitude of the Saigon puppet Government and demands that the Government of India break diplomatic relations and stop all trade with it.

Rally Against The Congress

Reporting on the Central Committee meeting of CPI(M) held in Calcutta on January 12-15, 1972*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from January 12 to 15, 1972, adopted a Statement on the Coming Elections.

By other resolutions, the Committee welcomed the raising to Ambassadorial level of the diplomatic relations between India and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, expressed its happiness at the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and, protesting against the transfer of political detainees from West Bengal to far-off places like Tamil Nadu, demanded their immediate repatriation to their home State and release.

The Committee finalised the dates of the Ninth Congress of the Party which had been postponed due to the Indo-Pakistan war. The Congress will now meet in Madurai from June 27 to July 2, 1972.

The Statement on the Coming Elections expressed satisfaction at the successful culmination of the Bangladesh freedom struggle and at the fact that the Government of India at last summoned enough courage to oppose U. S. dictates at the risk of stoppage of economic "aid" from the USA. Though war is over, the threat from the USA still continues and the Statements calls on the people to be vigilant against new forms of pressure and blackmail.

The danger of sliding back from anti-imperialist positions can be overcome only if the Government's proclaimed intention of depending with U.S. "aid" and relying on our own resources for development is transformed into concrete policies which

*Published in 'PEOPLES DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, January 23, 1972.

should mean that the capitalist path of development pursued by the Congress Government so far should be abandoned in favour of policies for which the democratic movement has been fighting.

This precisely is what the Congress rulers are refusing to do.

The Statement makes a searching examination of the policies pursued by the Government against the promises that were made at the time of the last Lok Sabha elections, in March 1971 and comes to the conclusion that the slogans of “garibi hatao” curbing monopoly, holding the price-line, crash programme for unemployment relief, radical land reforms, etc., have all been a big hoax played on the people by the Congress rulers.

On top of the increasing tax burdens, rising cost of living, growing unemployment, more and more fierce attacks on the wage-and salary-earners, impoverishment of the rural poor and so on, is the growing corruption of the administration, adds the Statement. Tax-evasion, black money, naked and unashamed bribery at the bureaucratic level, huge “donations” to the political leadership of the ruling party—all these have become inseparable parts of the economic and political-administrative set-up of the ruling classes and the very people who are the foremost in organising these anti-social and corrupt practices don the garb of “radicalism” and “progressivism” assumed by the leaders of the ruling party.

No wonder, the landlord and monopoly capitalist interests see and appreciate the reality behind the tall talk indulged in by the ruling Congress and give full support to that party and its Government. Even those parties that opposed the ruling Congress for the so-called radical policies being adopted by it, have also realised that the ruling Congress is, in fact, practising what they themselves are preaching and are flocking into the ruling Congress *en masse*.

There has already been a hardening of the worst and most reactionary features of the State political set-up in the country and the coming Assembly elections are intended by the ruling Congress to further strengthen the authoritarian trends that have grown under its leadership.

Even a month after the end of the war, the Government has not lifted the Emergency and all the repressive laws on the Statute Book and the Defence of India Rules are being used against the democratic movement and it is under conditions of such oppression that the elections are being conducted. This is all the more so in West Bengal where semi-fascist repression has been going on for quite some time now and the naked terror is being intensified as the elections approach.

It is monstrous, says the Statement, that the Right Communist Party and some other traditionally-known Left and democratic parties are collaborating with such a ruling party and helping it in its diabolical scheme of strengthening itself against all opposition in general. This is nothing but service rendered to those who are fast turning themselves into semi-fascist rulers in return for a few parliamentary and legislative posts graciously given to them by the ruling party.

It is equally monstrous, adds the Statement, that the leaders of the ruling party and their allies should try to hide these anti-democratic measures under cover of the recent successes scored in relation to Bangladesh and the Indo-Pakistan war. While it is ridiculous for the ruling Congress leaders to claim all the credit for the united struggle of the peoples of the two countries, it is still more fantastic to claim that this common victory of the two peoples justifies the efforts made by the ruling party to steam roll over all opposition.

After formulation a programme on which the Left and democratic parties can and should unite, the Statement calls on all Left and democratic parties to join together in a front to fight the ruling classes in general and the ruling Congress and its allies in particular. The Statement has particularly appealed to those parties that are today in the camp of the ruling Congress to realise the harm they are doing to the democratic movement and to themselves and break away from their alliance to join the CPI(M) and its allies in the struggle against the ruling party.

The Statement appeals to the people to vote for the candidates put up by the CPI(M) and its allies wherever they are contesting

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and where they are not contesting, for such candidates as are opposed to the ruling Congress and its allies on the one hand and the Right reactionary and disruptive parties such as the Syndicate Congress, Jana Sangh and the Swatantra and so on on the other.

CPI(M) Central Committee on Elections 1972

**Statement adopted in the Central Committee meeting
held in Calcutta on January 12-15, 1972**

The following is the Statement on the coming elections adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at its meeting in Calcutta from January 12 to 15, 1972.

Every patriotic Indian regardless of caste, creed or political allegiance shares with his brother in Bangladesh the joy of the freedom which he has won at the cost of lakhs of lives.

Significance of Bangladesh Victory

The nine-month long resistance of the people of Bangladesh to the bestial terror unleashed by the Yahya Khan military clique followed by the fourteen-day war under the combined command of the Indian and Bangladesh armed forces have added a new chapter to the history of the Asian people's struggle for freedom. It has scotched the diabolical schemes of American imperialists to keep the peoples and Governments of India and Pakistan fighting each other in order that the sub-continent may be under U. S. domination.

The emergence of the new independent State of Bangladesh has also made it possible for the peoples of this sub-continent to replace the twentyfive-year-long relations of communal hostility by new relations of friendship and co-operation among the three independent States of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The CPI(M) was one of the first political parties to raise, and foremost in popularising, the demand that the Provisional

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 23, 1972.

Government of Bangladesh be recognised and given all forms of assistance including arms by the Government of India. If this leads to a confrontation between India on the one hand and the military regime of Pakistan and its patrons on the other, and if in consequence a war is imposed on us, the Party said, the Indian people to a man would face the grim situation and defeat the enemy.

Although these demands were made by most other Opposition parties as well as wide sections within the ruling party itself, the Government for a long time hesitated to accede to the demand. The CPI(M) and other democratic forces are, therefore, happy when, after sometime, the Government overcame its initial hesitations and vacillations and started giving active help to Bangladesh.

Confrontation with U. S. Imperialism

It was in this background that some important changes in the foreign policy stance of the Government of India will have to be viewed. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship which was under mutual discussions for two years was finally signed on August 9, 1971. It assured Government of India Soviet military assistance in case it was subjected to armed aggression. On the Bangladesh question, the Government of India came into head-on collision with the U. S. imperialists who were actively siding and abetting the military junta of West Pakistan. There were also continuous efforts on the part of the Indian Government to mend the fence with People's China and normalise relations with it despite the hostility displayed by the Chinese Government over the issue of Bangladesh and the support the Government of India was rendering it.

All these developments, which ended up in the open confrontation with the U. S. imperialists and their evil designs on the Indian sub-continent on the eve of, during and after the Indo-Pakistan war over the Bangladesh freedom struggle, were of tremendous political significance. The CPI(M), which has always been in the forefront of the struggle against the policy of surrender to American pressure, has particular reason to be

satisfied that the Government at last summoned courage to oppose American dictates at the risk of stoppage of economic 'aid'. Not even the threatening presence of the Seventh Fleet in the Indian Ocean deflected the Government from its armed assistance to the freedom struggle of Bangladesh.

Although the war is now over, the American threat still continues. The people have to be vigilant against new forms of pressure and blackmail. Temptations may be offered, such as of resuming the economic 'aid' that has been cut, on condition that India once again revert to the old policy of economic dependence on, and collaboration with, the American monopolists and their Government.

No Change in Basic Policies

These dangers can be overcome only if the Government's proclaimed intention of dispensing with American 'aid' and depending on our own resources for our development is not allowed to remain on paper but is transformed into concrete policies. This requires that the path of capitalist development in collaboration with foreign monopolies and on the basis of allying with landlordism, pursued by the Government during the entire twenty-year period when five-year or annual plans were in operation, is abandoned in favour of policies for which the democratic movement has been fighting. It also requires that all the democratic forces fighting against foreign monopoly penetration, against landlord domination and against the development of Indian monopolies are united. Dependence on our own resources for national development is incompatible with the continuance of the basic economic policies pursued by the Government so far, and with hostility to working class, peasant and other mass democratic movements with concentrated attacks on the CPI(M).

The Government, however, refuses to change its basic economic or political policies. Despite the tall talk of 'Garibi Hatao', curbing monopoly, holding the price-line, crash programme for unemployment relief, radical land reforms and so on, the basic economic policies remain the same as they

have been since the Congress assumed power. Politically, too, the Government headed by Indira Gandhi directs the main fire against the genuinely radical anti-landlord and anti-monopoly forces and against the working class, peasant and other revolutionary forces and against the CPI(M).

Hollowness of Claims

It may, in this connection, be useful to recall to our minds that a year ago, when the Central Congress Government ordered a midterm election to the Lok Sabha, they promised to curb monopolies, bring about more radical land reforms, tackle the acute problem of unemployment, and so on. This was a continuation of the demagoguery indulged in by them in keeping with the new face they gave themselves in 1969, when they split from their Syndicate colleagues. Making a hypocritical 'confession' of the failure of their party in the past to take radical and progressive positions, they claimed to be turning a new leaf and promised that they would adopt entirely new radically oriented policies.

Many of those who till then had been in the ranks of the struggle against the Congress monopoly of power were taken in by this demagoguery of the leaders of the ruling Congress. Particular mention should be made of the Right Communist Party whose leaders had no hesitation to laud the new Congress as the harbinger of a new era for India. It was with the assistance of such parties that the ruling Congress improved its position in several States. It was these parties that enabled the ruling Congress not only to stage a come-back in West Bengal and Kerala but also to strengthen itself in Parliament to such an extent that the new Government could steamroller all opposition and push through Parliament even the most anti-democratic measures.

The CPI(M) is proud of the fact that it exposed the hollowness of the claims made by the ruling party. In the *Election Manifesto*, issued on the eve of the Lok Sabha election, the Party warned the people against the new attacks—both in the economic and

political fields—that would be launched by the ruling party once it gets further strengthened after the election. The aftermath of the election and the performance of the Government during the last ten months have completely proved the correctness of these warnings.

Real Character Comes Out

Closely following the spectacular victory in the Lok Sabha elections, the Central Government reintroduced the notorious Preventive Detention Act under the new name of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. It also imposed new burdens of taxation unprecedented in magnitude except in 1962. These two measures adopted in the very first flush of its electoral victory showed the real character of the Government—its anti-democratic, anti-people essence hidden behind the mask of ‘radicalism’ and ‘progressivism’.

All the promises to curb the monopolists, to bring about radical land reforms, to hold the price-line to tackle the problem of unemployment, and so on, made during the election campaign, remain unfulfilled. In fact, the very opposite has taken place.

The very ruling party which talked of curbing monopolists did, during the Lok Sabha election campaign, issue a large number of fresh licences to monopoly houses. After the election, too, concession after concession was given to Big Business. Resources of the nationalised banks, general insurance and other public sector institutions were also used to further strengthen the position of Big Business, thus dashing the hopes generated among the common people when these institutions were nationalised. The amendments to the Constitution adopted by Parliament on the initiative of the Government also did not bring about any basic change in the situation. Even while asking the working people to make sacrifices for helping the refugees from Bangladesh, to enable the Government to prepare itself to face the danger posed by the Pakistani military clique, to fight the Indo-Pakistan war and now to help in the rehabilitation of Bangladesh as well as to tackle the new problems of planning in India, the Government allowed the

monopolists, hoarders, black-marketeers and profiteers to fatten themselves at the expense of the common people. Talking of a moratorium on increases in emoluments of workers and employees and of a holiday for strikes and other forms of struggle, the authorities from the President downwards refused to take any single effective step against profiteering. The result is that a handful of monopolists and profiteers were able to take in crores and crores of profits out of a war in which thousands of our young men have had to lay down their lives.

Huge Jokes on the People

The same is true of the promise to bring about radical and effective agrarian reforms. The open admission, made in 1969, that the reforms carried-out till then have helped only a handful of rural rich while impoverishing the mass of the rural poor, has been followed by a practice which continues the same old process. Not a single step has been taken to make the benefits of land reform legislations available to the mass of the rural poor who, in fact, are being still further impoverished. The much advertised series of conferences of Chief ministers to evolve new lines of agrarian reform have yielded absolutely nothing. The only result has been that the landlords have been given sufficient time to adjust themselves to any new legislation (if and when it comes) by arranging fake 'partitions', 'gifts', and even 'sales'. Meanwhile, all available methods are used by the local gentry to turn cultivators out of land and themselves take physical possession of it.

"Holding the price-line" and "crash programme to tackle the problem of unemployment" have proved to be huge jokes made by the ruling party at the expense of the common people. The taller the talk with regard to these two problems, the higher goes the price-level and the larger the unemployment. During the very ten-month period that has lapsed since the Lok Sabha election, prices have gone up by about 30 per cent. As for unemployment its growth has become so apparent that those who manipulate the figures have stopped making calculations

of the extent to which unemployment is growing and the unemployed get absorbed in new jobs.

Far from getting new jobs to those who are already unemployed, tens of thousands are being thrown out of employment. Industry after industry is having its own problem of closures which lead to the loss of employment to hundreds and even thousands in a single mill or factory. For weeks and weeks, the Government keeps quiet and inactive in relation to those closures; and, when it becomes active, it arranges the reopening in such a way that the workers and employees are deprived of the gains they had made before the closure and forced to accept wage-and salary-cuts. The very problem of unemployment and failure of the Government to solve it were thus allowed to be used by the employers to launch new and vicious attacks on the working class.

Corruption in Administration

On top of the increasing tax burdens, rising cost of living, growing unemployment, more and more fierce attacks on the wage-and salary-earners, impoverishment of the rural poor and so on, is the growing corruption of the administrative machinery. The handful of big landlords, monopoly capitalists, big contractors, black-marketeers, foreign monopolies and so on are having such a tight grip both on the political leadership as well as on the bureaucratic apparatus of the administration that these class enemies of the people can get away with anything foul that they do. Tax-evasion, black money, naked and unashamed bribery at the bureaucratic level, huge 'donations' to the political leadership of the ruling party—all these have become inseparable parts of the economic and political-administrative set-up of the ruling classes that the very people who are the foremost in organising these anti-social and corrupt practices don the garb of 'radicalism' and 'progressivism' assumed by the leaders of the ruling party.

No wonder, therefore, that the landlord and monopoly capitalist interests see and appreciate the reality behind the tall talk of

'Garibi Hatao', curbing monopoly, and so on, indulged in by the ruling Congress. They give their full support to this party and its Government. Those political parties and groups that had taken the leaders of the ruling party at their word and, therefore, opposed them for the so-called radical policies being adopted by them, have also realised that the ruling Congress is, in fact, practising what they themselves are preaching. They, therefore, are flocking into the new Congress *en masse*.

Further Hardening of Reactionary Features

The process of disrupting the unity of the democratic opposition to the Congress regime and attempting at the restoration of the Congress monopoly of power, which began with the talk of 'a new radical Congress' emerging out of the 1969 split and which culminated in the victory of the ruling Congress in the Lok Sabha election last year, has thus meant a further hardening of the worst and most reactionary features of the State political set-up in the country. It has meant more vicious attacks on the living standards of the working people, a more determined effort at eliminating all forces of democratic opposition to its anti-people policies. It has also meant increasing use of Central power to dismiss State Government, making the appointed Governors tools of the Centre, encroaching on the rights guaranteed to the States by the Constitution, and so on.

Coming as the Assembly elections are doing against this background, they are intended by the ruling Congress to further strengthen the authoritarian trends that have grown under its leadership.

Although it is a month since the armed forces of Pakistan surrendered and a cease-fire was accepted on both sides, the Government refuses to accept that reality and lift the Emergency. Over and above the Maintenance of Internal Security Act and other repressive legislations that have been put on the Statute Book, the Defence of India Rules are also in operation. All these are used in various ways in order to put several thousands of activists of democratic organisations behind the bars, to

declare strikes and other struggles of the working people illegal and otherwise hamper the activities of democratic parties and organisations. It is under conditions of such oppression that these elections are being conducted.

Elections Under Semi-Fascist Terror

While this is true of all those districts and local areas where democratic movement in general and the CPI(M) in particular are relatively strong, it is all the more true of West Bengal where, it is well known, the CPI(M) has acquired the position of the biggest political party in the State. Here attack on democracy has long ago assumed the character of semi-fascist terror. Thousands of active political workers in the State are behind the bars, hundreds of them under preventive detention; nearly a thousand of them have been transferred to jails in distant States and two thousand more are proposed to be transferred; warrants have also been issued against a lakh. Above all, the Presidential regime and its police administration are actively encouraging and helping the inhuman attacks launched by semi-fascist gangs organised by the Congress (R) under the signboard of Chhatra Parishad and Yuva Congress Police, CRP, and even military operations are co-ordinated with such attacks. The so-called "combing operations" jointly undertaken by them have become the means through which active cadres of the CPI(M) are attacked and killed, houses and even whole villages are burnt and looted and vandalism is allowed to have free play. Such planned joint operations by the police, CRP and the semi-fascist gangs are being undertaken and intensified daily with a view to physically liquidating the democratic forces and particularly the CPI(M) from many of its strong areas. Thousands of political workers and even MLA, are simply driven out from some areas making it extremely difficult to organise any election campaign. With the approach of elections, such naked terror is being intensified.

The ruling party knows that even these vicious attacks would not prevent the people of West Bengal from rallying behind the CPI(M) and its allies if only they get an opportunity of freely

express their right to vote. They, therefore, refuse to have a proper and complete list of voters for West Bengal. While every State has had what is called and “intensive” “revision” of the lists, West Bengal has had only a “summary” revision. Even this has been made under such conditions of terror that neither the voters themselves nor the active workers of the CPI(M) could approach the authorities for putting the claims for inclusion of their names and objections to the fake names that have been included. Thousands of genuine voters have simply been removed. It is thus obvious that the forthcoming election to the Assembly in West Bengal will be based on a voters’ list which has been prepared with the specific objective of helping the ruling party and under conditions of unbridled terror and physical attacks.

Collaborationists of Ruling Party

It is monstrous that the Right Communist Party and some other traditionally-known Left and democratic parties are collaborating with such a ruling party, helping it in its diabolical scheme of strengthening itself against all opposition in general, particularly against those genuinely democratic forces which take a determined stand against the foreign monopolies, their Indian collaborators and the political parties that defend their interests. The support which these parties gave the ruling Congress in last year’s Lok Sabha election and which they may now give in the present State Assembly elections are nothing but the service rendered to those who are fast turning themselves into semi-fascist rulers, in return for a few parliamentary and legislative posts graciously given to them by the ruling party.

It is equally monstrous that the leaders of the ruling party and their allies should try to hide these anti-democratic measures under cover of the recent successes scored in relation to Bangladesh and the Indo-Pakistan War. These developments took place precisely because the entire people of both India and Bangladesh rose to a man and unitedly fought the most hated enemy of the world peoples, i.e., American imperialism and its

clients in West Pakistan. The credit for it, therefore, goes to the entire people of the two countries and not to any single political party. If at all a truthful assessment were to be made, it would have to be stated that the ruling party exhibited a good deal of hesitations and vacillations that were overcome only because of the tremendous pressure exercised by the people.

While it is thus ridiculous for them to claim all the credit for the united struggle of the peoples of the two countries, it is still more fantastic to claim that this common victory of the two peoples justifies the efforts made by the ruling party to steamroller all opposition, to once again install a Congress monopoly regime, and to use that regime for launching further attacks against the common people.

Programme for United Action

The CPI(M) appeals to all the radical and Left and democratic parties, mass organisations, groups and individuals who are interested in carrying forward the struggle against American imperialism and in making the country self-reliant to come together in a determined struggle against the anti-people policies of the ruling Congress and its allies. It calls on them to join their forces on the basis of the democratic programme of opposition to imperialists, landlords, rapidly growing Indian Big Business and to develop the democratic forces of the common people, their movement and struggles. The CPI(M) places before them the following programme :

1. A complete recasting of the foreign policy with a view to carrying the struggle against American imperialism to its logical conclusion and to this end :

- (a) Declare a moratorium on all payments to be made to the U.S. regardless of whether these payments are to be made by the public or private sector in India to the public or private sector in the U.S.;
 - (b) Take over the assets of the firms and companies owned by the U.S., as well as the counterpart funds of the PL.
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- (c) Terminate all “cultural” agreements which help the agents of the CIA or other espionage organisations of the U.S. to meddle with our internal politics ;
- (d) Firmly declare that if even in the future the U. S. expresses willingness to resume “aid” we would not accept it, since it has been proved that their “aid” is a weapon of political blackmail ;
- (e) Firmly reject all suggestions made in India or abroad, to weaken the ties which have been developing between India and the Soviet Union, particularly after the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty;
- (f) Maintain and further strengthen all forms of co-operation with the Soviet Union and all other Socialist countries ;
- (g) Take effective measures to eliminate America’s grip on the Asian continent by working for the anti-imperialist unity of all Asian Powers; to this end, give recognition to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and the Cambodian Government headed by Prince Sihanouk; raise the diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Ambassadorial level; pursue the efforts being made now to normalise relations with the People’s Republic of China as well as to forge new relations of friendship with Pakistan.

2. Take effective measures to implement in practice the declared policy of dispensing with foreign aid and rely on the internal resources for carrying out the plans of development—measures such as nationalisation of foreign trade; drastic reduction in imports of luxury goods as well as those producers’ and consumers’ goods that can be manufactured in the country; imposition of agricultural income-tax; moratorium on foreign debts for five years; nationalisation of foreign concerns and concerns owned by Indian monopolists; imposition of a ceiling on profits; and so on.

3. Withdrawal of the CRP and army and stoppage of mass terror in West Bengal, repeal of repressive legislations such as Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Prevention of Violent

Activities Act and Preventive Detention Act; immediate lifting of Emergency and the restoration of full civil liberties and democratic rights; stoppage of all repression on the workers, peasants and mass movements and on the CPI(M) in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and in parts of every State wherever mass movements and struggles are developing, release of political prisoners and withdrawal of cases.

4. Basic changes in the Constitution to eliminate monopolist and landlord exploitation, to ensure real autonomy for the States, to ensure the right to work and for civil liberties.

5. Need-based minimum wage for the workers and employees, stoppage of wage-freeze, lock-outs lay-offs, and closure of mills; taking over of closed mills with full trade union rights; repeal of all anti-working class legislation; security of service; provision of full employment and pending employment, relief to the unemployed.

6. Vigorous measures against rise in prices, inflation, deficit financing, and heavy taxation, indirect taxation on the common man in particular.

7. Radical land reforms in the interest of the peasantry, and their implementation in co-operation with the organisations of peasants; especially reduction in land ceilings and ensuring land to the tiller; fair wages and full employment for the agricultural labourers; allotment of free house-sites to the rural poor; debt cancellation of the peasants, agricultural labourers and artisans to money-lenders and landlords; cheap credit supply; guaranteed fair prices and good market facilities for agricultural produce; take-over of the wholesale trade in food and other essential commodities.

8. Immediate introduction of free education up to secondary stage in all States; provision of hostel facilities and full scholarship for all needy students, especially for Scheduled Caste and Tribal students; the right of students to participate in the management of educational institutions and academic bodies.

9. Drastic steps against those who indulge in outrages against Scheduled Castes and Tribes; immediate steps to put an end to economic and social oppression of these people by

landlords, contractors and traders; restoration of lands seized from them.

10. Safeguarding the right of Muslim minorities, no discrimination in employment in Government services and educational institutions against Muslims, protection for Urdu, vigorous fight against the communal poison being spread by Hindu and Muslim chauvinists.

11. Equal status and opportunities for women in all fields.

Appeal to Parties People

While appealing to all Left and democratic parties to join together in a front to fight the ruling classes in general and the ruling Congress and its allies in particular on the basis of this programme, the CPI(M) particularly appeals to those parties who are today in the camp of the ruling Congress to realise the harm they are doing to the democratic movement and to themselves, break away from their alliance and join the CPI(M) and its allies in the struggle against the ruling party.

It appeals to those parties who have not yet overcome their prejudices to the ideology and programme of the CPI(M) and its allies, and are, therefore, even now hesitant to join the front of struggle on the above programme, to realise the need for the unity of all the genuinely democratic parties and groups in the country if the onslaught of the ruling party is to be barred. It hopes that they would overcome their prejudices and join the front of struggle.

The CPI(M) appeals to the people in general to help in the emergence of such a front of struggle by voting for the candidates put up by the CPI(M) and its allies wherever they are contesting, since they are the most consistent fighters against the ruling Congress as well as against those parties who oppose the ruling Congress from the Right. Wherever the CPI(M) or its allies are not contesting, we appeal to the people to vote for such candidates as are opposed to the ruling Congress and its allies on the one hand and the Right reactionary and disruptive parties such as the Syndicate Congress, Jana

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Sangh and the Swatantra and so on the other. We hope that such candidates would help the emergence of a genuinely democratic Opposition by pledging themselves to strengthen the struggle of the working people around the programme outlined above.

Resolution on Release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

**Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its
meeting held in Calcutta on January 12-15, 1972**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its happiness at the release of Bangladesh President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by the rulers of Pakistan after nine months of incarceration.

The Sheikh's release and return to Bangladesh are a matter of rejoicing not for the people of Bangladesh alone but for all anti-imperialist forces because it is another blow to the conspiracies of the U.S. imperialists who have been doing everything to thwart the freedom struggle of Bangladesh.

The U. S. imperialists will not reconcile themselves to their defeat and will continue their conspiracies against the new-born State. It is the vigilance and unity of the Bangladesh people that will help them to defeat these conspiracies in the future, too, to defend and extend the freedom and democracy they have won.

The Central Committee is confident that the friendship between the peoples of India and Bangladesh forged in the course of the freedom struggle will be further strengthened in the coming days in the struggle of the peoples against imperialism and for democracy.

On Transfer of West Bengal Political Detainees

**Resolution of the Central Committee of CPI(M) adopted
in its meeting held in Calcutta on January 12-15, 1972**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemns the revengeful policy of the Congress Government to transfer hundreds of political detainees of West Bengal to far-away jails outside the State. Already more than 600 detainees have been sent to the Cuddalore Jail in Tamil-Nadu.

Just at a time when it is absolutely necessary for the Government to restore democracy in West Bengal, stop semi-fascist terror, release political prisoners and detainees, and order general elections along with other States, Congress Government, in its mad drive to crush all democratic movements in West Bengal by brute force, have not only intensified the reign of semi-fascist terror, but have also adopted the vindictive policy of the old British rulers to send political prisoners and detainees to outside jails situated at long distances.

Such transfer to far off jails practically deprives the political workers of their elementary right to meet their families and also to consult their lawyers in conducting their cases in law courts. It is practically impossible for relatives to spend huge sums of money to see the detainees. Many prisoners have cases before the law courts which need consultation with lawyers. The detainees are thus faced with serious hardships in outside jails being cut off from their families and their own State.

The diet and living conditions of the political detainees are very bad. It is further worsened by the transfer, because the diet

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is outside jails is different from that to which the detainees are used to.

The Central Committee was shocked to learn that on the first day when hundreds of detainees were sent to the Cuddalore Jail, they were lathi-charged as the jail gate.

The Central Committee demands that the Government stop immediately this vindictive and inhuman policy of transfer of West Bengal detainees to outside jails, bring back all those who have been transferred and give them better treatment as political prisoners pending their release. The Committee appeals to all democratic people, parties and organisations to put pressure on the Government to accept these demands.

CPI(M) and West Bengal Elections

Statement issued to the Press by P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M) in Calcutta on January 17, 1972

With the announcement of the Government of India's decision to hold elections in West Bengal, a concerted attempt is being made by the Press and Congress leaders to distort the position of our Party by misreporting the speeches and declarations of our Polit Bureau members to make out that our Party is opposed to the holding of elections in West Bengal because we are afraid of being defeated.

Ever since President's rule was imposed on the State, we have been demanding the holding of fresh elections to seek the people's verdict. It is the Congress rulers who have consistently rejected this demand. Even when the decision was taken to hold elections in the States, West Bengal was excluded from that order. If now the Congress rulers have decided to hold elections in West Bengal, it is not because of any sudden love they have developed for democracy but because they think that the success of the Bangladesh freedom struggle and the brutal semi-fascist repression in the State have prepared the ground for a Congress victory.

Despite the fact that under the conditions of the present semi-fascist terror against CPI(M) and Left bases in the State elections cannot be free and fair, we have welcomed the decision to hold the elections and asked the Government to lift this terror to enable the people to exercise their democratic rights.

We face the elections confident that the fighting people of West Bengal will give a fitting answer to the Congress rulers who have sought to suppress them with brutal representation.

CPI(M) Appeal for Democratic Unity for Elections in Andhra Pradesh

Appeal Issued by Andhra State Committee for CPI(M)

The Andhra Pradesh Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in Vijayawada from January 6 to 9, with Comrade N. Prasadarao in the chair. It discussed the tactics to be followed in the forthcoming elections to the State Assembly and decided to contest thirty seats. The following appeal in this connection was issued by it to all the Left and democratic parties in the State :

Elections to the State Assembly are scheduled to be held in the first week of March. The people will be asked to once again give their verdict on the Congress rule in the State.

These elections are being held in a particular situation.

American imperialism, the main enemy of the peoples of the world, received mortal blows recently. This is particularly visible in the sad plight into which it had fallen by standing against the freedom struggle of the people of Bangladesh.

The struggle of the people of Bangladesh for freedom and democracy against the Pakistan military dictatorship is an outstanding event and has won a resounding victory. The CPI (M) supported this struggle from the beginning and was demanding that the Government of India recognise the Bangladesh Government and give all-out support to the freedom struggle. The Government of India vacillated in the beginning, but later, under the pressure of mounting agitation and for its own reasons accorded recognition to the Bangladesh Government and gave support to it, which is a welcome step. All parties in the country supported this step. But, now, the Congress party

and the Government are trying to utilise this victory for their self-interest in the coming elections. This is a matter to be condemned by all popular forces.

It is reprehensible that the Government still continues national Emergency and carries on repression against mass movements. This should not be tolerated.

The Congress Government wants to cover up its twentyfive-year misrule by deceitful talk about Socialism, land reform, 'garibi hatao', etc.

But, practice and the actual state of affairs prove the bankruptcy of these claims. The slogan of land to the tiller resulted, in practice, in the strengthening of the landlord and rich peasant economy. The increase in the number of agricultural labour by about ten per cent in the last one decade is a telling proof of this.

Ever since the country became independent, the Congress had a monopoly of power. In this long lien of power, the poor have become poorer and the rich richer. Poverty and unemployment have reached unprecedented proportions. Tax, rent and debt burdens have become unbearable. Democracy is trampled underfoot and United Front Governments and non-Congress Governments have been toppled by most undemocratic methods. Leonine violence has been unleashed against popular movements and hundreds of Communists and hundreds of working class and peasant leaders murdered in cold blood. The Congress has become a synonym for corruption.

Andhra Pradesh stands in the fifth place in terms of population and area, but in the last ranks in industrial production. While the national income from industrial production is 18 per cent for the country, it is only seven per cent for Andhra Pradesh. The State's economy still rests mainly on agriculture and the national income from this source is 62 per cent. Industrial labour forms only one per cent of the population.

Added to this, regional chauvinism and oppourtunism developed corroding the entire national life. Terrible repression was let loose against the mass movements and in the last two-three years, more than 20 Communist (Marxist) leaders and

200 Girijan leaders have been shot dead or murdered in other ways by the police and the landlord goondas. Only an end to Congress rule can put an end to this ghastly state of affairs.

The disillusioned masses gave a massive rebuff to the Congress in the 1967 General Elections. In the 1969 mid-term elections also, the Congress was defeated roundly in four States. So, donning the grab of Socialism and mouthing demagogic phrases, the Congress won a resounding victory in the Lok Sabha elections in 1971. This victory was made possible by the Right Communists deserting the democratic front and joining the band-wagon of the Congress. The democratic fronts formed in 1967 broke up. Only, the CPI(M) stood up against this storm and holding aloft the banner of democracy emerged as the largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha.

It is a fact that the democratic forces in Andhra Pradesh were weak during this period. All factions within the Congress have rejoined the ruling Congress. The separatists, who played havoc with the slogan of separate Telangana have also returned to the Congress. Even a big chunk of the most reactionary Swatantra Party joined the Congress now.

The Andhra Pradesh Committee of the CPI(M) appeals to all the Left and democratic forces in the State to learn from this past experience and come together to defeat the Congress in the ensuing elections. It is the disunity.

Clarion Call for Democratic Unity

Report of West Bengal State Conference of CPI(M)

In a clarion call to all the democratic parties, forces and individuals, the Twelfth West Bengal State Conference of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), held in Midnapore Town from January 16 to 20, 1972, has urged them all to forge the broadest unity in order to inflict a signal defeat on the ruling Congress politics of semi-fasist barbarism. This monstrous politics can be resolutely fought and defeated only by involving the whole people against it. The imminent elections offer an opportunity to the democratic parties to rally the workers, peasants, middle classes and students and youth in their millions to inflict a defeat on the semi-fascistic politics and take ahead the people's struggles.

Hoisting the Red Flag at the conference venue at Mallikchak, Comrade B. T. Ranadive said that countless comrades throughout the world have laid down their lives to preserve the honour of the Flag. Many in West Bengal have done the same, fighting the ruling Congress politics of semi-fascism. Amidst the smell of gunpowder the Central Congress Government is going to hold elections in West Bengal. But we are not afraid. We are determined to undertake the unfinished tasks of the martyrs.

Laying wreaths at the Martyrs' Column, Comrade P. Sundarayya said that we are determined, as always, to carry forward the struggle of the people against the Congress regime which so far has unleashed all barbarities on the masses. The

Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 30, 1972. West Bengal State Conference of CPI(M) was held at Midnapore on January 16-20, 1972.

Congress now is violating the ordinary norms of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. It seeks to win the poll with the help of the Emergency and all-out terror. But this shall not be allowed. The Party in West Bengal shall learn how to carry on the work of organising the whole people and uniting all democratic parties and forces even in this grim situation of semi-fascist repression.

The Conference elected a Presidium consisting of Comrades Abdullah Rasul, Kamal Sarkar, Nirupama Chatterji, Gopal Bose and Suchand Soren.

Two resolutions, one condoling the death of Comrade Ho Chi Minh, Comrade Niranjan Sen, member of the Secretariat of the West Bengal State Committee and other Party workers and another paying homage to the comrades who laid down their lives in the fight against ruling Congress barbarities, to the revolutionaries throughout the world who have died for the cause of Socialism and democracy and the Bangladesh heroes who were butchered by the Pakistan army were adopted.

Political-Organisational Report

Presenting the Political-Organisational Report, Comrade Promod Dasgupta, Secretary of the State Committee, said that the Twelfth State Conference was being held in an abnormal situation brought about by the semi-fascistic terror of the ruling Congress party. This diabolical repression is being directed against the awakened people of West Bengal and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which stands in their van. The three years following the last conference are replete with events of supreme importance. During this historic period our Party, the struggling working class, peasants and employees, that is to say the entire toiling masses, have been immensely enriched with varied experiences and they have been imbued with growing political consciousness than at any time earlier.

Attacks and struggles against these attacks had taken place in the past also. But in the recent period in West Bengal, repression has been going on a scale altogether unprecedented, and it is on a new scale also that the people in towns and villages have

taken up the challenge of the ruling classes and are bursting out in massive class and mass struggles. Our Party is sure that the ruling Congress politics of terror would be defeated. We are confident that we would be able to mobilise the people in the arena of struggle by dispelling the illusions spread by the ruling Congress by way of a political offensive against the democratic forces.

After explaining the present international situation, where imperialism is in an insoluble crisis and the forces of Socialism and national liberation are advancing rapidly, the report said that the Party in West Bengal had carried movements demanding that the Government of India recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, raise the level of diplomatic relations with North Vietnam, North Korea and the German Democratic Republic. The Party had also organised campaigns against the U. S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Referring to the great Bangladesh struggle for national liberation, the report said that it had a tremendous impact on the democratic movement. Firmly vindicating our Party's ideological positions, the victory of the Bangladesh people has dealt a blow to imperialism, highlighted the contradiction between imperialism and national liberation, sharpened inter-imperialist contradictions. The report recalled the great heritage of the peasants and workers' movement led by our comrades in East Pakistan now Bangladesh. The victory of the Bangladesh people has demolished the artificial barriers of hate and suspicion between the peoples of the two countries and dealt a mortal blow to the communal forces in the sub-continent.

West Bengal's Economy

All through the last three years, the crisis of Indian economy has been deepening. As in the whole of the country, the crisis has been bursting out in West Bengal also where, according to the 1971 Census, the rate of economic growth has miserably slackened down during the last one decade. In 1971 the percentage of employed people has fallen to 28.27 from 23.2 in

1961 though the population has increased from 3.59 crores to 4.40 crores.

The number of agricultural workers has increased tremendously—from 18 lakhs to 33 lakhs in the last decade. During this period, the proportion of peasants has fallen from 38.5 to 31.7 per cent, while that of agricultural workers has increased from 15.3 to 25.8. In the rural areas, persons engaged in non-agricultural employment has dwindled from 46.2 to 42.5 per cent. Of the adult male population, three millions are jobless. Registered educated unemployed in 1970 stood at 190,829 while total unemployment registered in employment exchanges were 768,368. In the first six months of 1971, the number has gone up by two lakhs more.

As calculated up to October 1971, 509 factories were under closure throwing out 115,000 workers and employees ; 262 factories have little prospect of reopening. The Industrial Reconstruction Corporation has entertained applications for help of only five closed and six economically unviable factories against a total of 119 applications. Many small and medium units have closed down because of paucity of steel and raw materials, and lack of finance, shrinkage of market and unequal competition from the big units. Bank nationalisation has brought no facilities to the small units.

The Central Government in 1969-70 cut down the supply of steel to West Bengal from 7.37 lakh tonnes to 5.53 lakhs. As a result, the engineering industry has been badly hit. A bale of cotton costs hundred rupees more in West Bengal than it does in a State like Maharashtra. Despite the availability of resources in West Bengal, the Congress Government encourages the shifting of factories to other States. The Centre has decided to transfer the offices of a number of Government and autonomous bodies while the Birlas are shifting some of their head-offices.

In 1969-70, the Centre earned Rs. 496.18 crores from West Bengal but allocated only Rs. 44.31 crores to the State. While the Central Congress Government has been paying scant regard to our Party's demand to allocate 75 per cent of the revenue collected to the States, it spends Rs. 102 crores on the CRP and

Rs. 1,241 crores on defence. Education in the four eastern States it in a bad state. In the villages, no steps have been taken to provide free education beyond Class IV, to say nothing of education at the high school and college levels.

The state of the rural economy is miserable. Exploitation by jotdars and money-lenders is intense. As the peasant stood up against the exploiters during the period of the United Front Governments, all-out repression was unleashed on them by the CRP and police and landlord goondas. Because of the occupation of twelve lakh bighas of benami land, 60 to 70 lakh maunds of paddy has not gone into the hands of jotdars and hoarders. As a result, the food problem is a bit less acute. But agricultural indebtedness has increased and the poor peasants' land is sold or mortgaged away. Purchasing power in the rural areas has further shrunk. Agricultural workers are finding less employment and lower rates of wages. Prolonged neglect of the irrigation system often leads to floods and drought. Recent floods caused devastation in the rural areas of nine districts.

The peasants are being deprived of a just price for their produce. Owing to the capitalist inroads into the rural economy, dual exploitations has grown further. The conditions of weavers, artisans and shop-keepers are miserable. Rural cottage industries are in stagnation. Urban life has fared no better.

In the background of this all-sided crisis, mass struggles against the ruling classes have forged ahead and have led to the realignment of political forces and parties. Our Party in West Bengal has at each stage of realignment properly understood its significance and has, accordingly, varied its tactics correctly and thereby carried forward the mass struggles to higher and higher levels. Every tactic of the ruling classes to frustrate the advance of the masses has been foiled. Following the division in the Congress, some parties, principally the Right Communist Party, taking the cue from the new tactic of the ruling Congress to divide and liquidate the democratic mass struggles, have sought to disrupt the progress of the mass movements but have failed.

As class struggles and the fighting spirit of the people grew unprecedentedly during the second United Front Government, the Central Congress Government after its dismissal unleashed naked police-CRP terror on the masses. A new tactic of assassination of CPI(M) workers and sympathisers was introduced. The Naxalites and creatures of the underworld were organised by the ruling classes as murder squads. Disregarding the popular verdict in the 1971 election held amidst terror, the Congress party established a Coalition along with the Muslim League with the support of the Syndicate, Jana Sangh, Right Communists and others. This Government was used as a cover to unleash further repression but it could last only 88 days due to bitter in-fighting. The CPI(M) and its allies in the ULF, despite the increased terror, carried the big electoral success by further mobilising the masses in struggles.

During that period and thereafter the Right Communist Party has totally given up its anti-Congress positions. Despite the long-standing anti-Congress tradition, the Forward Bloc also has been suffering from internal contradictions.

Right before the Fifth General Elections, the Congress repression had taken a semi-fascistic character. With open help from the police and the CRP, the Congressite Chhatra Parishad and the Youth Congress have started gangsterism against the democratic movements of workers, peasants, Government and other employees, students, teachers and youth. They are breaking unions, rousing provincial passions against the non-Bengalee workers as also communalism. The common people are realising the character of these brigades. Even old Congress men are feeling disturbed at their gangsterism. In their attempt to build up the organisation with the help of gangsters, the Congress party has landed in a new crisis. A number of factions are colliding in the Congress party and with growing mass movements the feuds would become even more intense.

This period in West Bengal has seen the collapse of Naxalite sectarianism. One section has merged with the Congress, one section has surrendered to the police and the rest who have not done so are being persecuted in jails and outside.

In order to isolate the CPI(M) from the masses and to break the fighting unity of the people, the Central Congress Government has carried on different conspiracies from November 1968 onwards. But all through the people have burst out in their millions against each conspiracy. The history of West Bengal from 1968 to the present day is the history of big mass movements. At its present phase, the Congress attacks have taken the full form of semi-fascistic repression with the CRP, police and Congress storm-troopers jointly attacking the masses of workers, peasants and middle classes and their parties, especially the cadres and leaders of the CPI(M).

Growth of the Party

Since the last Conference, the Party in West Bengal has become even more consolidate ideologically, politically and organisationally and its ability to rally the masses and resist attacks has increased unquestionably. A programme of Party education has been undertaken through Party classes and the Party organs. The ideological fight against Naxalism and the United Front tactics of the Party have abundantly educated the comrades and developed their political consciousness.

In the struggle against the anti-U.F. conspiracy—against the semi-fascistic terror as at present, the Party has to discharge so many responsibilities that it is impossible for any member to remain inactive. The Party has spread out in all the districts. But the Party organisation has not grown enough compared to the tremendous growth of the mass organisations. To make up this lag, more leaders at the Branch and Local levels have to be developed.

Collective functioning, decision taking and review must be more emphasised. The system of continuous check up has revealed some weaknesses.

The total number of Party members in West Bengal as on December 31, 1971, is 34,877. At the time of the last Party Conference it was 16,066 and in February 1970, it was 20,824. The number of members in Auxiliary Group has increased from 38,944 in January 1970 to 51,157 December 1971.

The sale of Party literature has tremendously increased. The circulation of the Party daily has increased from about 7,000 in 1968 to 25,000 at present. There has been similar substantial increases in the circulation of other journals of the Party and mass organisations.

Mass Fronts

The Party has made tremendous headway in all the mass fronts. On the peasant front, we have been successful in radically changing the alignment of forces in the rural areas—a new awakening has come there, the poor peasants and agricultural workers have come to occupy the leadership in peasant struggles. The little bit of alienation of the middle peasants must be overcome by building up movements based on peasant unity—this task has not been properly pursued. Through the struggles for benami land occupation and for harvest on such land, a big chunk of rural Bengal has been transformed into strong fortresses of the movement. Now the ruling Congress by organising group attacks, mass killing and putting villages on fire with the help of the CRP, police and hoodlums is out to destroy this base. The Party is determined to resist this by organising the agricultural workers and poor peasants as the core of resistance to semi-fascistic repression.

Apart from the big battles of the working class such as those of the jute, engineering, tea garden, colliery, textile, Durgapur workers and others, the Party takes pride in that it has been able to demolish the confines of economism and inspire the working class with a new political consciousness. The Party has been able to develop industry wide battles in sharp contrast to the earlier factory-based struggles. The Party has developed fraternisation of all sections of workers with any section fighting for its demands as demonstrated in the case of the jute, textile and tea garden workers. The West Bengal CITU in which our party works has been able to organise 108,903 jute workers, 22,107 textile workers, 28,033 steel workers, 116,480 engineering workers, 24,681 bus and truck workers, 48,734 tea

garden workers, 22,928 coal-miners, 13,711 dockers and 6,128 electricity workers.

During the last three years the growth of the Party in all the other fronts including the student, youth, women and teachers' is remarkable.

In the present year, the State unit would try to enrol from West Bengal 600,000 members in the CITU, 800,000 in the Kisan Sabha, 120,000 in the Students' Federation of India, 200,000 in the Democratic Youth Federation, 100,000 in the Ganatantrik Mahila Samiti, 50,000 in the All-Bengal Teachers' Association and 50,000 in the All-Bengal Primary Teachers' Association.

Discussions of the Report

Sixtyone comrades from all the districts and mass fronts participated in the debate on the Political Organisational Report for well over sixteen hours. The participants from Calcutta, 24-Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly and Burdwan, five contiguous districts constituting the powerful base of the democratic movement in West Bengal, reported how massive police-goonda terror has been unleashed to break the fighting morale of workers, peasants and the middle classes. In the other districts all the symptoms of semi-fascistic terror are getting clearer and clearer.

The delegates from the Industrial areas reported that despite attacks on their unions and person, the workers imbued with a high degree of political consciousness, have remained firm and in no case surrendered to the gangsters.

Every report from the rural areas claimed that the *benami* and vested land occupied by and large have been retained and notwithstanding the attacks by jotdars ruling congress gangsters, police and the CRP, in more than seventy-five per cent of such land the crops had been harvested successfully. Reports from weak districts like Bankura, Purulia, West Dinajpur, etc., showed that the Party and mass organisations had made good advance through the democratic movements in the recent period against police-goonda terror.

Comrades from Calcutta spoke of the heroic struggles of the people of Beliaghata, Jadavpur, Tollygunj and other areas against semi-fascistic barbarities. They stressed the importance of political campaigns in the peaceful areas and the great need for mobilising big sections of the workers and middle class people who were still unorganised.

Comrades from Burdwan spoke of the semi-fascistic terror on peasant bases in Kalna, Purbasthali, Katwa, Mangalkot, Ausgram and Bhatar, on the working class in the Durgapur-Asansol-Chittaranjan belt, on the coal-miners in Raniganj. In the whole district the leadership cannot function openly because of the terror—the police-CRP goonda gangs rounding up any leader they find, invariably torturing them and more often than not murdering them.

Comrades from Howrah pointed out that even old Congressmen were feeling disturbed by the *mastans* swarming into the Congress party. They emphasised that there had to be continuous action by the working class and the peasantry against the semi-fascistic repression, mobilisation only on occasion of specific attacks did not serve the purpose.

Comrades from Hooghly reported how even Congress followers in Uttarpara, Konnagar and other places rallied against the semi-fascistic barbarities. They all demanded that the concepts of consolidating contiguous areas and worker-peasant alliance must be more actively pursued.

The delegates from the North Bengal districts felt the zonal co-ordination was essential for further development of the Party and mass organisations. A delegate from Darjeeling reported the growing influence of the Party on the Nepali workers in the tea gardens. Delegates from Cooch-Bihar argued for developing contiguous areas to resist the growing semi-fascistic attacks.

All the comrades from North Bengal, Bankura, Purulia and Murshidabad asked for help from the State leadership to co-ordinate the rapidly developing mass organisations.

Delegates from Midnapore, Birbhum and Nadia reported the considerable success regarding the recent harvest despite arrests

of and warrants against thousands, despite murders and ravaging of villages.

Delegates from the trade union front dwelt on the ruling class attacks on the workers by way of proposals of wage-freeze, so-called production-oriented wage, moratorium on strikes, etc. But workers of all sections including the INTUC following have rallied against these attacks.

The delegates from the teachers' wanted more co-ordination between the movements of the primary, secondary, college and university teachers on the one hand and the students' front on the other.

Student delegates pointed out the need of organising the fifteen lakh students in high schools and colleges most of whom were unorganised. The student community has been mobilised on the Save Education issue against the Naxalites and later Chhatra Parishad assault on all academic values. But the mobilisation is far from satisfactory and uneven in the districts.

The delegates from the youth front felt the need of spreading out the youth organisation beyond Calcutta, Howrah, 24-Parganas and Hooghly where it is concentrated now.

Delegates from the women's front spoke of the increasing participation by women in the struggle against semi-fascist repression but felt that the Party must frame a guide-line for developing a democratic women's movement. They also felt the need for a democratic all-India women's organisation.

Delegates from the Party journals and publication fronts wanted a well-planned drive for the sale of Party papers and literature in all the districts and fronts.

A delegate from the cultural front demanded that a broad united front of artists, writers and poets must be developed to carry on the fight against semifascistic repression effectively.

After placing the account of the State Committee before the Conference, Comrade Promod Dasgupta summed up the debate on the report. He pointed out the great achievements of the Party and mass organisations after the last conference that went to prove that the Party's tactical line in West Bengal as

developed with the help of the Central Committee had been in the main correct. All along, the Party had been forging the unity of the struggling force but never had it sacrificed struggle at the altar of pointless unity.

Comrade Dasgupta wanted the mass fronts to fight the illusions of economic amelioration spread by the ruling Congress. The Party must consolidate all forms of organisation so that its cadres are not exposed to the liquidation campaign of the Congress Government. Through political campaigns, the Party must take all steps to convince the people that the present fight is not between the ruling Congress and the CPI(M) but between the former and all the democratic forces and parties.

Resolution on Tasks

The Political-Organisational Report was unanimously adopted by the conference. Unanimously passed also was a resolution on the Party's tasks in the present situation moved by Comrade Harekrishna Konar and seconded by Jyoti Basu.

The resolution says that Party at all levels must take up the political task of mobilising all the democratic forces, parties and organisations in united movements against the semi-fascistic repression; building up united and ceaseless movements for democratic rights, stopping of police and goonda raids, release of political prisoners and against their transfer to jails in other States, for withdrawal of false cases and the withdrawal of the CRP and the army; the Party should build up a strong movement against the continuation of the police and goonda raids that would otherwise make the coming elections a farce; campaign in support of Bangladesh, which issue the Congress is now exploiting for its narrow partisan interests; rallying the people against U.S. imperialism and for confiscation of all U.S. capital in India; organising movements for powers and finance for the States; and for developing a united front of all democratic and Left parties to defeat the Congress in the coming poll. Party members were called upon to face all attacks while campaigning for united front candidates.

The resolution says that in the mass fronts, the Party should strive to develop united struggles of all the mass organisations and in addition to united efforts, the Party should build up movements on its own initiative to guarantee the success of joint efforts. Concrete programmes of movements of each front must be chalked out. While doing so the Party must fight against economism, spread political consciousness, particularly organise the agricultural workers who in the villages are to play a key role against the semi-fascistic attacks, build up the widest rural unity and mobilise the students and youth, sections of whom are being misled by the Goebbelsian propaganda of the ruling Congress to join the semi-fascist brigades. In areas where open work of even mass fronts has been silenced by terror, the Party must devise ways to resume work.

In respect of Party organisation, the resolution says that as bourgeois-democratic rights are heavily circumscribed in West Bengal, the old style on Party work and forms of organisation must change in the atmosphere of semi-fascistic repression. Party organisation must accordingly be steered on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles. Keeping alert against all kinds of bewilderment and adventurism, the Party should preserve its cadres and workers of mass organisations against enemy attacks.

The Party should promote new leadership at all levels, and ensure collective functioning, joint leadership and check-up. The Party membership must be increased by taking in a good number of those now in Auxiliary Groups. All steps must be taken to encourage self-education and education in small groups, only these methods being feasible in the semi-fascistic atmosphere.

Fighting Back The Terror

Comrade M. Basavapurnaiah addressing the delegates said that with world capitalism in an insoluble crisis, the Indian ruling classes pursuing the capitalist path have landed the country in an ever-deepening crisis. With this crisis, the bourgeois-landlord regime led by the big bourgeoisie cannot by

any means afford to lose to the democratic forces its grip over an area like West Bengal and the adjoining territory full of natural resources, highly industrially developed and having good port facilities and a significant geographical position. Hence the semi-fascistic repression on the West Bengal people and their democratic parties, concentrating the attack on the CPI(M) that leads the democratic movement.

Comrade Basavapunnaiiah urged the delegates to break with the legacy of two decades of parliamentarism which is still having its influence on the work and organisation of the Party. In the period of semi-fascistic repression in West Bengal, the Party must emphasise work on all fronts and particularly on the co-ordination of all forms of organisation to take ahead the mass movements. Fascism is not inevitable and the semi-fascistic terror regime can be defeated.

Comrade B.T. Ranadive said that the great achievements of the Party in the ideological fight against revisionism and sectarianism, in the political fight for building up united fronts, and in stemming the Indira sweep in West Bengal and Tripura in the 1971 elections, in the economic struggles of the workers, peasants and middle classes— all these successes go a long way to sustain us in our fight against the semi-fascistic terror in West Bengal. The ruling classes in their attempt to win elections in West Bengal by bombs and bullets are ironically promoting a revolutionary opposition. Whether by attacking us or our masses, the ruling classes seek to snap the Party's links with the masses. Despite temporary retreats in some localities, we are determined to defeat the semi-fascistic terror regime by mobilising the workers, peasants and others in the fight against the common enemy.

Comrade P. Sundarayya urging the Party to be patient in its struggle against repression, told the delegates of the innumerable sacrifices of the Russian people who sacrificed their lives in millions during the revolution, civil war and the anti-fascist war. He reminded the delegates that as many as fifty million laid down their lives in China during the fight against Japanese

imperialism and Kuomintang white terror. The great Vietnam people have been fighting for the last twentyfive years making immense sacrifices. In our own country, the saga of the Telangana people must not be forgotten. In our movement against the semi-fascistic repression in West Bengal we must adopt all tactics necessary but we must emphasise the supreme tactic of rallying the whole democratic people and all democratic parties against it.

Comrade M. Hanumantha Rao, Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Committee of the CPI(M) and a member of the Party's Central Committee, greeted the Conference and promised that comrades in Andhra Pradesh would inform the people there of the semi-fascistic repression in West Bengal. If the attack on West Bengal is allowed to succeed, in the future it would spread to become an attack on democracy in the whole of India.

Comrade Sukumar Sen, Secretary of the Midnapore District Committee of the Party, greeted on behalf of the Reception Committee all present at the Conference, the five hundred volunteer girls and boys, several of them tribals, who worked day and night, the People's Relief Committee, Painter's Front and the Ganantya Sangh.

Credentials Report

The report of the Credentials Committee on the 394 delegates and 31 observers showed that of the total delegates and observers, 132 are in the age group of 18-35 and 124 in the age group of 45-60; 142 joined the Party prior to 1940 or between 1940 and 1946, 114 between 1963 and 1967; 230 are valetimers; 181 are unmarried; 297 had suffered imprisonment and 231 had worked underground; 162 delegates represented the trade union front, 138—peasant, 44—student and youth, 14—women, 23—teachers and seven cultural front. There were 17 women among the delegates and observers. Fourteen are MPs and 26 Municipal Commissioners. According to class origin, 27 are workers, six poor peasants, 24 middle peasants and 350 from the middle classes.

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The Conference unanimously elected a new 42-members State Committee which re-elected Comrade Promod Dasgupta as the Secretary.

Mass Rally

The Conference over a mammoth rally was held at the Circuit House Maidan, Midnapore town. Colourful processions of peasants, tribal men and women, converged on the Maidan from every sub-division of the district and from adjoining Bankura, Purulia and Howrah.

Presiding over the rally, Comrade Harekrishna Konar reported on all the important decisions of the Conference. Comrade Sundarayya, Ranadive, Promod Dasgupta and Jyoti Basu addressed the rally

Punjab State Conference Of The CPI(M)*

The Ninth Punjab State Conference of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was held in Taran Taran, Amritsar district, from January 18 to 20, 1972.

The Conference began with the hoisting of the Red Flag by veteran Communist leader Comrade Fauja Singh Buller who was present on May 1, 1926, when the Red Flag with the Hammer and Sickle was first hoisted in India at Amritsar. He narrated how today a powerful movements under the Red Flag had developed throughout the country fighting against British imperialism for independence and the cause of the working class, peasants and toiling sections after independence.

The Conference adopted a condolence resolution mourning the deaths of centenarian revolutionaries, Baba Karam Singh Cheema and Baba Bhag Singh Canadian who had died since the last State Conference.

The Conference was inaugurated by Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet, member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) who dealt with the international and national situations in special reference to the victorious struggle of the Bangladesh people and its impact on the course of developments. He also dealt with the present political situation in the country and the policy adopted by the Party in relation with the coming elections as to how the ruling classes are concentrating their fire against the Communist Party of India (Marxist), specially in West Bengal, in order to suppress the

*Report published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, February 20, 1972.

democratic movement in the country. He also pointed out the weaknesses in our movement in the State and asked the delegates to discuss the weaknesses in order to overcome them.

The Economy of Punjab

His speech was followed by the introduction of the Political-Organisational Report of the State Committee by its Secretary, Comrade Satwant Singh. He dealt with the political-economic situation in the State in the background of national and international developments.

Quoting the 1971 Census Report he stated that 62.78 per cent of the workforce is engaged as cultivators and agricultural workers against 58.89 in 1961 census. This shows beyond doubt that Punjab continues to be pre-dominantly an agricultural State producing raw materials for industry. He pointed out that there were only a small number of factories employing more than 500 workers.

So far as agriculture was concerned he pointed out that capitalist relations in agriculture were developing in Punjab more rapidly than in other States. But there has been further concentration during the past few years with land passing from the poorer sections to the richer section of the peasantry. Disparity has grown very much and the "green revolution" has further added to this disparity. Dealing with the impact of the "green revolution" he stated that it had no doubt helped the big landlords, capitalist farmers and rich peasants and a section of the middle peasants who were in a position to invest capital. But it had in no way helped the poor peasants whose conditions worsened leading to further growth of disparity in the rural areas. The introduction of machinery has led to the eviction of tenants on large-scale and increase in the number of agricultural workers.

The phenomenon of rich peasants taking land on lease is on the increase, leaving the poor peasants in a state of helplessness and at the mercy of usurious capital. The money which is pumped into the rural areas with a view to keeping the richer sections of the peasantry on the side of the ruling classes is

being used not only for the purchase of machinery and inputs but also for usurious purposes. In many areas, rich peasants are replacing the old-type money-lenders.

According to the Census Report of 1971 the percentage of agricultural labourers has increased from 19.65 in 1961 to 20.03 in 1971. The fall in the number of cultivating tenants is responsible in a large measure for the increase in the number of agricultural labourers. Comrade Satwant Singh dealt with the conditions of the working class and the employees who are hard-hit by the effects of the deepening economic crisis due to the rapid rise in prices and consequent steep reduction in real wages and salaries.

Activities of the Party

Then he dealt with the activities carried on since the Eighth Party Conference on the basis of the tasks laid down at that time. In this respect, he pointed out, the Party was not able to fulfil its responsibilities in implementing the tasks laid down by the conference. But for a year and a half now there has been some effort to implement the tasks on the T.U., peasants, students and Party organisation fronts. As a result there is a revival of the movement. The State Branch of the CITU has come into existence. The Punjab Students' Organisation has been revived. The Agricultural Workers' Organisation has been reorganised. The struggles on the question of wage and land have deepened its base in some pockets of the State.

The work of the Kisan Sabha also has been reoriented mainly concentrating on the poor peasants and tenants. Because of such a reorientation some notable successes have been achieved in the agrarian front in the struggle for land, wages and against evictions. The success of the Twentyfirst Session of the All India Kisan Sabha held in Punjab was the reflection of this reorientation.

Political Situation

Dealing with the present political situation he stated that although the Congress party was able to win the Lok Sabha

elections, after the budget session of Parliament and the steps taken by President's rule in the State, disillusionment had begun among the people.

The Akali Party the second biggest party in the State, is in a state of disintegration due to the anti-people policies pursued by its Ministry, specially after the 1969 elections.

The Jana Sangh has been weakened because the Congress party itself has taken up the slogans which the Jana Sangh was advocating.

The Right Communist Party has cast its lot with the Congress and has been co-ordinating its activities with the Congress since over a year.

So it has become the responsibility of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to build a real democratic opposition against the Congress bourgeois-landlord rule, which can be done only by developing mass movements of the workers, agricultural workers, peasants, students and other toiling people.

He also dealt with the victorious struggle of the people of Bangladesh and the part played by the people of Punjab in fighting back the Pakistani aggression in the western sector. He said the Party had stood firm denouncing all chauvinistic and imperialist Pakistan and rallied the people behind the people of Bangladesh. He dealt with the people in the border areas. Thousands of them are still forced to live in camps and lakhs have not been properly rehabilitated. He asked the Government to pay immediate attention to meet the just demands of the people living in the border areas who had suffered heavily due to the war.

Weaknesses in Organisation

Dealing with the Party organisation he pointed out that the weaknesses inherited from the past still continued to persist. Giving the experiences of West Bengal and Kerala he emphasised that unless the Party organisation was put on the right rails, the Party cannot play its rightful role.

Twentyeight delegates took part in the discussion on the report, narrating their experiences, emphasising the necessity of not only organising economic struggles but also the necessity to politicalise the various sections of the toiling people. Some of them also pointed out the Party's weakness of not taking up campaigns on a national plane and also the weakness in not giving due importance to the anti-imperialist struggles and international questions. Delegates pointed out that the Party had not been able to develop a powerful solidarity movement in support of the democratic movement of West Bengal which is facing semi-fascist terror at the hands of the ruling classes.

The Conference after a discussion of the record of the Akali Party while in office decided not to have any alliance with it during the coming elections because of its Government's anti-people policies, while at the same time concentrating the main fight against the ruling Congress.

Summing up the discussion, Comrade Satwant Singh accepted many of the suggestions made by the delegates. The report was adopted unanimously.

Resolutions of the Conference

The Conference adopted five resolutions—welcoming the raising of the status of relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to ambassadorial level, condemning the semi-facist terror in West Bengal and demanding an end to this repression to ensure free and fair elections, putting forward the demands of the people of the border areas who have been very badly affected during the Indo-Pakistan war and demanding that the Government meet their demands, condemning the repression let loose by President's rule in Punjab in the name of curbing Naxalites, specially against the workers and the cadres of our Party. The fifth resolution was about strengthening the Party organisation raising the ideological-political level of its cadres.

The Conference also discussed the election tactics and authorised the State Committee to formulate the election strategy in the light of the discussion. A State Committee consisting of

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19 members was unanimously elected by the Conference which re-elected Comrade Satwant Singh as its Secretary. Fifteen delegates to the Party Congress were also elected unanimously.

The report of the Credentials Committee placed before the Conference giving facts about 118 delegates stated that the number of delegates below 30 years of age was only eight, whereas the number of delegates more than 60 years old were 24. Seventysix delegates were whole-timers and 36 part-timers. As for class origin, five came from the working class, 13 from the agricultural workers, 27 from poor peasants, 53 from the middle peasants, nine from rich peasants, 11 from other middle classes. Twentyfive delegates had joined the Party before 1940, 19 between 1941 and 1947, 59 between 1948 and 1960 and 15 after 1961. There was no woman delegate in the Conference.

A big mass rally, presided over by Comrade Fauja Singh Bhuller and addressed by Comrades Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Dalip Singh Tapijala, Kishori Lal and Jagjit Singh Lyallipuri concluded the Conference.

“Excitement”—You Say About All This, Mr. Sen-Verma ?*

Nirmal Chatterjee's body cut into pieces at Sonarpur, Geeta, his wife, ravaged twice by Congress goondas in front of her four children. Two hundred CPI(M) workers arrested at Sonarpur. Baby, an eight-year-old girl, killed at Khardah, another woman injured by gunshots. One Muslim villager killed. A whole village gutted there. A procession of CPI(M) volunteers led by Haraprasad Chatterjee, candidate in Jorabagan, gunned and bombed. The family of Benoy Konar, imprisoned CPI(M) candidate at Memari, Burdwan, attacked. A procession of election campaigners there sprayed with bombs and bullets on February 20. This is a very brief outline of the picture in the 34 constituencies of West Bengal, seriously affected by police- cum-goonda terror where free and fair elections have become impossible.

At midnight of February 17-18, the house of Nirmal Chatterjee, Vice-President of the CITU-affiliated Sarkar Chulla Workers' Union and CPI(M) worker of Sonarpur, 24-Parganas, was besieged. Masquerading as policemen, a posse of Youth Congressites led by Gana Dasgupta looted everything including cash and ornaments from the almirah and from the person of

*This relates to terror created in West Bengal by the Indian National Congress with the help of State Administration and a section of Police with direct involvement of the Congress Government at the Centre (in New Delhi) prior to the election to State Assembly held on March 11, 1972. Mr. Sen-Verma was the Chief Election Commissioner of India who tried to treat the developments in West Bengal most lightly.

This write up was published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, February 27, 1972.

Geeta, Nirmal Chatterjee’s wife. Before decamping with their booty and with Chatterjee himself, two of the Congress thugs raped Geeta right in front of her four children. As the light of dawn gleamed Geeta, accompanied by her four children, the oldest being a daughter of nine years, went out to look for her husband. A furlong away she came accross Nirmal’s dead body cut into pieces, strewn here and there.

Goondas on the Rampage

Yes, Mr. Sen-Verma, after your recent visit to West Bengal, after all you heard and saw there, you concluded “that the very fact that there had been complaints about only 34 out of 280 Assembly constituencies showed how much the situation this year had improved” and “that some excitement prevailed in certain constituencies in West Bengal” (*Hindusthan Standard*, February 18).

Right during the stay of the Chief Election Commissioner in Calcutta, the butchery of Nirmal and rape of Geeta and the destitution of whole family with four children happened in Sonarpur, one constituency among the 34 seriously affected by police-goonda terror for the last many months.

But things did not end with the murder of Nirmal and the rape of his wife. On the complaint of Geeta, the police had to arrest Gana as the main culprit. Congress and Right C.P. bosses are now busy trying to secure bail for him. The police described Nirmal to the Press and Governor Dias as a Congress worker. But the police and the Press, including the revisionist one, could not deny that Gana was a Youth Congressite.

Immediately the news of Nirmal’s murder and the barbarities on Geeta spread, people began rallying in protest. Students of all the local schools went on strike. Popular demonstrations condemned the incident angrily. So the police and Congress storm-troopers ran amok. From Tollygunj, Kasba and Beliaghata South, truckloads of goondas were rushed in. More than one thousand CRP, police and goondas in all started ravaging Sonarpur from the afternoon of February 18. Houses were

rummaged and more than 200 whisked away to the police station where they were beaten for hours together. Nearly a hundred are still being detained and they are being tortured by the police and the goondas. All this, according to you, Mr. Sen-Verma, is “excitement in a few pockets in some constituencies”. Even a school boy can understand that this “excitement” is Congress terror to somehow bag some of the 34 constituencies which, in case of fair election, it will irretrievably lose.

Comrade Nirmal was not only Vice-President of a CITU affiliated union but also an active CPI(M) member at Kamalgaji, Sonarpur. The police and Congress goondas had “cleared” the Kamalgaji area of all known CPI(M) workers. Nirmal was in a humble employment in the locality. He would lose the job if he left the place and the family would die of starvation, so Nirmal stayed on. At the point of a revolver, Congress goondas made him sign a note to the effect that he would dissociate from the CPI(M). But as he refused to work for the Congress the barbarities were heaped on him, his wife and his children.

No Protection to Even M.P.s

Two Members of Parliament, Jyotirmoy Bosu and Niren Ghosh, wanted to go to Sonarpur to see Geeta. But the police stopped them telling them that the police would not be able to ensure their safety in Sonarpur. Jyotirmoy Bosu was manhandled earlier by Congress goondas when he accompanied Sen-Verma during the latter’s visit to Sonarpur. “Excitement” in Sonarpur, Mr. Sen-Verma ? The police and the Congress have to try and ensure the victory in the constituency of the Right C.P. candidate. They deem it their bad luck that Gangadhar Naskar, CPI(M) candidate, was only injured and not killed in the gun attack that the Congress and the Right C.P. elements, protected by the police, launched last week on a procession in which Comrade Naskar was present.

Khardah in 24-Parganas north is one of the 34 constituencies where there is “excitement”, to use Mr. Sen-Verma’s terminology. During your visit there, Mr. Sen-Verma, Comrade Jyoti Basu informed you that from most areas of Khardah

constituency, CPI(M) workers had been forced out by the police and Congress-Right C.P. hoodlums. During the last four months alone, eleven have been murdered, thirteen badly maimed and the residences of 127 destroyed. Sadhan Chakrabarti, former MLA and candidate now, has been driven out from his residence.

For the umpteenth time, in Khardah, Congress Right C.P. elements carried out a campaign of murder on February 19. Hundreds of goondas, organised under police protection, invaded Bandipur spraying bullets from their rifles. They killed Baby, a girl of eight, at Thakur Colony. With the people building up resistance the thugs accompanied by a big CRP contingent chased the villagers. The joint force ransacked and gutted the residence of a villager, Donpere. Fakir Mohammed, a CPI(M) sympathiser, was dragged out from his house and gunned to death. Nissar Mandal and his wife fell injured by gunshots. Some were kidnapped from Rahara. The last deed of the police and goonda hordes was to force all the affected families to file complaints at the thana implicating the CPI(M). And next day, *Kalantar*, the Right C.P. daily, came out with the story of “CPI(M) ravages at Khardah”. Who in Khardah or the surrounding areas will believe that the CPI(M) was killing its own supporters ?

Not Safe Even for the C.E.C.

Perhaps you are tired, Mr. Sen-Verma, of the Leftist charges of goonda-police terror in Beliaghata. As you visited the area on February 15, hundreds of men and women met you and recounted in tears to you the details of the jungle terror going on against them. Asima Poddar met you. Have you forgotten, Mr. Sen-Verma, that your own movement of the Chief Election Commissioner of India beyond Haramohan Ghosh Lane, was stopped by goondas equipped with deadly weapons on the other side of the railway track ? The officer-in-charge of the Beliaghata police station would not take the responsibility for your safety. The big contingent of police and CRP posted there could not ensure the safety of the Chief Election Commissioner against the Congress goondas. If that is the position of the Chief

Election Commissioner because of what you call “excitement”, you should be able to imagine the position of the Left parties all over the State, Mr. Sen-Verma.

In Panihati Assembly constituency in 24-Parganas Mr. Sen-Verma was told by the CPI(M) candidate there that the police-goonda terror had made it impossible for CPI(M) workers to openly approach 76,000 voters out of a total of 121,000. The CPI(M) candidate had won the last elections with a record margin in the whole country.

In Baranagar, Mr. Sen-Verma was told that owing to the terror, CPI(M) volunteers could not openly approach 52,000 voters in fourteen out of the 29 wards.

The police and Congress have shut out CPI(M) volunteers from 22,000 voters in Dum Dum constituency. Is all this “excitement in a few pockets in some constituencies”, Mr. Sen-Verma, as you put it to the Calcutta Press Club or broadcast over All-India Radio ?

As the local people of Baranagar were making complaints against the police-cum-Congress terror to Mr. Sen-Verma during his visit there, the Congress and Right C.P. spokesmen said that some of their supporters had to leave their houses in Baranagar because of “CPM terror”. *Jugantar*, a daily owned by a top Congress leader, reports “At this, Jyoti Basu hastened to ask, would they give us a list of people thus affected. We would get such people back to their homes within 24 hours. Can they give us a similar guarantee as to our people thus affected ?

“On behalf of the PDA (the Congress-right C.P. alliance) it was said that the local people are discontented because of the activities of a Commissioner during the United Front. We cannot help it” (*Jugantar*, February 16). Even after that you failed, Mr. Sen-Verma, to nail those responsible for creating “excitement in a few pockets in some constituencies” ?

Administration’s Admission

We do not intend to increase manifold the number of troublesome questions to you, Mr. Sen-Verma, despite such questions

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being raised in Jadavpur, in Tollygunj, or Jorabagan or Kalna or elsewhere in the 34 seriously affected constituencies. We did expect that the Chief Election Commissioner of India, enjoying as he does the status of a Judge of the Supreme Court, would have had the courage to say what he himself saw. Even the State administration could not suppress the fact of the extreme deterioration in the law and order situation in the affected areas. “Concern was expressed at the conference on the depth of deterioration in the law and order situation in some areas of the State,” reports *Basumati*, another daily owned by a Congress leader, reporting a conference of Siddhartha Ray and top State officials at Raj Bhavan, Calcutta, on February 17, 1972.

Vote For This Programme In West Bengal And Tripura*

**Placed before the People by the CPI(M) Prior to Election
in 1972**

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) places before the people the following programme :

Foreign Policy

1. A complete recasting of the foreign policy with a view to carrying the struggle against American imperialism to its logical conclusion and to this end :

- (a) Declare a moratorium on all payments to be made to the U.S. regardless of whether these payments are to be made by the public or private sector in India to the public or private sector in the U.S. ;
- (b) Take over the assets of the firms and companies owned by the U. S., as well as the counterpart funds of the PL 480;
- (c) Terminate all “cultural” agreements which help the agents of the CIA or other espionage organisations of the U.S. to meddle with our internal politics ;
- (d) Firmly declare that if even in the future the U.S. expresses willingness to resume “aid” we would not accept it, since it has been proved that their “aid” is a weapon of political blackmail;
- (e) Firmly reject all suggestions made in India or abroad, to weaken the ties which have been developing between

*Published in “PEOPLE’S DEMOCRACY”, Calcutta, March 5, 1972. This programme was from the statement of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) of January 15, 1972 Refer the document covered under Item No. 55 of this Volume.

India and the Soviet Union, particularly after the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty;

- (f) Maintain and further strengthen all forms of co-operation with the Soviet Union and all other Socialist countries;
- (g) Take effective measures to eliminate America's grip on the Asian continent by working for the anti-imperialist unity of all Asian Powers; to this end, give recognition to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and the Cambodian Government headed by Prince Sihanouk; raise the diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Ambassadorial level; pursue the efforts being made now to normalise relations with the People's Republic of China as well as to forge new relations of friendship with Pakistan.

For Self-Reliance

2. Take effective measures to implement in practice the declared policy of dispensing with foreign aid and rely on the internal resources for carrying out the plans of development—measures such as nationalisation of foreign trade; drastic reduction in imports of luxury goods as well as those producers' and consumers' goods that can be manufactured in the country; imposition of agricultural income-tax; moratorium on foreign debts for five years; nationalisation of foreign concerns and concerns owned by Indian monopolists; imposition of a ceiling on profits; and so on.

End Repression

3. Withdrawal of the CRP and army and stoppage of mass terror in West Bengal, repeal of repressive legislations such as Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Prevention of Violent Activities Act; immediate lifting of Emergency and the restoration of full civil liberties and democratic rights; stoppage of all repression on the workers, peasants and mass movements and on the CPI(M) in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and in

parts of every State wherever mass movements and struggles are developing, release of political prisoners and withdrawal of cases.

4. Basic changes in the Constitution to eliminate monopolist and landlord exploitation, to ensure real autonomy for the States, to ensure the right to work and for civil liberties.

5. Need-based minimum wage for the workers and employees, stoppage of wage-freeze, lock-outs, lay-offs, and closure of mills; taking over of closed mills with full trade union rights; repeal of all anti-working class legislation; security of service; provision of full employment and pending employment, relief to the unemployed.

6. Vigorous measures against rise in prices, inflation, deficit financing and heavy taxation, indirect taxation on the common man in particular.

Land Reforms

7. Radical land reforms in the interest of the peasantry, and their implementation in co-operation with the organisations of peasants; especially reduction in land ceilings and ensuring land to the tiller; fair wages and full employment for the agricultural labourers; allotment of free house sites to the rural poor; debt cancellation of the peasants, agricultural labourers and artisans to money-lenders and landlords; cheap credit supply; guaranteed fair prices and good market facilities for agricultural produce; take-over of the wholesale trade in food and other essential commodities.

8. Immediate introduction of free education up to secondary stage in all States; provision of hostel facilities and full scholarship for all needy students, especially for Scheduled Caste and Tribal students, the right of students to participate in the management of educational institutions and academic bodies.

Harijans and Minorities

9. Drastic steps against those who indulge in outrages against Scheduled Castes and Tribes; immediate steps to put an end to

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economic and social oppression of these people by landlords, contractors and traders; restoration of lands seized from them.

10. Safeguarding the right of Muslim minorities, no discrimination in employment in Government services and educational institutions against Muslims, protection for Urdu, vigorous fight against the communal poison being spread by Hindu and Muslim chauvinists.

11. Equal status and opportunities for women in all fields.

Blood-Bath In Dum Dum*

At least thirty put to death and more than fifty missing, over a hundred injured and arrested, hundreds of houses and many shops gutted at Dum Dum—this is the balance-sheet of the Congress programme of mass murders. One is really reminded of the Cossipore-Baranagar programme last year. The March 5, 1972 barbarities, only five days before the election on March 11, were directed by Congress gangsters against the CPI(M) and Forward Bloc volunteers at Dum Dum's East Sinthee area where the people in all the last elections overwhelmingly voted for the CPI(M) candidate.

The gangsters were equipped with lethal weapons including high-powered bombs, rifles, sten-guns, pipe-guns, etc. Above all, a very large contingent of police, who arrived on the scene well in advance, became active abettors.

In a renewed phase the reign of terror that ensued on March 5, 1972 at 3-15 p.m., they sprayed the whole area with bombs and bullets. They forced their way into all the houses looking for CPI(M) volunteers. Abetted by the police, the Congress gangsters were on the rampage for hours lasting long into the midnight. Nearly thirty workers and sympathisers of the CPI(M) were dragged out from their houses one after another. In cold blood, the Congress thugs put them to death. Those dragged out had their eyes covered with cloth, their hands were tied behind their back and they were taken to the railway track near by for

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, March 12, 1972. These incidents took place in Dum Dum prior to the Assembly election held in West Bengal on March 11, 1972.

execution. A speeding train had to stop because of the executions. The bodies of the executed were cut into pieces. The dead bodies of only 12 so far could be recovered. Seven among them were thrown into the near by Bagjola canal after being murdered.

The hoodlums set the offices of the local committees of the CPI(M) and Forward Bloc ablaze. These two offices and three other election offices were gutted. Ten shops were looted and destroyed. And, of course, hundreds were ransacked, looted and set on fire.

The Calcutta Press, on March 6, came out with the concocted, malicious and slanderous news that the murders were a sequence to bomb attacks on a Congress procession by CPI(M) volunteers. Harekrishna Konar, Niren Ghosh, Jyotirmoy Bosu, Mati Moitra, Forward Bloc leader of Dum Dum and Tarun Sengupta, Left Front candidate in the constituency, told the Press that the venue of the mass murders on March 5 was a CPI(M) stronghold where the electorate has always overwhelmingly voted for the CPI(M) in all the elections since 1962. Hence, afraid of being routed at Dum Dum again on March 11, the Congress and police conducted the barbaric murders on the basis of a deliberate plan.

The rampage continued for the whole day on March 6 also when the gangsters attacked the local people, 8,000 election volunteers of the Left Front, all their election offices. They attacked with sten-guns and rifles. The police abetted the jungle rule of the goondas and encircled Dum Dum.

Advance planning was obvious. Congress and police have been organising for the last few days preceding March 5 a sort of provocative sniping attacks at East Sinthee. Tarun Sengupta, the local CPI(M) candidate, informed the police at 10-30 a.m., on March 5 of the Congress conspiracy to make attacks on that day. That morning he also contacted the Inspector-General of Police, Superintendent of Police, 24-Parganas and the local police station. The police took no preventive action.

Workers were hunted out by the Congress gangsters. Many men and women not connected with any party were mercilessly belaboured. A girl of 20 down with chicken pox was dragged

out on the street from her bed and assaulted. The police joined the gangsters in this campaign of loot and murder.

The leaders at the Press Conference pointed at the complicity of the police when they brought to light the fact that the two persons described in police briefings as Congressites killed at East Sinthee were wagon-breakers, two of whose groups had a fight over spoils on Jessore Road, more than half a mile from East Sinthee, when two of them were killed.

In a Press statement, Comrade Jyoti Basu has said that some high police officers are trying to make a mockery of the election in various constituencies. In a telegram to the Chief Election Commissioner, Basu has also pointed out that the I. G. of Police and some others are behind the plan to sabotage peaceful elections.

Attack on Samar Mukherjee

Comrade Samar Mukherjee, Deputy Leader of the CPI(M) in the Lok Sabha and a member of the Central Committee of the Party, was leading a procession of Left Front volunteers at Beliaghata on March 5. All of a sudden right in front of the office of the Deputy Police Commissioner, the procession was attacked by Congressites. Comrade Samar Mukherjee was badly hit on the head by splinters from the bombs thrown at him. Profusely bleeding he was taken to hospital.

We do not Recognise the Validity of this Farce

Joint Statement issued by the Leftist Parties on March 13, 1972 on the Election of March 11, 1972 in West Bengal which was totally Rigged by the Indian National Congress with the help of State Administration and State Police and the Research & Analysis Wing of the Government of India under the direct command of the Congress Government in New Delhi.

Jyoti Basu (CPI-M), Makhan Pal (RSP), Asoke Ghosh (FB), Nihar Mukherjee (SUC), Sudhin Kumar (RCPI), Jyoti Bhattacharya (Workers' Party), Suhrid Mallick Chowdhury (FB-M), Nirmalendu Mukherji (BBC) have issued the following statement on March 13, 1972 :

For the first time the people of West Bengal have experienced total rigging of an entire election by the Government. We have already stated how on the polling day armed Congress-CPI gangsters with the help of the police captured large number of polling stations, drove out our polling agents and voters and stamped the ballot papers. Our reports at that time were confined to about forty constituencies. Further reports show that protests and objections made by our candidates and election agents were not even heard by the election officials, many of them being themselves intimidated.

Now after counting has started, it is becoming clear that rigging was extended even after this sort of polling, and hardly a few constituencies have been spared from this. It is obvious that ballot papers and ballot boxes have been tampered with on an unprecedented scale. A deep-laid conspiracy to destroy parliamentary democratic election procedure, which had been

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hatched at the top level of the Government, is now showing results.

During the counting also our counting agents are being threatened, and their protests about irregular ballot papers and fake ballot papers are being brushed aside. Armed gangs have been mobilised in and around counting-places to intimidate our counting agents and supporters. Throughout the day large-scale intimidation of and armed attacks on people have occurred in various localities. People are being driven out of their residences in many localities in hundreds. All this is taking place in the presence of the police and the army, even in areas bound by curfew and Sec. 144 Cr. PC. What is even more alarming is that tension is being created in minority areas.

In such a situation, we have decided not to recognise this farcial election as valid.

The people must register their protest against these fascist methods of destruction of all ways of a free and fair election. Great ordeals will now have to be faced with cool courage and determination.

Democracy Martyred in West Bengal for Congress Election Victory

Detailed Report of the Rigged Election in West Bengal on March 11, 1972.

Polling day in Baranagar, March 11, 1972, was wholly a day of gunmen. Congress and Right Communist gangsters accompanied by rifle-wielding police and CRP forces, took over more than a hundred of the total 135 booths in that constituency. Acting on the basis of a high-level plan, these armed gangs chased away the CPI(M) polling agents from all the booths. They took hold of all the ballot boxes and ballot papers. The ballot papers were then stamped and put into the boxes.

Thousands and thousands of Left voters were held up in their own localities where the Congress and Right C.P. gunmen as well as the police threatened the voters at gunpoint not to move towards the polling stations at all. The few voters who could manage, amidst this suffocating terror, to go to the polling booths were chased away. Even Congress and Right C.P. voters were treated in the same way. In the filthiest language, they were all told that their votes were already cast.

Within four hours after the polling started, 933 votes out of 963 votes in booth No. 91 were cast, 1080 out of 1090 at booth No. 72, 858 out of 880 at booth No. 94—just imagine this with the new system of counterfoils to ballot papers which requires more time before each voter can finish the process of casting his ballot. While the police, Congress and Right C.P. hoodlums were on the rampage all over Baranagar, Comrade Jyoti Basu informed the Government of West Bengal at 10 a.m. that election in the constituency was impossible to be held according to the laws of the land. At 11 a.m. he wrote a letter to the Sub-

Divisional Officer of Barrackpore, who is the Returning Officer for Baranagar, saying in all the booths, it was a common scene that the police, goondas and non-polling officers were having a free hand.

The authorities did not pay any attention to the protests. And the armed gangs continued their rampage unchecked. The so-called bodyguards of the Right C.P. candidate fired at random and injured severely some persons. In order to cover up their lawless gangsterism, the Congress administration and the Right Communists floated the story that an attempt was made to kidnap the Right C.P. candidate.

Immediately after 5 p.m. when the polling was officially over, in a renewed campaign of terror the armed gangs began spraying the whole area with bombs. They overtook anyone they suspected to be Left supporters and severely assaulted them. Apart from many injured in the bombings, two residents of Jadav Ghosh Lane were hit by bullets and suffered serious injuries.

At the crossing of S.P. Banerjee Road and Rajkumar Mukherjee Road, a concerted attack was repulsed by the local residents and there were continued attacks for long periods on Nimchand Maitra Street and Baruipara Refugee Colony. The attackers came from the side of Alambazar and opened fire from rifles. Two fell on the spot injured by bullets, one of them, Alok Majumdar, of the BKC College, died on the way to the hospital.

The CPI(M) election office on Gopal Lal Thakur Road was set on fire. Another was ransacked and set on fire in the course of widespread attacks on Motilal Mallik Lane, N. K. Chatterjee Street and Trailakya Narain Street. Policemen in plain-clothes opened fire on the CPI(M) Local Committee office. The police instead of rescuing the victims of goonda attacks, were terrorising ordinary people and made 14 arrests including Municipal Commissioner Amar Mallick.

A few hours later, the police and the goondas returned and tried to demolish the house where the Local Committee office of the Party is situated, they broke the doors and windows and

ransacked the Party office. As the women of the locality came forward to protest the police and the Congress gangsters imported from outside challenged them to a fight.

Beliaghata North

There was a total reign of terror all over Beliaghata North constituency where Comrade Kesto Ghosh, the former Labour Minister, of the U.F. Government, was seeking re-election. It was almost a war-like operation. It began in the early hours of the morning.

The Congress goondas accompanied by police went into Mianbagan, Kundubagan, Charakdanga Road and all neighbouring areas with bombs, pistols and sten-guns and took up positions at five-to-ten yards distances. They warned the people not to leave their homes even for buying vegetables, not to speak of casting votes. Troops were patrolling the main roads oblivious—or under instructions,—of the terror that was being let loose just a few yards away from the main roads.

But when the people dared to defy this terror and started to move in large numbers towards the polling booths the police and the goondas turned their attention to the polling stations. The Left Front polling agents were turned out of the booths on the point of fire-arms. An attempt was made to kill a polling agent at the Anjalika Balika Vidyalay by pouring acid on him.

The voters were assaulted and chased away. A girl voter, who refused to submit to this terror, was stripped naked and paraded along the streets. Then the gangsters compelled the Presiding Officers to hand over the ballot papers which were subsequently stamped by the goondas themselves and put into the boxes. It is known that the Presiding Officers in booth Nos. 12—16 handed over all the ballot papers to the goondas.

A Presiding Officer who protested was threatened with fire-arms. He ran away and reported the matter to the Returning Officer who sent him back to the booth. But the goondas, by them in absolute control there, refused to let him in.

Mother of martyr Sajan Chakrabarti went to cast her vote at booth No. 89. She could just escape with her life. As a result

booths were reduced to an absolute farce. Ballot papers meant for many of the booths were stamped the previous night itself. A portion of this constituency which falls under the jurisdiction of the adjacent Jagatdal police station was for the day attached to the Noapara police station. The reasons are obvious.

At Naihati more than 2,000 voters were not allowed to cast their votes. Thousands of others, on coming to the booths, found that their votes had already been cast by Congress goondas.

Burdwan District

The district of Burdwan has been subjected to massive police and goonda repression to reduce the election in all the twenty-five constituencies of the district to a mere mockery. On polling day, almost every polling agent from the Left Front candidate was hunted out of the polling stations. There were indiscriminate arrests of election workers including even quite a number of polling agents.

Kalna constituency was virtually an occupied territory, where hardly anyone suspected of Left sympathy, not to talk of polling agents, was allowed to go anywhere near the polling booths.

At Memari, and several other constituencies, polling agents had the experience of being soaked with petrol and set on fire.

In the morning of March 11, polling day, about two hundred arrests were made of CPI(M) activists in just one constituency of Asansol. Two lakh warrants are pending in just this one district, while two of the candidates are in jail and another one debarred from entering many parts of his constituency.

A very eloquent testimony of the total farce of the elections in West Bengal, particularly in the twenty-five constituencies of Burdwan is the result of the Nadanghat constituency. The Left Front candidate of the CPI(M) here secured only 2,641 votes in a constituency that he had won in 1969 and 1971 with votes of 28,304 (1969 when there was a total united front against the Congress) and 34,288 (in 1971 when the United Front against the Congress had been disrupted by the Right

Communists). This time, the Congress candidate polled 61,617 votes and won the seat with a margin of over 58,000 !

In Barabani constituency, not a single Left Front poll worker could be found because of arrests and repression. At Burdwan South and North constituencies, no Left Front workers except the two Left Front candidates could enter the town on polling day.

In Raniganj, Left Front volunteers were subjected to Congress goonda attacks and were arrested at their direction. Massive terror was mounted on the colliery workers (mostly hailing from Bihar) in the constituencies of Raniganj, Ukhra, etc., so that they could not come to the polling booths.

Howrah

Terror was most intense in the Domjur constituency of Howrah district. Nearly forty thousand voters were not allowed to cast their votes. Jaikesh Mukherjee, the Left Front candidate, was kidnapped and detained for four hours by Congress goondas. When the District Magistrate was contacted he said that this was not a fact. Mukherjee was later rescued by the army. Debu Banerjee, his election agent, has been missing since the poll day.

At Domjur constituency, in more than twenty booths, the goondas took over control and completed the farce of election by themselves. In booth No. 72, fiftyone ballot papers, Nos. 169350—169400, were snatched away from the Presiding Officer in the presence of a large number of people. After 11 a.m. Congress goondas were engaged to cast false votes by the thousands. A little after noon, the armed goondas attacked a voters' queue in Jaipur Bil. Mihir Bagchi, a Hind Motors worker, was shot dead.

At Howrah Central constituency, where RCPI leader Sudhin Kumar was the Left Front candidate, the goondas kept the voters at bay on the point of revolvers.

In Howrah South, the Congress goondas went about with bombs, daggers and revolvers openly. Among them one could see persons responsible for the murder of Comrade Jiban

Maity. In twenty-eight booths of this constituency, the polling agents had to come under escort.

At Bally constituency, the Congress goondas and police ran amok in the Bamungachhi area.

Jadavpur

The pattern of intimidation—snatching and stamping ballot papers—was the same in dozens of polling booths in this constituency also. Four Left Front election workers were kidnapped and when they tried to resist and escape they were shot at. Two of them are now in the police hospital and the other two are still missing.

Ballygunj, Dhakuria

In Dhakuria, the election office of the Left Front candidate Jatin Chakrabarti (RSP) near Paresh Nath School centre was attacked and demolished with bombs. None of the genuine voters including many of the well-known Congressmen of the area were allowed to vote, they were hunted away from the booths.

In Ballygunj, where Workers' Party leader Prof. Jyoti Bhattacharya of the Calcutta University was seeking election as the Left Front candidate, the goonda operation was led, it is reported by Subrata Mukherjee, Chhatra Parishad boss and the Congress candidate in the constituency.

Saïlen Pal, a leader of the Workers' Party, was severely beaten in front of a booth by the goondas in the presence of policemen. Several polling agents were thrown out on point of guns from many polling stations.

Sonarpur

In at least twenty-five booths of Sonarpur constituency, the polling agents were turned out, voters including many women chased away, ballot papers seized and stamped by the Congress goondas who did not even hesitate to stamp ballot papers in favour of the Congress on behalf of CPI(M) workers and

supporters who are in detention in jails. Needless to say, the police and CRP co-operated with them fully.

Khardah, Titagarh

In ninety out of 128 polling booths the same tactics of seizing and stamping ballot papers were adopted. At four of the booths. Nos. 39, 91, 92 and 102, the polling officers were surrounded by goondas and ballot papers were snatched away and stamped and put in the boxes. The whole operation was completed the night before the polling day. Complaints were lodged with all the authorities including Election Commissioner Sen-Verma in the morning of March 11.

In the Khardah and Titagarh municipal areas even minors were engaged to cast bogus votes.

A Congress and Right C.P. goonda gang attacked the election office housed at the residence of Dr. Girija Chatterjee at Titagarh, where Sadhan Chakrabarti, the Left Front candidate in the Khardah constituency and hundreds of Left Front workers were engaged in election work. First, they resorted to bomb-throwing and continuous firing. The local police station, just fifty yards away, would not hear anything of this nor the request for help.

Then the goondas poured petrol and set the house on fire. Only because an army convoy speeding that way came to their rescue, the lives of the Left Front candidate and about 300 other workers were saved.

The next target of the goondas was a bustee in Olangpara inhabited by the minority community. The bustee was gutted, they also burnt down the Titagarh Paper Mill Union office. Some 50,000 voters in Titagarh and nearly a lakh of voters in Khardah were prevented from casting their votes. Many suffered bullet injuries during the day.

Panihati, Dum Dum

Almost the entire constituency of Panihati and Dum Dum were under goonda and police attacks. At Dum Dum, no Left Front polling agents were allowed inside the booths.

After The Poll

The reign of terror in West Bengal continues unabated after the March 11 farce of an election. Immediately after the poll mockery, curfew or prohibitory orders under Section 144 were clamped down on the entire Barrackpore Sub-Division, Jadavpur in South 24-Parganas, in the whole of Purulia district, many areas of Burdwan, Howrah and Hooghly districts.

The Congress hoodlums, defying with impunity the curfew and Section 144, are taking out squads armed to the teeth and running amok against the people suspected to be Left Front supporters. The police, far from protecting the people from these goonda attacks, are making indiscriminate arrests of the victims.

In Bhatpara mohalla of Burdwan town, the goondas, accompanied by the police, carried out house-to-house raids. Many of the victims of the attacks were arrested by the police.

In the night of March 12, the armed Congress goondas accompanied by the police lunched an attack on Sree Colony in Tollygunj. Attacks on a wider scale were launched on March 13, and Narayan Das of Adarshapalli was abducted. When local women went to rescue him, they were stopped by the goondas and the CRP. The goondas opened fire and Smt. Krishna Chatterjee was struck on the head. Similar attacks were launched in Naktala, Wards Nos. 8 and 9 of Netajinagar and Pallisree Colony. Subal Das was seriously injured by bombs.

In Rajarhat a batch of goondas from Dum Dum made in armed attack on Prafulla Colony on March 13. Haren Mallik, local CPI(M) leader, was abducted by goondas and severely beaten up. The police later arrested him. Agni Mandal, a Left sympathiser, was injured by bullets.

In Belgachia, the police are conducting terror raids in the Dattabagan Housing Estate and the bustees of Birpara and Campbagan. They arrested six Left Front workers. Warrants of arrest have been issued, it is reported, against Lakshmi Sen, former MLA, Rajdeo Goala, Corporation Councillor, and sixty others in a case in which Congress goondas threw bombs on election booths in Belgachia.

The police and goondas are carrying out house-to-house raids in the Jelepara, Kapibagan, Nonapukur areas of Garden Reach. Four Left Front supporters have been arrested. Dilip Sen, election agent of Chhedilal Singh, LF candidate from Garden Reach, was attacked with bombs. But when he went to lodge a complaint at the police station and indentified the culprits, he was arrested.

Offices of the Gananatya Sangha (IPTA) and the Democratic Youth Federation at Creek Lane, Calcutta were raided, ransacked and looted on March 12 by a gang of Congress goondas accompanied by the police.

Jyoti Basu (CPI-M) Makhan Paul (RSP), Nihar Mukherjee (SUC), Chitta Bose (Forward Bloc), Sudhin Kumar (RCPI), Jyoti Bhattacharya (WPI), Suhrid Mallik Chaudhury (FBM), and Nirmalendu Mukherjee (Biplabi Bangla Congress) in a joint statement on March 12 said :

“Not content with forcible capturing of large number of polling stations in many parts of West Bengal by armed gangs of the Congress-CPI alliance with the help of the police and turning the election into a farce in these constituencies, the Congress-CPI alliance is organising fresh armed attacks upon the people in most of these areas. Already reports have come from wide areas of 24-Parganas district, Calcutta and Burdwan district, that armed gangs have started attacks on members of our parties and supporters. These attacks are increasing even in areas bound by curfew and Section 144 Cr. P.C.

“It is evident that these attacks will continue to mount. The situation is particularly grave in view of the counting of votes which will start today. We demand immediate effective measures to stop this gangsterism and ensure at least the minimum necessary security for the people.”

By the evening of March 14, 47 cases of forcible snatching away of ballot papers and stamping on them by Congress goondas were reported to the State Committee office from all over West Bengal.

Not less than two thousand families in and around Calcutta have been hunted out of their localities after the polling day

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This has happened on a large scale in Baranagar where houses were looted of their valuables after the inmates were driven out.

The Lenin Nagar refugee colony in Noapara, 24-Parganas, has been reduced to shambles and hundreds of families have been made refugees for a second time.

Bijpur, also in 24-Parganas, had the usual quota of rampage by Congress hoodlums where the house of the LF candidate was attacked repeatedly.

Drunk and gesticulating rowdies are moving around Comrade Jyoti Basu's residence in South Calcutta shouting obscenities.

Free and Fair Elections ? The Andhra Pradesh Model

This is what has happened in some of the Telangana constituencies in Andhra Pradesh where the CPI(M) candidates were contesting.

Miryalagudem :

Miryalagudem constituency, where the contest was between a notorious landlord, Krishna Reddy of the Congress and Comrade M. Seetharamayya, President of the Panchayat Samithi. Onkar of the Congress organised goonda attacks and repeated raids on villages which are strongholds of the CPI(M) with the active help of the Sub-Inspector of Police of Garidapalli.

Guduguntlapalem, where only a year ago two of the Marxist cadres were murdered, was raided again by the goondas on January 14 last. Standing crops on the plots of a number of Marxist supporters and cadres were destroyed, their houses were stoned, several were seriously beaten and the villagers terrorised with all this. Again on January 29, the police raided the village, arrested two supporters of the CPI(M), took them to the Garidapalli police station and beat them severely. When food was brought to them by three CPI(M) supporters they, too, were beaten.

In the morning of February 23, this village was again raided by Congress goondas. Sarpanch Somi Reddy, a former Sarpanch and others were severely beaten and dragged on the ground. Ten women, Ropoyina Nagamma and others, were thrown on the ground and trampled upon. Twentyone of the CPI(M)

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, March 26, 1972.

supporters were taken into custody. All this was done in the very presence of the police.

Palakadu, a harijan hamlet, was raided and a large number of people were beaten. Gunfire was opened to frighten the people. Chinnappa beaten to unconsciousness, and quite a few including Chinnappa were taken to the Garidapalli police station and again beaten by the Sub-Inspector there.

On February 21, the Vaikuntapuram harijan hamlet was raided by Onkar's goondas at midnight. The villagers were driven out of their houses and were beaten. They were forced to flee the village the next day.

On February 22, these goondas raided Fattepuram. CPI(M) cadres Balayya and Bhikshmayya, were waylaid, two carts of theirs loaded with grain, on the way to the town market, were seized. The police did not take any action. On the other hand, they threatened the villagers.

On February 22, they raided the village of Ponugodu and stoned the houses of CPI(M) workers. On January 30, the Sub-Inspector arrested toddy-tappers who are supporters of the CPI(M) and they were beaten in the lock-up.

A Congress camp of about a hundred persons was set up in Nereducherla and they started terrorising the villagers all around.

It was in this constituency that in ten polling booths the Congress goondas prevented even the polling agents of the CPI(M) from being present. Comrade A. K. Gopalan had to draw the attention of the I.G. of Police to this.

Khammam :

In the Paleru constituency, the Sub-Inspector of Chintakani police station arrested a number of CPI(M) cadres and supporters, including the village sarpanch, Comrade Gondra Veerabhadr Reddy, implicating him in a false murder case in a nearby village, Ammapeta. There was a clash between two Congress factions there and the CPI(M) had nothing to do with it. He was kept in jail without being given bail since January because he is influential in about ten villages around.

Repeated raids on this village by Congress goondas with the help of the police were organised. Chekali Bhadramma and her ten-year-old son were beaten severely. The houses of the Erukali tribal people in the village were special targets of the attacks. Even the food-grain was confiscated by the police from the house of Gondra Bhadra Reddy. Warrants were issued for the arrest half a dozen more CPI(M) cadres.

Gudimalla village of Paleru constituency was raided on January 22 by Congress goondas. Comrade T. Acchhaya and several others were severely beaten. Again on February 19, the village was raided. The house of Comrade Chella Mutyala Rao was set on fire and burnt down. The raiders had hoped that the fire would spread and burn down the eighty houses of the poor Vaddera (earth-diggers) families. But the whole village gathered and put out the fires.

In Madhira taluka, the standing crops on thirty acres of land belonging to about 30 families of Mallavaram harijans were destroyed by the landlords of Samalagadda. Alla Janakiramayya of Pedaburavalli was severely beaten as he got down from a bus in Madhira town, in open daylight, while he was on his way to the court, and his limbs were fractured.

In Paleru constituency, on polling day, polling agents of the CPI(M) were not allowed into the booth in areas like Meditapalli, Meliapatna, Kachereni, etc.

In Khammam constituency, the revisionist Right Communist candidate Rajabali was vigorously backed by Upendrayya, the notorious Congress leader who is responsible for the murder of about ten CPI(M) cadres during the last two years in this taluka. Rajabali with his Congress supporters organised goonda attacks with about a hundred hoodlums on Basavapuram village on March 4, one day before the poll, and dragged out the village sarpanch, a CPI(M) supporter and broke his limbs. He succumbed to his injuries the next day in hospital. Rajabali with the full backing of Congress leader Upendrayya and police connivance organised a series of raids on villages which are CPI(M) strongholds. He and his thugs prevented CPI(M)

campaigners from entering a number of villages where he had influence.

In this constituency, too, polling agents were not allowed into booths in areas like Tapatapalli, Vandanam, Timmapuri, etc., and the agents had to be withdrawn from booths in areas like Raghunathapalam, Kodumuru, etc., as the authorities refused to give them protection.

Nalgonda :

The Congress candidate Sreenivasa Rao has been notorious for his terror tactics. It was his men who had murdered even the Right Communist cadres, P. Anji Reddy and his brother P. Rami reddy in 1966 with unlicensed guns. He went round many villages in this constituency at night shooting in the air and threatening the voters to vote for the Congress. He organised attacks on student activists in their lodges in Nalgonda town, and threatened more dire consequences if they persisted in working for the CPI(M) candidate. In spite of it, the students went on working.

In the neighbouring constituency, where another of this Congress fraternity, Govardhana Reddy, was contesting, on polling day itself, the police opened fire in Gujja village near the polling booth and shot dead two CPI(M) cadres, Dadi Malla Reddy and Gangadevi Chennayya.,

Ibrahimpattanam :

This constituency is adjacent to Hyderabad City, the headquarters of the Andhra Pradesh Government. Here the CPI(M) candidate Comrade Krishnamurthy was fighting the Congress landlord Ananta Reddy.

In Khambalapalli, in this constituency, goondas of Congress leader Yadgiri Reddy attacked people who were going to attend a meeting to be addressed by Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad on February 22. Fifteen CPI(M) workers and others were injured. On February 26, Congress goondas attacked the Ellamma Gonda tribal people and severely belaboured them. Comrade Antaram and ten others were injured.

On March 4, when the CPI(M) candidate, Comrade Krishnamurthy along with the Party's State Committee member, Comrade N. V. Bhaskara Rao, was going in a car, the Congress landlords stopped the car in Ganugallu, damaged it and assaulted the CPI(M) leaders. They were rescued by some village elders.

Narsampeta :

In this constituency in Warangal district, from 1960 onwards the Congress landlords have been resorting to a terror campaign against the toiling people to crush and liquidate the Communist movement. It was with this terror that they were able to defeat the CPI(M) candidate in 1967. This time, Comrade Omkar, a member of the State Committee of the CPI(M) was put up against the Congress candidate.

The moment his name was announced on January 13, Comrade Omkar was arrested as he reached Narsampeta from the State Committee meeting. He was implicated in a murder case. When Congress goondas had raided Ashokenagar in November 1971, there was a clash and one of them had died. A large number of CPI(M) cadres and supporters of that village and the whole taluka were implicated in that case. But for months after this, Comrade Omkar was working openly, addressing public meetings in the whole taluka. The authorities never even mentioned his name in connection with the case. But the moment he was announced as the candidate, he was arrested along with the Taluk Party Secretary, Comrade Ramachandra Rao. The court granted them bail.

But the terror of the Congress goondas and of the police continued in the whole constituency.

On January 14, Laknepalli party organiser, G. Sampat Rao, was attacked by Congress goondas, and his limbs were axed, his house looted and he was kept in death agony. Comrade G. narasayya's house was looted, his cart thrown into a well. But no action was taken by the police.

On January 15, Nallaballi village and the near by hamlets of Gunturupalli and Konda Elupalli were raided by the police headed by the Sub-Inspector. Mass beatings, raping and arrests

took place. The pretext of the police for this raid was that a police constable and Sub-Inspector had been belaboured by Congressite landlords of Gunturupalli and the pro-Communist peasants of Nallaballi did not go to the rescue of the police from the Congress landlords' attack!

In another raid by Congress goondas, eight women were raped, and a hundred women beaten and abused. Seventy-year-old Nagaboyina Somamma, Mithila Lakshmi an Nagaboyina Lakshmi who had given birth to her child only about ten days earlier, were beaten severely. The wives of CPI(M) workers, Gandla Sankarayya and Gandla Ramulu, were attempted to be raped but their mothers-in-law, seventy-year-old, went to their rescue. She was beaten and insulted and she died of shock.

Ten men from the village were taken into custody and kept in police lock-up in Nallaballi for three days till January 18 and beaten.

Such was the terror that continued in this constituency. Yet, the CPI(M) candidate, Comrade Omkar, won this seat by a margin of 3,000 votes.

CPI(M)'s Polit Bureau Statement on Elections and Immediate Task

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) pays its tributes to the fighting people of West Bengal, who have been facing terrific assaults and combing-out raids by the Congress-organised gangs, with the full backing and participation of the police, CRP and the whole administrative machinery. Because of these murderous attacks, nearly 40,000 supporters and cadres of the Party including their family members were forced to evacuate their homes and seek shelter and safety elsewhere, both before and after the elections. Nearly 650 cadres had so far fallen victim to assassin's knife and pipegun or to police firing—24 of them since March 11, 1972. Thousands are behind prison bars, and warrants are pending against about one hundred thousand peasants and workers.

Yet, facing the brutal terror, the people gave a massive vote, officially registered as 45 lakhs, to the candidates of the Left Front. This does not include tens of thousands of votes invalidated. Many more lakhs were prevented from exercising their franchise in favour of the Left Front candidates in more than 50 constituencies.

Violence and Malpractices

Our Party and other constituents of Left Front had specifically drawn the attention of the Election Commission and the Central Government about the conditions in 34 of these constituencies long before the election order was issued, how the terror that had been continuing in these constituencies made

it virtually impossible for us even to approach the electorate. Yet neither the Election Commission nor the Central Home Ministry had taken any action to remedy it. On the other hand, the conditions had further worsened.

Occupation of polling booths by Congress and Right Communist-organised bands ; driving away the agents of opposition parties from the booths and the voters in the queues; forcing presiding and polling officers at gun-point to initial the ballot papers and stamping on the Congress and Right C. P. symbols ; filling the ballot boxes with 90 to 95 per cent of the voters on list by 1 p.m. was the normal pattern in these constituencies. Even in the night of March 10, armed gangs went from door to door in certain constituencies warning the people against going to polling booths, and threatening dire consequences if anybody dared to defy.

In about another 150 constituencies, innumerable other kinds of malpractices have been resorted to. Duplicate ballot papers are printed ; ballot boxes are replaced by new ones ; ballot papers of one constituency are found in boxes of some other constituencies ; seals have been tampered with ; ballot papers are found dumped in a heap inside the boxes as well as outside near Congress and Right C.P. offices ; counting agents were driven out where allowed, their protests were not recorded ; ballot papers of candidates of Left parties were invalidated by counting officers then and there putting on them a second stamp ; counting the votes polled by the Left parties as polled for the Congress Alliance ; and during the process of counting when they found candidates of Left parties leading, allowing pre-stamped double ballot papers in thousands being mixed up; and even declaring the defeated Congress candidates as having won.

The whole election machinery was overhauled and geared to the needs of the ruling party and even temporary jobs were provided to hundreds of Congress party people in Government departments and elsewhere to employ them for election work. Returning officers, presiding officers, and counting officers are mostly hand-picked men who would do the dirty job of the

ruling Congress. When they suspected certain police officers were not likely to do their bidding and if they could not be transferred yet, on the very night previous to the polling day the areas are brought under the jurisdiction of another police station.

Real Trend in Favour of L.F.

Further, it is a revealing fact that it is in the strongest constituencies of the CPI(M) and Left Parties which they have been winning by large majorities in the past, they lost heavily by huge margins of tens of thousands to the Congress candidates, thus clearly disclosing the character of naked terror and rigging of elections. On the other hand, in constituencies where the Congress Alliance candidates had absolute and clear majority and therefore they had no need to resort to terror tactics or rigging the elections, the Congress Alliance votes decreased considerably while the candidates of Left parties increased their votes significantly and in some cases even won them. This proves that the real trend in West Bengal was in favour of the Left Front.

Because of all these facts, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) has come to the definite conclusion that the elections in West Bengal are rigged, according to a definite plan from Central Government authorities.

Hence the P.B. endorses the action of our State unit and other Left parties who called upon their members who were declared elected to the Assembly not to take oath, or attend this sham Assembly. The Chief Minister, Sri Siddhartha Sankar Ray, cannot tolerate even this protest and blandishes firm action if this decision is not reversed. The P.B. congratulates the Left parties who have courageously stood against these threats and have decided to unitedly mobilise public opinion against these rigged elections.

The P.B. of the CPI(M) demands the annulment of this election in West Bengal and order a fresh election, guaranteeing free and fair conditions, satisfactory to all opposition parties.

The P.B. urges all democratic parties and forces to build a powerful campaign to defend the right of “free vote.”

Why Rigging was Necessary

The ruling Congress, in the midst of the deepening economic crisis, and with its anti-people policies of transferring the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of the toiling masses in order to protect the vested interests, could not afford a Left Front Ministry headed by the CPI(M). For, experience had shown that such a Ministry, even in one State, would be an instrument in the hands of the toiling people against the attacks of the vested interests and would galvanise the democratic movement of the toiling people throughout the country in the struggle for alternative policies. The ruling Congress could not even tolerate a powerful democratic opposition in the important State of West Bengal to function and utilise the forum of the legislature in the defence of the toiling masses. On the other hand, it found itself faced with a powerful democratic and mass movement in West Bengal, whose strength was demonstrated during the Parliamentary election of 1971. The Congress could not fool the democratic forces and people of West Bengal and got a severe beating in the Parliamentary elections. Moreover, all its attempts to perpetuate the division in the Left parties had failed and a front of Left parties had emerged, signifying the certain defeat of the Congress, if fair elections were held. Hence, it resorted to rigging the elections on a massive scale.

The need to defend the class rule of vested interests especially of the most notorious big landlords and of Big Business, in the growing economic crisis and growing resistance of the people, is forcing the Congress party to indulge in tall and big promises. In practice, it is resorting to more and more police-raj methods and to one-party dictatorship.

In Bihar, it has resorted to rigging of elections in a large number of constituencies, where it faced strong opposition from Socialist and other parties. This resort to rigging is a new development in the conduct of elections while previously it was

enough for the ruling classes to indulge in large-scale bribery and covert use of the administrative machinery to achieve victory.

In Kashmir, also, the ruling Congress has been rejecting the nomination papers of opponents, and lately externing the opposition popular leaders from entering Kashmir and banning organisations that were not prepared to kowtow to the ruling party at Delhi. While the P.B. disapproves the aims and policies of the Plebiscite Front, it declares that resort to such undemocratic methods is not justified.

The recent elections to the State legislatures have revealed that unless this menace of rigging elections is fought and defeated, the end of parliamentary democracy is not far off.

Right C.P.—Partner in Crime

In this crime against the people of West Bengal, against parliamentary democracy and the electorate, the ruling party found a willing partner in the leadership of the Right Communist Party, the deserters and traitors who disrupted the democratic forces to secure a few seats from the Congress. The Right Communist leaders and some of their vicious underlings participated in the crimes of murder and attacks against the people, in raiding booths, in attacking people and, above all, in screening the attacks of Congress goondas against the democratic forces. Working in unison with the armed Congress goondas, with plain-clothesmen of the intelligence branch, permitted to use arms by them, the Right Communist leaders and their close hirelings became ardent champions of Congress semi-fascism with their slogan of national democracy.

Their trade union organisations today work in collaboration with the ruling party's INTUC to hunt down militant workers, disorganise militant trade unions and help the ruling party hirelings to raid trade union offices and take possession of them.

The Right Communist Party's performance in all the States shows that it has become an appendage of the Congress (R),

gaining seats where the ruling party helps it to secure them, unable to score hardly any successes when opposed to it.

The degeneration of the Right C.P. leadership is the inevitable result of the class-collaborationist policies they have been pursuing in the name of their struggle for national democracy.

Our Party calls upon the ranks of the Right C.P.—all those who are prepared to think in terms of democracy and class struggle, to understand where their leadership has been leading them. They must answer the question : is it their destiny that they should be shepherded into the Congress camp and be a party to crimes against the people or to defend the people against the atrocities of the ruling party ?

The ballyhoo that the Indira Gandhi Congress has become progressive and is going to usher in radical agrarian reforms, take radical steps to curb Big Business houses and foreign economic domination indulged in by the Right Communists and other hangers-on of Indira Gandhi, did not carry conviction to the fighting people of West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala even in the 1971 elections. One year's experience, of the Indira Gandhi Government after the massive two-thirds parliamentary majority she got, of broken pledges, of heavy tax burdens, increasing prices, closing of industrial establishments and mines, soaring unemployment, greater and greater concessions to Big Business houses and the foreign monopolists, of big talk of radical land ceilings and distribution of land-and house-sites, but doing very little in actual practice, made the people even in other States start losing their illusions in the Indira Gandhi Government and her policies.

Misuse of Bangladesh Issue

In the 1972 election campaign, Indira Gandhi and her supporters banked on the victory of the Bangladesh people in establishing their sovereign State and the help which the Indian Government had rendered to it, facing open attack from Pakistani armed forces on India, backed by U.S. imperialists, with the Seventh Fleet cruising in the Bay of Bengal. It is undoubtedly a magnificent contribution of all of our Indian people to the

cause of the liberation of people of Bangladesh from the terror of 22 families and the military clique of Pakistan. But the Congress wanted to take the whole credit for itself and its Government. Indira Gandhi tried to conceal her earlier vacillations and hesitations under the pressure of American imperialists, and her refusal to give prompt recognition to the Bangladesh Government and to take decisive action as demanded by all democratic forces. We are proud that our Party and even large sections of Congress followers forced the Indira Gandhi Government to take necessary action, even though it was belated.

The Congress has been parading that its “electoral victory” in West Bengal is due to the great prestige that the party has earned throughout India because of Indira Gandhi’s role in relation to the Bangladesh struggle. It is claimed that the Congress victory in West Bengal was the result of the same “Indira wave” which ensured a sweeping victory for it in the other States.

This attempt to conceal the foul methods adopted in West Bengal and present the rigging as a respectable political victory cannot wash. Facts belie the claim. They show that despite the unscrupulous use of Bangladesh victory for the partisan ends of the Congress, the Congress vote in recent elections compared with that in 1971 has either in some cases substantially decreased or just maintained at the same level or at best shown only a marginal increase.

Congress Votes Go Down

In the strong Congress States of Maharashtra, Andhra, Mysore, Himachal, Haryana, the percentage of Congress votes has fallen considerably. In Andhra it has fallen from 55 to 52 per cent ; in Maharashtra, from 63.8 per cent in 1971 to 56.62 per cent in 1972 ; in Haryana from 53 to 46.9 per cent ; in Mysore from 71 per cent to 53 per cent ; in Delhi from 64 per cent to 48 per cent. Even where there is a marginal increase or five per cent increase as in Gujarat, if we take into consideration, the largescale trooping in of Congress (O), Swatantra and Telangana

Praja Samiti MLAs and MPs into Indira Congress in Gujarat, Mysore, Andhra Pradesh and other States, this marginal increase and fall in percentage of voting takes an added significance.

As against this fall in the strong Congress States, we get the rise from 27.3 per cent to 49.4 per cent in West Bengal, where a viable democratic Left alternative was there, and where the powerful democratic Left movement had inflicted successive defeats on the Congress. It should be further remembered that West Bengal was the State worst affected by the economic crisis; that between 1971 and 1972, unemployment had mounted rapidly and economic misery was more widespread than anywhere else.

It is obvious that in other States during the course of the last year much of the "Indira wave" of 1971 was wearing out under the stress of economic realities. It is true that the shift was not getting crystallised round Left forces in the absence of powerful democratic movement. The Bangladesh developments provided the Congress with a weapon to arrest what would have been a precipitous decline in popular vote and influence. Even then the decline could not be eliminated. But then in West Bengal alone they seem to have performed a miracle and led to a nearly hundred per cent addition in Congress voting. These statistics alone are sufficient to expose the thoroughly mendacious claims of the Congress and the manipulations of voting figures in West Bengal.

Democratic Unity—Urgent Need

But yet, the reality of weakness of democratic parties and disunity and disruption among all the traditionally Left democratic parties, is also reflected in this voting. It is an urgent task, the crying need of the hour, for all democratic parties and forces, to unite and immediately forge necessary mass sanctions to defeat the police-raj methods. It is urgently necessary to defeat the drive of the ruling Congress party to one-party dictatorship and its attempts to deprive all State Governments of even the existing meagre rights of the States and force them to kowtow the Congress party's policies, (latest

Mr. Subramaniam's demand on the DMK Government). They must fight for :

1. Defence of unfettered exercise of *free franchise* and for forging and generating of conditions for *free and fair* elections.

2. Defence of the fundamental right to *form associations and unions*. This becomes urgent, as already in West Bengal, the Congress party gangs are forcibly occupying tens of trade unions and student organisations which are not under their control. They are dictating that managements must not allow workers owing allegiance to those TUs even to work in their jobs. There is also a drive on the part of the ruling Congress to force one National Trade Union Centre which would follow the Government diktats and give up the right to strike.

3. Defence of day-to-day economic, social and political demands of workers, agricultural labourers, peasants, middle class and especially of scheduled castes and tribes and of minorities ; against soaring prices ; and increased tax burdens; against the corrupt administration ; against growing attacks of vested interests backed by the Government.

4. Defence and extension of autonomy to States.

5. Building a really self-reliant economy free from the grip of America and other foreign imperialists and Indian monopolies which alone would ensure the really independent foreign policy, based on anti-colonialism and anti-racialism and of friendship with all our neighbouring Asian States.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all the democratic forces and parties, to hold talks, to chalk out measures, in furtherance of the above measures.

The Polit Bureau calls upon all parties and groups who are concerned with this subversion of the electoral process, to raise their voice of protest against this menace.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all people of West Bengal irrespective of their party affiliation to raise their voice of protest against the humiliation that has been heaped upon them by depriving them of their right to vote.

The Polit Bureau appeals to the ranks and following of the Right Communist Party to think over where the alliance which

their leaders forged with the ruling Congress of big bourgeois and landlord classes and their Government and active co-operation with them in suppressing democratic forces and toiling masses, and their organisations especially headed by the CPI(M), is leading it. We fervently plead with them to join hand with us and to oppose their leadership's wrong and suicidal policies.

The Polit Bureau once again pledges to the people of West Bengal and especially to thousands of cadres of our Party and other Left parties who are suffering from unheard of brutalities, constant harrassment and violation of personal honour, banishment from their homes, imprisonment and assassination, that our whole Party will stand by them. It will face whatever tribulations and sufferings that may become inevitable. It pledges that we would do everything that is possible in their defence, as its first and most immediate task. It will strive its utmost in defence of democracy in West Bengal against the Congress semi-fascist terror and for this it will strive its utmost to mobilise the people of the whole of India. It realises that any failure in this regard would herald the end of democracy in our country.

It is confident that people of West Bengal and our Party members would face all the tribulations with great fortitude and determination and continue to struggle till we all unitedly achieve victory over the ruling classes. It calls upon the Party units throughout the country to mobilise the people, in unions with all other democratic parties, groups and elements, in defence of the fighting people of West Bengal.

Left Front of West Bengal to Boycott the Assembly

The Left Front, West Bengal, has decided to boycott the sham Assembly session and has directed MLAs belonging to its constituents not to take oath as a mark of protest against the rigged election in the State.

This decision was arrived at its meeting on March 18 :

A public meeting in Calcutta has been convened by the Front on March 28, 1972 where its stand is to be explained to the people.

CPI(M) Will Stand By The people, Face All Sacrifices

West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) Reviews the Post-election Situation in the State

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met on March 25 and 26, 1972. It heard concrete reports from all the districts about the election and post-election situation and chalked out an appropriate line of action.

From the reports the Committee became all the more convinced that the whole election has been totally rigged by the Congress Government by naked use of fascistic methods of gangsterism and swindling in all stages of the election. More facts were received about how in 51 constituencies almost all or a considerable number of booths were simply occupied by armed Congress-Right Communist gangsters with the active support of the police, the CRP and the administrative machinery. The voters including even many Congress voters were simply chased away and ballot papers were simply stamped and inserted into the boxes by the gangsters. This methods of terror and crude gangsterism was resorted to in some polling booths of many other constituencies also.

Total Rigging

It was further revealed that in a far greater number of constituencies where the Congress apprehended defeat on the basis of Government Intelligence reports, large-scale tampering and manipulation of ballot boxes and ballot papers and swindling in counting were planned and put into effect. It has been corroborated by factual and circumstantial evidences. Contrary

to the usual election procedure, the Presiding Officers of polling booths were instructed this time *not to* submit their ballot paper accounts as well as Presiding Officers' diaries in sealed envelopes, but to submit them in open covers. Many more instances have been found of ballot boxes being filled up the previous night ; bunches of ballot papers folded together have been found in a greater number of boxes ; more instances of ballot papers of one constituency found in the boxes of other constituencies have been noted ; seals of ballot boxes have been found changed or broken ; many excess ballot papers going to the extent of even two hundred or more than the numbers noted by polling agents changed or added on an extensive scale and duplicate ballot papers were printed and used.

Finally, swindling at the time of counting was also planned in many cases. Counting halls were filled up with armed gangsters who with the help and connivance of the police and other officers did whatever they liked including double-stamping on ballot papers that were in our favour in order to invalidate them, adding or snatching away bundles of ballot papers and finally in some cases, even managing to declare their candidates elected by sheer arithmetical manipulation.

From the reports it is clear that 200 constituencies and more were subjected to various methods of rigging. This does not mean that other constituencies were totally spared. Something was done even in such constituencies where the Congress had no ground to apprehend defeat. We knew that the election was being held in an atmosphere of semi-fascist terror. We thought that this terror might be somewhat intensified and we expressed this fear openly before the election.

We even informed the Government about gangsterism in 34 constituencies. But to speak frankly, we did not apprehend such unheard of gangsterism and rigging on such a gigantic scale. That the Congress rulers have already gone to such desperate length to butcher parliamentary democracy was a new bitter experience for the people of west Bengal. From their own experience the people have learnt the truth that it is not the

people and the democratic forces, but the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes who destroy bourgeois democracy when it threatens their class rule.

Swing was to The Left

The State Committee noted that in spite of the Government terror and high-pitched false propaganda, the mass swing towards the Left Front and a way from the Congress was marked all over West Bengal. The Congress propaganda about a mass swing in their favour is nothing but a Goebbelsian type of total lie. The Congress and bourgeois papers did not claim any such swing before the election. This was invented later on by the Congress propagandists to cover up their own crime and justify the fantastic results. This is evident from the results of those constituencies which were possibly spared from special rigging, as the Left was comparatively weak in these constituencies and as such the Congress did not apprehend defeat. It is a crude deception to suggest that there were two diametrically opposite trends in the same areas and districts. The so-called voting figures and percentages as paraded by the Government have got no relation with the real people's verdict.

On a rough calculation, it may be safely said that the Congress-CPI(R) voting figure has been inflated by at least 25 lakhs and that of the Left parties decreased by about 15 lakhs.

The Committee noted that the people in general are stunned at the rigged results. They do not accept the election as valid. Even many of the Congress supporters are not happy. The very poor participation of the people in the so-called Congress victory celebrations is a clear indication of the popular opinion that the election has been totally rigged.

Post-Poll Violence

The Committee noted with great anxiety that no sooner the election was over than the Congress Government further intensified their attacks against the people to a monstrous degree. For the last two years the Congress rulers vainly tried to crush the democratic forces by brutal semi-fascist terror.

Having failed to mislead the people by their demagogic propaganda and crush their movements by brutal terror, they have now desperately launched far more ferocious attacks in the usual fascist way. Armed gangsters with the full backing of the police and the CRP have launched murderous assaults in areas after areas, particularly in Calcutta, 24-Parganas and Burdwan. Already 30 workers have been brutally murdered and hundreds wounded after the election. More than 20,000 people including women have been driven out of their areas. If we add the number of those who were driven away before the election, the figure will reach 40,000. The whole intention is to destroy all the strong ares of democratic movements, drive away the active workers and force the people to surrender meekly to the despotic Congress rule. The police-CRP attacks have been synchronised with the gangster attacks. More and more workers of Left parties, particularly of our Party, are being hounded out and arrested on got-up charges or detained without trial. They are being brutally tortured in police lock-ups. Party offices and offices of the mass organisations are being attacked, ransacked and forcibly occupied. Trade unions have become special targets of attack. Workers are being terrorised to join the Congress stooge unions and hundreds of TU office-bearers and leaders have been forced on the point of guns to keep away from their places of work. Teachers are being forced to resign. Eviction of peasants, not only from *barga* lands, but also from vested surplus lands is threatened on a big scale. It is reported that a sinister plan has been made to detain thousands of Leftist cadres and murder a good number of leaders to cripple the democratic movement.

Never before in history the people of West Bengal experienced such fascistic attacks. The whole election has been rigged. The people's right to vote has been snatched away. West Bengal has been humiliated. And now even the elementary right of the people to hold any views opposed to the Congress is under attack. The dangerous fascist theory of one leader, one party and one ideology is being put into practice in West Bengal—by methods of naked gangsterism and terror. The Congress

leaders are aware that under the cover of their demagogic talks about development and welfare, they are going to impose more burdens on the Common man. Their policies are going to face increasingly stronger opposition from the people. As the people of West Bengal stand in the front rank of the democratic forces of the country, the Congress Government has made them the special target of their attack. History has placed a great responsibility on our people.

Present Situation

The State Committee discussed the present situation. It endorsed all the steps taken by the State Secretariat. It fully supported the joint decision of the Left parties to boycott the rigged legislature. In its opinion, it is the minimum form of democratic protest that the people can register. All comrades (State Committee members) reported that the people fully appreciated the decision. A legislature that has been formed through a rigged election and a Government that has stolen into power on that basis cannot claim any authority from people's verdict. It is based on naked force, gangsterism and swindling. The Left democratic parties can never associate themselves with the Congress conspiracy to cheat and mislead the people and cannot help them to cover up their crime.

The Committee further noted that the Congress rulers have indulged in a motivated propaganda that our Party is thinking of going underground and preparing for armed struggle. It is a crude attempt to justify, in the Hitlerite way, their mad drive for destruction of democracy. Our Party declares unequivocally, that our main task is to unite the people more firmly in the struggle for democracy and elementary rights of the people. No terror, gangsterism or blackmail can divert us from this noble task.

Our party will defend the unity of the Left democratic parties as an apple of the eye and extend it at every level to develop united mass movements against all attacks of the vested interests and the Government.

CPI(M) Will Stand By The People, Face All Sacrifices 403

The Committee greeted the people who stood firm in face of brutal terror, and who did not allow themselves to be misled or cowed down. We are proud of our heroic workers, peasants, employees, students, youth, women and other who have suffered great hardships and are called upon to stand up before more ferocious attacks.

Our party has pledged itself to stand by the people, irrespective of whatever sacrifices are forced on us. We shall unite the people in all forms of movement to defend themselves, their organisations and their rights.

Proud of Our Cadre

The Committee noted that the people by and large have stood firm. It also noted that a section of cadres and supporters of the Right Communists are seeing through the treachery of their leaders and are moving towards common struggles. It also noted that even a section of Congress supporters are feeling uneasy at the fascistic onslaughts. The Congress rulers are getting more and more isolated. Their desperation exposes their weaknesses. The party has called upon workers, peasants and all toiling people to unite more firmly in the struggle for democracy.

The Committee took special pride in the courage, determination and self-sacrificing spirit of our cadres and supporters who are making great sacrifices. We extend revolutionary greetings to all of them. We pay homage to our martyr heroes. The Committee was confident that our Party will prove itself equal to the formidable task ahead.

On Chou En-Lai-Nixon Communique

**Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) on
March 27, 1972**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) had stated in July 1971 when President Nixon's visit to China with a view to normalising Sino-U.S. relations was announced that it denoted "an open admission by Nixon of the defeat for the anti-China policies which the U.S. imperialists had pursued so far."

The P.B. was not taken in by Nixon's deceitful talk of "Pilgrimage of Peace" and warned that "the U.S. would not easily accept a *detente* or a real solution in favour of peace and democracy."

This assessment has been confirmed by the Chou-Nixon communique issued at the conclusion of the talks in the last week of February 1972. The declaration by the U.S. in the communique that the United States acknowledges that "Taiwan is a part of China,..., a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind it affirms the ultimate objective of withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations.....as the tension in the area diminishes", is a definite climb-down on the part of the U.S.

Already this statement has jittered the stooges of U.S. imperialism in East and South-East Asia who are apprehensive that they cannot depend upon U.S. imperialism to defend their positions from the onslaught of the peoples struggling for liberation.

The restatement by the U.S. in the communique of its own positions on Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and South Korea

underlines the fact that the U.S. imperialists are not in a mood to accept a solution in favour of peace and democracy.

The P.B. notes with concern that Nixon while taking of a "Pilgrimage of Peace", was actually emboldened to launch intensified bombing attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, just a few days before his visit to China. The P.B. also notes that in the Chou-Nixon communique, while China has reiterated its support to the eight-point proposals of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, not a word of condemnation or protest against the intensified bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is mentioned. This has definitely compromised the position of China as a firm supporter of the armed struggle of the people of Vietnam against U.S. imperialism.

The solicitude shown by the Chinese Government in the communique to the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir is in strange contrast to its support to the Pakistani military junta, aided and supported by U.S. imperialism, to suppress the freedom struggle of the 75 million people of Bangladesh.

Its refusal to see the reality of Bangladesh even after it has emerged victorious in the struggle and its harping upon the question of Kashmir, do not help the cause of peace and democracy in the Indian sub-continent.

The Soviet Union sees in these Nixon-Chou talks not a fiasco of the U.S. policy but a deal against the Soviet Union. The division in the Socialist camp, and the extreme hostility and suspicion of each other entertained by the two biggest countries of the Socialist camp—the USSR and China—have created a situation wherein instead of the Socialist camp as a whole being in a position to utilise the crisis of imperialism and the inter-imperialist conflicts to deal blows on imperialism, the U.S. imperialists are emboldened to utilise these difference in the Socialist camp to their own advantage.

The P.B. warns that heightened vigilance is absolutely necessary and calls upon all Socialist countries and all anti-imperialist forces to exercise utmost vigilance and see that the U.S. imperialists do not succeed in their attempts.

Aggression in Vietnam Underlines U.S. Design to Enslave Asian Peoples

**Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in
New Delhi on April 13, 1972**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) meeting in New Delhi from April 12 to 14, has issued the following statement to the Press on April 13, 1972 :

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) denounces the renewed American imperialist aggression with aerial and naval bombings and use of land armed forces against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the people of Vietnam. The present American bombings excel all previous records of wanton destruction. Using near-atomic bombs and other weapons, razing localities to the ground, the American imperialists are carrying on a massacre of the people of Vietnam for no other reason except that they refuse to surrender their right to freedom.

The P.B. greets the fighting forces of the Vietnamese people on their courageous resistance to these unprovoked attacks and their successful advance against the armed forces of the puppet Government supported by American air and naval forces. This successful advance has drawn forth the admiration of all the fighting peoples of the world and constitutes a great saga of the freedom struggle of our times. The P.B. is confident that backed by world opinion, by the growing indignation of the world people against American imperialism, the fighting forces of the Vietnamese people will be able to achieve their cherished objective of throwing the American forces out of the whole of Indo-China and shaping their destiny according to their own freely expressed will.

The P.B. denounces the criminal acts of the Nixon Government which abruptly stopped the Paris Talks to be able to resume its attack against the people of Vietnam and further escalate its war in Indo-China. The Nixon Government has thus exposed that it was preparing for a war while hypocritically talking of a negotiated solution of the problem of Vietnam. It has once again unmasked itself as the criminal designer against the freedom and liberation of the peoples of South-East Asia.

The P.B. calls upon the people of India and all democratic parties to denounce this crime of the American imperialists against the fighting people of Vietnam, this aggression against a struggling Asian nation and this attack on Socialist country. It once more underlines the American conspiracy to dominate the Asian peoples and enslave them through puppet regimes supported by them.

The people of India had a taste of it in the last Indo-Pak War when the U.S. imperialists poured arms into Pakistan to give support to the military regime of Yahya Khan and to unleash war against India. They helped Yahya Khan to carry on the massacre of freedom fighters in Bangladesh. They brought the Seventh Fleet in the Bay of Bengal and attempted to backmail India for its support to the Bangladesh freedom struggle. American imperialism, which revealed itself as the enemy of the Indian people only a few months back, is now attempting to subjugate another people in Asia. The P.B. calls upon all democratic parties and forces to express their solidarity with the people of Vietnam by staging united demonstrations and action and proclaiming their determination to fight against the force which is a common enemy of all peoples.

All democratic parties and forces should unitedly demand the immediate withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam, total stoppage of bombings and complete freedom for the Vietnamese people to live according to their own freely expressed will.

The P.B. welcomes the statement of the Government of India calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the soil of Vietnam and holding the American Government responsible for

the conflict. At the same time, the P.B. is of the opinion that considering the extreme gravity of the situation and the vital issues involved, this statement alone is too inadequate to meet the situation. The Government of India should take positive steps to help the fighting forces of the Vietnamese people and, first of all, recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government and sever all relations with the puppet Government of South Vietnam, which had recently been heaping one insult after another on the Indian people. It is a crime to continue to recognise a government which acts as an agency of foreign imperialism and is responsible for getting its own citizens murdered in thousands through aerial bombing.

The P.B. is of the opinion that the entire Socialist Camp and especially the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China owe a special responsibility for the defence of the people of Vietnam. A country belonging to the Socialist Camp has been attacked, a people fighting for its liberation is the victim of aggression. American imperialism is emboldened to launch this barbarous and brazen attack because it calculates that the united might of the Socialist Camp will not be used against it. The P.B. appeals to the two countries to recognise this common danger and the urgent need of helping a Socialist state and a people fighting for their liberation and join in mighty effort to take effective steps immediately to put an end to this naval and aerial aggression. The P.B. calls upon the entire world working class movement to demand joint action by the Socialist Camp in support of Vietnam.

The P.B. salutes the freedom fighters and the brave and courageous warriors who are storming one strategic position after another despite heavy losses. The P.B. once again calls upon the Indian people to recognise their duty towards this valiant anti-imperialist struggle, to raise their voice of denunciation against American crimes and to render every kind of help to a fighting nation whose only demand is freedom and liberty for its own people.

CPI(M)'s Demand Charter for Toilers of Punjab

The Congress party in Punjab have made umpteen promises to the people both before and after the elections.

Taking note of this, the Punjab State Committee of the CPI(M) decided to "face the Congress-Right C.P. alliance by developing mass movements on the issues raised by them during the elections, so that the people may see the contrast between the declarations and the deeds of the bourgeois-landlord classes and their hangers-on."

As the first step towards the implementation of this decision, a deputation went to the Congress Chief Minister and handed over the following memorandum :

After taking oath as Chief Minister you announced the 12-Point Programme of your Ministry. It is supposed to contain the pledges made before the people of the State during the elections. But the points you have raised are as vague as those raised during the tenure of the past regimes. There have been many contradictory statements later which create genuine doubts about the implementation of these pledges. Similarly the Budget proposals also have belied the hopes.

You know that we fought the elections on the basis of our Manifesto and will continue to rally the workers, peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth and other toiling people behind our demands. But in this memorandum we will confine ourselves to your 12-Point Programme in order to see how far you are genuine in getting them implemented. Our experience shows that the vague programmes are always meant to side-

track the issues. In case you have got any desire to redress the greivances of the workers, peasants, agricultural workers, employees and others, we put forward the following proposals for immediate implementations :—

In Relation to Land Reforms

It is three years since the Congress Government has recognised the failure of agrarian reforms in the country. It has also raised the question of immediate action to remedy the situation. The Congress manifesto has emphasised the need for immediate land reforms on the basis of the recommendations of the Chief Ministers' sub-committee. It had recommended the maximum ceiling at 18 acres taking the family as a unit and doing away with all the exemptions. In your policy statement you have not made a mention of the ceilings. Subsequently the Congress Legislature Party decided to fix up the ceiling at Rs. 2.5 lakh of price/value of land. This has been done knowing fully well that the price of land varies in different districts of the State and is not based on productivity but certain other factors. Again in a statement the Finance Minister assured the landlords owning 30 standard acres not to worry about the ceiling. Strangely, in your interview to the Special Correspondent which appeared in *The Statesmen* of March 28, you stated that "10 standard acres of land per family may be more than desirable in some places and even 30 standard acres may be less than the desirable ceiling in some others."

It seems that, according to you, even 30 standard acres may be less than desirable in our State and to by-pass the issue you have mentioned "that Socialism will be achieved only when there is complete nationalisation of property". According to this statement, on the one hand, you want to protect the higher ceiling and, on the other, want to pose more radical than anybody else by raising the slogan of nationalisation of all property. In this way, instead of implementing the promises, you are trying to create confusion and thus defend the landed interests. It is this policy which has enabled the landlords to sell

their lands or grab them in different forms through *mala fide* transfers. Slogans of your party have helped the landlords and have led to the eviction of lakhs of tenants during the last 20 years.

The question here is the breaking of land monopoly and to satisfy the needs of the land hungry. A beginning can be made only if—

- (i) Immediate decision is taken to declare null and void all transfers and sales by the landlords since the recommendations of the Chief Ministers were announced. Immediate law to forbid any sale or transfer of landlords' lands.
- (ii) Doing away with all exemptions provided in the tenancy legislations.
- (iii) Implementing the recommendations of the Chief Ministers by lowering the ceiling to 18 acres making the family as a unit.
- (iv) Distribution of surplus land to the landless tenants and agricultural workers.
- (v) Passing the legislation incorporating the above proposals in the present Session of the Vidhan Sabha.

Waste and Evacuee Land

You have talked much about the welfare of harijans. There is no doubt that they continue to suffer from social inequality in spite of many legislations. But the root cause of all this is their economic backwardness. Similarly other landless to whichever community they belong to continue to live in utter poverty. You have proposed that the tenants on waste land who have brought the land under cultivation will be given ownership of land up to ten acres including the lands which they owned. You have demanded Rs. 500 per acre from the harijans and Rs. 1000 from the Rai Sikhs as compensation. These lands, mostly situated in the river bed areas, have been brought under cultivation with very hard labour of the tenants. They have contributed to agricultural production, by taking loans etc. Why

should they be made to pay compensation for such lands ? They should be made owners of such lands forthwith. It is dangerous to differentiate amongst them between harijans and others. They are the landless poor belonging to the same category whether they are harijans, Rai Sikhs or others. This type of differentiation seeks to disrupt these sections of the poor peasantry. Moreover, you have not included in this category the tenants belonging to other communities who are landless.

Your decision to take revenue Records of 1970 or before that as the basis of giving ownership further exposes your whole scheme. The landed interests and the Revenue officials never allow the lands of these tenants to be recorded in the land records. We have seen it during the struggle of the tenants of Seed Farm. Ultimately the Government had to agree to give ownership of land by accepting the actual possession as the basis, checked through the affidavits of the tenants and through a popular committee of their representatives. Your scheme will become fake if Revenue records and not the actual possession are made the basis.

In this category you have not yet made any mention of the evacuee lands. You have also not mentioned huge tracts of land occupied by the government officials and landlords under cover of the policies of auctions pursued by the Congress Government for many years, and subsequently by the Akali Government during their rule. We propose that :

- (i) No eviction be made of any tenant who has waste or evacuee land in his possession up to the limit prescribed by you and he should be given the ownership of such lands without compensation.
- (ii) No differentiation be made between the harijan and other landless tenants.
- (iii) All remaining evacuee and waste lands be distributed to the agricultural labourers and landless of adjoining areas especially harijans who constitute the largest percentage of landless at the rate of five acres per family.

- (iv) An enquiry be instituted into the land grabbed by officials and landlords by various ways, and their lands taken away for distribution.
- (v) Actual possession of land be taken into consideration and not the Revenue records which are generally false as far as the tenants are concerned.

State Trading in Foodgrains and Other Commodities

You have talked of widening the scope of State trading. It is not the question of widening alone. The past few months have shown that the landlords and black-marketeers are able to raise the price of wheat squeezing the lower sections of the population. We demand :

All the wholesale trade in foodgrains be taken into the hands of the Government. The Government should also take the responsibility of purchasing the other produce of the peasantry at remunerative prices. It should also ensure reasonable and constant prices to the consumers in the State.

From the statements made by various spokesmen of the Government it seems that you intend to pass on this question to the Central Government. Again, on the one hand it is side-tracking the issue and on the other, depriving the State from the limited powers which it has got. We propose to enforce the ceiling on urban property immediately as committed by your party without any reference to the Centre.

Nationalisation of Transport

This slogan is being raised for many years and the result has been more expansion of private transport. This time also, although the slogan is repeated in the Governor's Address, there is no provision in the Budget for it. We know that the big transport owners in the State have been influencing the various governments in the State and are exercising the same on your Government. Transport can be a great source of revenue for the State. In fact, the Government has decided to hand over the Punjab Roadways to the Corporation. This is the reversal of the policy. We demand :

- (i) Transport be nationalised in the State immediately and allocations be made in the Budget for this purpose.
- (ii) The policy of transforming it into a Corporation be given up.
- (iii) All the employees of the Transport companies be ensured security of services.

In Relation to The Working Class

In this respect your promise is totally vague. The working class in the State have been the worst sufferer during the last two decades. During both the regime of the previous Congress and Akali governments, even the awards of the wage boards have not been implemented in the State. When the workers went on strike, their struggles were suppressed by brutal police repression. Any vague promise would not satisfy the working class in the State. We demand :

- (i) That the minimum Rs. 200 need-based wage be fixed for unskilled workers.
- (ii) Immediate changes be made in the labour laws by which wage-freeze, lock-out, lay off and closures are not allowed and full trade union rights are restored. Provision of full employment and in its absence unemployment relief.

In Relation to Agricultural Workers

This section of our population is going through untold hardships. Most of them do not get employment for the whole year. They are employed only during the busy seasons. Their wages are very low and there is no machinery for its enforcement, and you have not made any mention either in your 12-Point Programme or in the Governor's Address about amelioration of their conditions. We propose :

- (i) Rs. 5 per day as minimum wage be fixed for the agricultural workers.
- (ii) Machinery be constituted for its enforcement.
- (iii) Measures be taken for providing employment to the unemployed agricultural workers and in their absence unemployment relief.

For Government Employees

Here, again, your promises are vague. Although you yourself have been giving full support to the demands of interim relief for the State Government employees at the level of Central Government and all the parties have raised the same demand. Now you have instituted a Committee to go into the question. What is the question to be gone into ? Their demands are very clear. Even in the constitution of the Committee, you have tried to get representatives from one section of the employees in order to perpetuate the division among the Government employees through Government favours. This policy of yours is against the interests of the employees. We demand :

- (i) Immediate announcement regarding interim relief to the State Government employees at par with the Central Government.
- (ii) Removal of anomalies in the Pay Commission Report.
- (iii) Democratic changes in the service Rules putting an end to the policy of victimisation and putting an end to the character verification of Government employees by the CID.
- (iv) Making workcharged employees permanent.

For Private School and College Teachers

- (i) We demand that there should be legal sanction to guarantee the security of service to the private school and college teachers.
- (ii) To improve the grade of teachers on the basis of Delhi pattern.
- (iii) To provide employment to the unemployed teachers.

On the Unemployment Problem

Unless special measures are taken to break the monopoly of land and to industrialise the State, it is difficult to tackle the problem of unemployment. Educated unemployment is also continuously rising in the State. We have suggested concrete measures about land reforms. We suggest immediate steps to be taken for industrialisation of the State so as to provide

channels for employment. Education be rapidly expanded and unemployment relief be provided to the unemployed.

On the Question of Civil Liberties

Civil liberties have been a victim under various past regimes in the State. Recently high-handedness of the police has increased very much. Political workers have been murdered by the police after arresting them in the name of “encounters.” In most of the cases the police have taken law into their own hands, ignoring all norms of procedure. You yourself were forced to demand a judicial enquiry into the murder of young students in Taragarh firing in Muktsar and the murders of Nihangs of Ropar. There are similar cases of repression in Kanjila of Sangrur district and many other places.

MIS Act is still in use in the State and workers of our Party and others continue to be kept in detention. False case have been instituted against the workers of our Party, such as Comrade Hardit Singh Bhattal and Sampuran Singh Dhaula etc. This high-handedness of the police, if allowed, can become a serious danger to the functioning of democratic institutions. Therefore, we demand the restoration of full civil liberties in the State, by putting an end to the police repression and allowing the normal functioning of various organisations.

- (i) Declaring that MIS Act will not be used in the State.
- (ii) Release of Comrades Amrik Singh and Surjeet Singh and others who are still under detention.
- (iii) Immediate institution of judicial enquiry into the police excesses such as Taragarh and other places and punishment of those found guilty.
- (iv) Withdrawal of cases against political workers and students.

These are some of the issues which we have raised with you—mostly covering the same ground which your 12-point Programme has covered. We have tried to concretise some of the points on the basis of our own experience in relation to the defence of the toiling people. We would like to have concrete replies from you on these questions so that your declarations

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can be tested and your claims of working for the down-trodden can be judged. These points provide a little test to judge who stands for the vested interests and who stands for the down-trodden.

We have not touched here the major questions of policy in relation to the penetration of foreign capital in India and the continuous growth of the monopoly capital in the country. Although we know that these policies are playing havoc with the people of our State. We have in this memorandum only raised demands regarding limited relief measures which can be easily taken if there is a desire to do something for the poorer sections of our populations, and ameliorate the miserable conditions under which they live.

Beat Back Danger of One-Party Dictatorship

Call of CPI(M) Central Committee

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in New Delhi from April 15 to 21. Comrade Promod Dasgupta presided.

The meeting adopted a condolence resolution on and paid tribute to Comrade A. Krishna Shetty, the respected leader of the kisan and democratic movement in Karnataka and a member of the Karnataka State Committee of the CPI(M) who expired on March 28, 1972.

The meeting expressed tributes to the martyrs who laid down their lives in the course of the recent State Assembly elections in West Bengal, who braved the terror regime organised by the ruling party under the direct leadership of the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, and in other places.

Tribute was also paid to tens of thousands of ordinary people in West Bengal who faced the bestial attacks launched on them by the hooligans of the ruling party under the protection of the police and the CRP for the only 'crime' that they committed, i.e., that they desired the victory of and worked for the Left Front in the recent elections.

Against USA's Criminal War

The Central Committee expressed its indignation over the intensified aerial and naval war that is being carried on against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by the USA. It endorsed the statement of the Polit Bureau issued on April 13, and called

upon the party units and democratic forces to carry on a continuous campaign against this criminal war of the U.S. imperialists.

The Central Committee noted that in West Bengal, where the ruling Congress confronted the united Left forces, the Congress had resorted to all kinds of fraudulent means to rig the elections in order to get into office. Apart from the terror that had been let loose on the democratic movement for over a year prior to the elections, every means—from open invasion of booths, murders, attacks on voters to prevent them from voting, packing ballot boxes with ballot papers stamped in favour of the Congress by gangsters, tampering with ballot boxes, falsifying the results—was utilised to get Congressmen and their stooges, the Right Communists, elected.

It was noted that while in West Bengal, the recorded vote of the Congress increased from 28.2 per cent in the elections held just a year ago in 1971 to 49.2 per cent i.e., by 75 per cent, in the rest of the States for which elections to the Assemblies were held in 1972, the Congress vote actually fell from 52.7 to 48.4 per cent.

Terror & Rigging of Elections

In West Bengal itself, it was noted, steep increases in the votes polled by the Congress front and equally steep fall in the votes of the Left Front have been recorded precisely in those constituencies which have always been considered the strongholds of the CPI(M), or of other constituents of the Left Front. The traditional strongholds of the ruling Congress and the Right C.P. and Bangla Congress where on the basis of the 1971 vote they had absolute majority in 93 constituencies, showed a sharp fall in their vote, and increases in Left Front vote. In Midnapore district alone, for instance, the votes polled by the Congress front fell by 125,000 while those of the Left Front rose by about 75,000.

The Central Committee noted that the Prime Minister and other spokesmen of the ruling party or its satellites like the Right C.P. have not cared to explain the discrepancy involved

in their claim of an “Indira wave” sweeping the country when in the very election in which the all-India percentage of votes as well as the votes polled in most of the States by the ruling party has fallen, only in West Bengal where they had to face the challenge of the Left Front their votes increased by 75 per cent. Nor have they cared to explain how such steep fall in the votes polled by the Left Front should occur only in those constituencies which they themselves concede are the strongholds of the Left Front.

These contrasts between the West Bengal and other States on the one hand and the Congress strongholds and the strongholds of the Left Front on the other convincingly prove that the ruling Congress under the direct leadership of the Prime Minister made organised use of naked terror and other forms of rigging elections.

Hence the C.C. endorses the action of our State unit and other Left parties who called upon their members who were declared elected to the Assembly not to take oath or attend this sham Assembly. The Chief Minister, Mr. Siddhartha Shankar Ray, cannot tolerate even this protest and blandishes firm action if this decision is not reversed. The C.C. congratulates the Left parties who have courageously stood against these threats and have decided to unitedly mobilise public opinion against these rigged elections.

Why Semi-Fascist Terror ?

The semi-fascist terror and the fraudulent elections in West Bengal reveal the desperate lengths to which the ruling party can go to retain its power in the interests of the ruling classes. It could not view with equanimity the prospect of the Left Front led by the CPI(M) getting a majority. In conditions of West Bengal, it could not tolerate even a sizable Left Opposition.

The Central Committee noted that after the elections, terror has been intensified in West Bengal. Trade unions are attacked, trade union offices are occupied, leaders and workers of the CPI(M), of the trade unions, kisan sabhas and other mass organisations are being murdered, and working class and other

areas, including strong areas of the kisan movement are being systematically raided with the connivance and active help of the police and State administration. Twenty thousand people have been forced to vacate their homes after elections, bringing the total evacuees to 40,000.

The need for such semifascist terror arises precisely from the fact that despite all its claims to the contrary, the economic crisis is deepening and the ruling classes seek to shift the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of the working class and other toiling people. They seek to destroy the most militant advance guard of the trade union and kisan and democratic movement, if possible, so that it does not act as a galvaniser and inspirer of resistance to the policies of the Government all over the country.

Appeasing Monopolists and Landlords

The Central Committee noted the significant fact that while talking of 'garibi hatao', the Government is actually turning more to the monopolists for investment and industrial expansion, who are being offered new concessions. In the name of joint sector, they are being permitted to enter the strategic sector with public resources. At the same time, they are not being debarred from the light and consumers' industries. Far from the State controlling the monopolists, this will lead to a growing fusion of monopoly interests with the State.

While the Congress leaders go on assuring that land ceiling will be lowered, those that are likely to be affected have already taken measures to render any such legislation ineffective, and the drive to evict the peasants from land is being intensified. It is significant that the Congress Governments refuse to take any action to prevent any future legislation being rendered ineffective by such tactics.

In these conditions, the inability to appease large sections of the masses through significant concessions, the dire need to thrust further burdens on the masses, and the impatience and intolerance of the ruling party towards all opposition foreshadows

a likely trend towards one-party dictatorship. This also portends a further attack and erosion on the rights and powers of the States and further concentration of power in the hands of the Centre.

The Central Committee is of the view that the most effective way to stop this drive towards one-party rule, battle against the rising fascist trends and protect civil liberties and democratic rights is the unity of Left and democratic parties.

The Central Committee directed the Polit Bureau and each State Committee of the Party to contact the other Left parties with a view to reforge the unity of the Left and democratic parties disrupted by the machinations of the ruling party, betrayal of the Right C.P. and PSP, as well as by the vacillations of other Left parties. The reforging of the unity of the Left movement in West Bengal should give confidence to the entire movement that unity can be reforged all over the country.

Launch Nationwide Campaign

The Central Committee called upon all its State and lower units to launch a nationwide campaign, both on its own and jointly with all Left and democratic parties, groups and individuals—a campaign for :

1. Fighting the danger of one-party dictatorship, ensuring all constitutional liberties including free and fair elections and the right to vote. The withdrawal of all repressive legislations such as MISA, Prevention of Violent Activities Act, Preventive Detention Act, and the release of all those detained under these Acts.

2. For the end of semi-fascist terror in West Bengal, withdrawal of the CRP and military, restoration of civil liberties; for the freedom of building mass organisation and for fair and free elections.

3. For basic change in the Constitution, to eliminate the misuse of the Constitution by the ruling party, to eliminate the monopolist-landlord exploitation, to ensure real autonomy for the States, to ensure the right to work and full civil liberties, to do away with the arbitrary powers of dismissal conferred on the President.

4. For defence of day-to-day economic, social and political demands of workers, agricultural labourers, peasants, middle class, and especially of scheduled castes and tribes, against increased tax burdens, against the corrupt administration ; against growing attacks of the vested interests backed by the Government.

5. Building a really self-reliant economy free from the grip of America and other foreign imperialists and Indian monopolies which alone would ensure a really independent foreign policy, based on anti-colonialism and anti-racialism and of friendship with all our neighbouring Asian States.

The Central Committee notes that the entire opposition in the country has come to realise the seriousness of the situation arising out of such an organised use of naked terror by the ruling party and have demanded an inquiry into the election in West Bengal. Those who have thus raised their voice against this unscrupulous use of the administrative machinery in the interest of the ruling party include some parties who are opposing the ruling party not from the Left but from the Right. There is, therefore, no question of the CPI(M) or other Left parties forging a U.F. with these parties. The Central Committee, however, expects these parties also to realise that the drive for one-party rule made by the ruling party is a threat to all opposition parties.

Draft for Party Congress

The Committee reviewed the international and national economic and political developments since November last when the Central Committee finalised its draft political resolution for the Party Congress. It took particular note of the Indo-Pakistan war in connection with the Bangladesh freedom struggle, the heroic offensive of the people's liberation forces of South Vietnam against the U.S. imperialist invaders and their puppet forces, as well as the national-political situation that has arisen following the elections to the State Assemblies. The draft resolution was accordingly re-written and is being released for the pre-Congress discussions in the entire Party.

Subversion of Parliamentary Democracy In West Bengal

Jyoti Basu

For the first time since independence parliamentary democracy has been subverted in the State of West Bengal by terror and rigging. Why has this been done in West Bengal ? Why has the ruling Congress party so criminally violated the basic right of the people in the State their right to vote, to elect on Assembly and Government, according to their free will ? In the existing circumstances, in a society divided into classes the ruling party and the classes it represents do generally have an advantage in the elections. Yet why were they so afraid of a popular verdict in a free and fair election ?

W. Bengal's Importance

The State of West Bengal with its population of 4½ crores contains important industries and huge investments—public, private and foreign. There is concentration of coal, steel, tea, jute, heavy engineering, heavy chemicals, locomotive, automobile and other industries in the State which also has excellent railway and port facilities. The State has a powerful democratic movement with strong trade union, peasant and student organisations. For many years Left and democratic parties here have been leading the economic and political battles of the working people resulting in greater and greater isolation of the ruling party. For the vested interests the question thrust itself into the forefront of not only safeguarding their interests by suppressing the forces leading the mass movements

but of taking drastic measures to make it impossible for them to once again get hold of the governmental machinery in a situation where the Indian economy has been landed in a very deep economic crisis by the bankrupt policies pursued by the Congress rulers in the interest of a handful of people.

The rate of growth of industrial production has been steadily declining, unemployment has been increasing and has reached menacing proportions. It is true that four successive good monsoons have resulted in good harvests enabling the Government to stop import of food grains. But this along with the green revolution strategy have however not led to greater consumption of food by the masses ; increase in production has benefited a handful in the countryside and has led to wider disparities and growing pauperisation. Technological improvements which are a part of this strategy are throwing tens of thousands of agricultural labourers out of employment.

In this sphere of industry, advanced technique has not led to improvement in the conditions of life and work for the workers but to increased profits for the capitalists, retrenchment of workers and reduction of employment potential.

The number of people living below the poverty line has grown enormously in the 25 years since independence. The country's economy has been made abjectly dependent on foreign aid. The capitalist planning, which the Congress rulers have been pursuing, has been planning for declining economy, for growing unemployment, for pauperisation of vast masses of the peasantry, for increasing poverty, for monopolists and dependence on foreign imperialism. These policies could not but lead to the intensifying of the crisis and abridging of the democratic freedoms of the people.

Vanguard of Resistance

The ruling classes have been throwing the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the common people—with enormous increase in indirect taxes, spiralling prices, deficit financing etc., all of which have been steadily cutting into the earnings of the working people, depressing their living standards.

There has been resistance to these policies of the Congress rulers in many parts of India. But the working people of West Bengal have been in the forefront of this resistance and the Left and democratic forces here posed a serious challenge to them. The ruling classes know that if the working people of West Bengal are successful in beating back their offensive and preventing them from establishing their Government, the working people in the rest of the country will follow their example and all their plans of building capitalism on the misery and sufferings of the people will be dealt a serious blow.

And the ruling classes have also known that this was no longer a theoretical proposition. Democratic non-Congress Governments became a reality much to their consternation. That was the experience twice since the Fourth General Elections in 1967—when two United Front Governments were in office in the State in March-November 1967 and March 1969 to March 1970. These Governments refused to follow the Congress line of carrying on the administration in the interest of a handful of people in land and industry. They stood solidly with the working people, started giving to the people whatever limited concessions were possible within the limitations of the present Constitution. Even more important, they helped the working people to organise their struggles against the monopolist interest and the big landowners. Workers in the tea, jute, engineering, textile, mining and other industries were able to wrest an annual increase in emoluments of Rs. 50 crores from the industrialists during the period of United Front Government. The big landowners who were keeping thousands and thousands of acres of land illegally in their possession were forced to disgorge large parts of them and the landless and poor peasants occupied and cultivated 300,000 acres of land. The Government made it clear to the employers that in just struggles of the working people, it would stand by the latter. More important was the United Front Government's policy of not sending the police to the aid of the employers and landowners to beat down the workers and the rural poor—a complete break with hitherto existing Congress practice. The common people, the workers,

peasants, teachers, Government employees etc. understood through their own experience that the Government was working for their interest unlike all previous Governments. Development of West Bengal did not mean to the United Front Government limitless suffering and injustice for the common man.

Above all, the most serious challenge came from the fact that as against policies of the Congress rulers which were creating an all-round crisis, and suppressing the people's rights, the United Front Governments were projecting an alternate path of democratic advance which was attracting the people in the Congress-ruled States also.

Subversion of U. F. Govts.

The ruling classes could not afford to let such Governments continue, as they were seriously challenging their exploitative regime. Parliamentary democracy is sacred to the exploiting ruling classes only as long as it serves their own class purposes. The moment the democratic forces begin to make whatever radical use of it as is possible, parliamentary democracy is attacked and even ruthlessly liquidated. Such has been the experience particularly in Kerala and West Bengal. Twice the Indian ruling classes dismissed the elected Governments by various means—first in November 1967 and then in March 1970—and dissolved the elected Assemblies unceremoniously, trampling underfoot the right of the people to have elected legislature and elected Governments. And they made preparations so that a non-Congress Government of that type cannot come to office in West Bengal once again. Not only the formation of such a Government had to be prevented, but the emergence of even a strong Left and democratic opposition in the legislature was looked upon with foreboding because in the explosive situation prevailing in West Bengal a powerful opposition inside the Assembly basing itself on a powerful mass movement outside would make it impossible for Congress rulers to have their way. Twice they had seen this. When the first United Front Government was dismissed in November 1967, the Congress had installed a puppet Government with some defectors

but that Government did not last for more than a few weeks; it had to quit in face of the strong opposition inside the Assembly which was leading a powerful mass movement outside.

Again in March 1971, after the election when the CPI(M) emerged the largest single Party and when the combined strength of the Leftist parties belonging to the United Left Front and the United Left Democratic Front constituted the absolute majority, the Congress formed a coalition Government with a precarious majority. This Government, too, did not last for more than a few weeks because of the powerful opposition inside, dissensions within the ruling party and coalition, and also because of the movement outside. But the Government, instead of resigning when it was unable to carry on, dissolved the Assembly first to prevent any non-Congress Government being formed and thereafter resigned.

It had become essential for the Congress rulers that the Left and democratic parties should not be allowed to form a Government, nor should they be allowed to enter the legislature as a sizable force. This was the setting for subverting the elections, through violence, terror and rigging.

Ruling Class Violence

Unprecedented political violence was unleashed in the State by the ruling classes when they began their conspiracy against the second United Front Government and it was intensified after the dismissal of the second United Front Government in March 1970. A few "extremists" who had been thrown out of the CPI(M) had already begun indulging in terroristic actions with anti-social elements and CIA agents becoming the predominant factor of this movement. It is with these elements that the ruling Congress linked up to launch its programme of assassination of CPI(M) cadres and leaders and liquidation of the strong bases of the democratic movement. The army, the Central Reserve Police, the Border Security Force and the State's police were all mobilised along with all the anti-social elements for letting loose a reign of terror. During the second United Front Government from March 11, 1969 to the day the

Government fell after 13 months as a result of the resignation of the Chief Minister about 90 assassinations had taken place which could be described as political in nature—some as a result of clashes arising out of disputes between the peasants and landlords and between the workers and capitalists and some others due to conflicts between United Front parties.

Contrary to motivated propaganda, however, the United Front Government did not adopt the policy of attacking the Congress party or its other opponents. No murderous assaults were organised against the members and cadres of these parties. But after West Bengal came under the rule of the President and the Democratic Coalition Government led by the Congress the number of attacks and political murders went up by leaps and bounds. Even according to the figures given by the present Government, in 1970 there were 436 political murders; in 1971 the figures were 1169. It must be remembered that since the fall of the United Front Government in 1970 a total of more than six hundred cadres and supporters of the CPI(M) including six women were killed, till March 1972.

Since President's rule in March 1970, the Naxalites were used as a handy weapon by the Congress and the administration to attack and kill CPI(M) cadres and supporters and those of other Left Parties in the attempt to disrupt democratic movements. This was presented through the Press as inter-party clashes necessitating the induction of the CRP and employment of larger numbers of police. In this period action of various sections of the people in self-defence against Naxalite and other gangster attacks was ruthlessly suppressed by the Government. Even when about 200 lower ranks of policemen were killed by the Naxalites in this period the administration showed strange unconcern as it was also attempting to suppress the organisation of lower grade policemen. Similarly, when about 40 Government employees were killed by armed gangsters the Government did not pursue the murderers thereby encouraging such murders. It is in the same period that the army and police cordoned off areas, dragged out young boys and killed them in cold blood, many of them Naxalites who

refused to be used by the administration. Instructions were given by the Central Government to discontinue the usual practice of administrative enquiries when people were killed by the police. In many areas the supporters of Left parties were threatened and forced to leave their homes. The ground was thus being prepared to crush all democratic movements and for a Congress victory in any eventual election.

W. Bengal Stems Indira Tide

And the election came in March 1971. The ruling Congress led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, after the split in the Congress and victory in the Presidential election, with the nationalisation of banks, the move to abolish princely purses and privileges and a number of radical slogans like eradication of poverty, radical land reforms, etc., decided that the Congress had sufficiently regained ground to make an appeal to the electorate a year in advance of schedule. The division in the Left gave added confidence to the Congress in West Bengal.

While in the rest of the country, the ruling Congress swept the poll, in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, the electorate refused to be swayed by the radical postures of the ruling Congress. While the ruling Congress was able to win an overwhelming majority of the seats from the other States, in West Bengal despite the fact that there was a division in the democratic vote, the Congress could not secure a majority of the seats. It could not even emerge as the single largest party in the Assembly and its vote plummeted to an all-time low of 27.3 per cent. It could secure only 105 seats as against the CPI(M)'s 113 seats; CPI(M) obtained 31.98 per cent of the vote. As for the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament), the Congress could secure only thirteen and CPI three with Congress-support, against the CPI(M)'s twenty. All the ruling Congress calculations had gone awry. After experimenting with a ramshackle opportunist coalition for two months, the Assembly was again dissolved without giving an opportunity to the opposition to form a Government and the State was placed under President's rule once more—to make even more thorough

preparations to ensure a Congress victory in a future election. With the confidence which the ruling Congress gained from the sweeping victory in the rest of the country, official repression by the Central Reserve Police and the West Bengal police with the army standing by and unofficial repression through murder and mayhem by hoodlums organised by the Congress were intensified. The Congress no longer needed the services of the Naxalites. It took over from them and compelled large numbers to surrender to it and started operating in the name of its student and youth organisations. With this semi-fascist terror entire areas were "liberated" and declared out of bounds for the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties. The cadres and supporters of the Left parties were driven out, the offices of the Left parties and of trade unions affiliated to the Centre of Indian Trade Unions and others were occupied or burnt down. The targets of these attacks were the strongholds of the CPI(M) and other Left parties and they were held under virtual occupation by the Congress hoodlums. Thousands were detained without trial, tens of thousands implicated in false cases.

Even then when the Fifth General Elections were announced to be held in March 1972 for all the other State, West Bengal was excluded from the list of States in which elections were to be held. The ruling Congress was still not sure of winning the State because of its experience in 1971. But after the successful conclusion of the liberation struggle of Bangladesh and the victory in the war with Pakistan within a few weeks, the ruling Congress acquired confidence that it could have another walkover in the rest of the country including West Bengal and the date for West Bengal elections was also fixed. As for Bangladesh, there was no reason in West Bengal to give the credit for victory only to the Congress. The people had seen Left and democratic parties mobilising mass support for the Bangladesh struggle helping the refugees and pressurising the Government of India to recognise the Government of Bangladesh and to give it all aid ; so that the atrocities and barbarities committed by the Pakistan army could be ended without delay.

Preparations to “Win” Elections

From secret reports from the Intelligence Branch of the police and other sources also the Congress knew that while it could be sure of victory in the rest of the country, the outcome in West Bengal was still doubtful. However, to deny the democratic processes again in West Bengal even in such a situation when the rest of the country was going to the poll would have thoroughly exposed the democratic pretensions of the Congress rulers. So elections had to be held in West Bengal. But intelligence and other political reports about the prospects were seriously considered and preparations made to win the elections.

Already by this time, 34 Assembly constituencies from where Left and democratic candidates have always won with impressive majorities were under the occupation of Congress hoodlums with the Left and democratic parties physically prevented from having any access to large sections of the voters there. A list of these constituencies with what was being done there by the Congress hoodlums hand in hand with the army, CRP and police was handed over to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, as early as on January 31, 1972, by a deputation of leaders and members of Parliament of the parties constituting the Left Front. Even without a cursory glance of the memorandum, the Prime Minister said they were “blatant lies”. It is quite clear that the Prime Minister not only knew what was happening, not only had she given her blessings to the activities of these hoodlums, but the Congress leadership including Mrs. Gandhi and the entire governmental machinery had actually drawn the blue-print for this fascistic attack on parliamentary democracy. It was for the carrying out of this diabolical plan that a Congress leader Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, Minister of the Centre was appointed the Minister in-charge of West Bengal affairs—an extra-ordinary step taken in no other State under President’s rule in India. Mrs. Gandhi herself was confirming this conspiracy when in one of her campaign speeches in West Bengal a few days before the poll she justified the violence of her party’s student and youth wings against the Leftist parties as hitting back in self-defence. Earlier

the Prime Minister on the December 3, 1971, whilst speaking at a Congress rally in Calcutta at a time when Indian territory was being bombed by the Pakistan Airforce, went out of her way to pay compliments to those who organised the Congress victory in the recently held Municipality election in Burdwan and remembered with gratitude the 'sacrifices' made by many for this achievement. She knew how for one year the police officers organised the Congress hoodlums to attack the CPI(M) and others opposed to the Congress and how gangsters were used with the help of the police to win the election. The Government of India left no doubt of how officers should act by awarding the President's Police Medal to the Superintendent of Police of the district who refused to arrest Congress hoodlums who murdered 15 CPI(M) members and supporters in the town within a year and lent a helping hand in suppressing the democratic forces and installing armed Congressmen in the entire district where 60 CPI(M) members and supporters were murdered within one year, hundreds of trade unionists, Kisan Sabha workers, students etc., were detained without trial, and thousands implicated in false cases. The gangsters of the youth and student wings of Mrs. Gandhi's party were on the rampage loaded with knives, bombs, revolvers and even sten-guns. They were killing and maiming with impunity to terrorise the voters. If any action can be justified in self-defence against these armed thugs, it would have been the resistance of the people. But any time, anywhere, the people resisted, the CRP and police waiting in the wings pounced on them and completed the job which the Congress gangsters had begun. The plan was conceived and directed by the Congress Government at the Centre.

Terror in 34 Constituencies

Even a roughly drawn picture of some of these 34 constituencies is enough to show the horrifying situation that existed there.

Baranagar, for instance, a constituency from which I have been getting elected in all the elections since 1952, thirtyfour of

the CPI(M) cadres and supporters had been killed here, over 150 maimed or badly injured. About a hundred workers had been arrested and implicated in cases and warrants of arrest against another 482 had been issued. About 200 houses and our trade union offices had been ransacked, looted and set on fire. Over a thousand people had been rendered homeless. Over fifty thousand of the total 114,000 voters in areas affected by the terror were inaccessible to CPI(M) campaigners.

In the North Beliaghata constituency, Calcutta, the CPI(M) was prevented from approaching 64,000 of the 78,000 voters.

Take another constituency—Dum Dum, 24-Parganas district—More than twentyfive persons had been killed here, over 300 injured, more than a hundred houses had been attacked, 1200 persons had been thrown out of their homes. About a thousand workers and employees were being prevented from reporting to duty. Four hundred and fifty persons had been arrested. Eight offices of CPI(M) and a number of trade union offices had been occupied by the ruling party's hoodlums. Anjali Ghosh, worker of the Democratic Women's organisation, was killed for refusing to divulge information about her son's whereabouts to the murderers. A woman and a child were burnt to death, and a number of women were subjected to indignities in the Dakshindari colony.

In Khardah, 24-Parganas district, 18 CPI(M) cadres were killed in the course of one year and ten to fifteen persons were being arrested everyday on concocted charges.

Take the Durgapur-Asansol industrial area in Burdwan district. Two hundred thirty eight leaders and functionaries of trade unions had been killed in this area. In Durgapur alone, four leading trade unionists in the Steel Plant had been murdered, two detained without trial under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act and 19 under the Prevention of Violent Activities Act, 1100 workers had been implicated in false cases, over 500 had been arrested under various charges ; in the Mining and Allied Machinery Plant, five leading trade unionists had been killed; in the Durgapur Project Colony, two had been killed . During the strike of the Durgapur Steel workers, 25,000

policemen including the Central Reserve Police had been mobilised to suppress the 60,000 workers. The police accompanied by the hoodlums of the Congress and the Communist Party of India had gone from house to house brutally beating up the striking workers and their families not sparing even the children. Even the supply of milk and fresh vegetables to the quarters of the workers was stopped by the police. In the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, 123 trade union leaders and workers had been arrested under various charges. The situation was more or less the same in every single factory in the Steel Town. In the Raniganj colliery area over a thousand workers were implicated in false cases, many workers were under detention, many workers had been driven away from the mines and their quarters were under daily attack in the presence of the police.

In the villages of Burdwan, the terror was intense. Beatings, tortures, killings, arson were all common. Large chunks of the population had to evacuate from these areas for safety. In Kalna, for instance, 25 CPI(M) leaders and workers had been killed by gangsters ; many injured, hundreds of houses burnt down and peasants' crops looted. All this with the direct help of the police.

Kiriti Chattaraj, a well-known S.U.C. supporter of village Ichapur under Faridpur Police Station in Burdwan district was brutally killed in his house. In Birbhum district fierce attacks were launched by the police with the help of anti-social elements and Naxalites against the SUC, one of the strong Left parties. Over 400 SUC members and supporters were arrested on fabricated charges and several hundreds were forced to leave their areas. Even when Swaraswati Bagdi, wife of a S.U.C. supporter and sixteen year old Subhadra Bagdi complained of mollestation by six Central Reserve Police, no action was taken. Prasanta Das, Secretary of the Berhampur Town Committee of the SUC was severaly assaulted by anti-socials belonging to the Congress. Similar attacks against the members and supporters of SUC. and other Left parties were organised in constituencies like Kulpi, Canning, Mathurapur, Patharpratima, Kultali etc., in 24-Parganas.

The details of this violence and terror can fill volumes. But even the few details narrated here give an idea of the situation prevailing in the 34 constituencies when the announcement of the election was made.

Intensification of Violence

The Congress rulers changed their earlier decision not to hold elections in West Bengal on the calculation that with the “softening” of the bases of the democratic movement in these 34 constituencies by attacks of the CRP, police and goondas, and with victory in Bangladesh the Congress could ride to success in West Bengal, too. But soon after the announcement of the election was made, the Centre’s Intelligence reports gave a different picture. In the prevailing situation, the reports said, the Congress had no chance of winning a majority of seats. The Congress had even named its prospective Chief Minister for the State and that person, Mr. Siddhartha Shankar Ray, had declared that he would contest the election from a Muslim majority constituency in North Bengal. Within a few days, obviously because of the Intelligence reports, he reversed this decision and announced that he was not contesting the election. But the ruling Congress certainly was not prepared to leave it at that and sit idly while the Left Front won a majority in the elections. The Prime Minister herself directed the Intelligence department to give detailed estimates of probable voting figures in each constituency. On this report, plans were worked out to “win” a majority for the Congress. Information was reaching the Left parties that a serious conspiracy was afoot against the voters and the Left Front. But only one part of this plan—the intensification of the violence and terror in the 34 constituencies could be seen on the surface during the ten weeks or so between the decision to hold the election and the actual polling on March 11.

About 20,000 persons, workers and supporters of the CPI(M) and the Left Front, many of them with their families, were evicted from their homes and sent out of the constituencies where they lived in about 34 constituencies.

Attempts on the lives of a number of Left Front candidates were made during these weeks. Prasanta Sur, CPI(M) candidate from Tollygunj, was shot at from a rifle when he was campaigning in his constituency on February 22. One of his workers who shielded Prasanta Sur, received the bullet and died. Haridas Malakar, CPI(M) candidate in Dhakuria in the two previous elections and a workers' leader was kidnapped in an attempted murder. He was saved after he had sustained serious injuries. Jatin Chakrabarty (RSP) who was put up in the Dhakuria constituency was attacked with a bomb in an attempt to kill him on February 27; Probodh Purkait, the Left Front candidate in Kultali, was kidnapped on the eve of the polling. A number of other Left Front candidates—Tarun Sen Gupta (Dum Dum), Krishnapada Ghosh (North Beliaghata), Jyoti Bhattacharyya (Ballygunj), Gopal Krishna Bhattacharyya (Panihat), among others—had to leave their constituencies and live elsewhere.

Two of the CPI(M) candidates—Benoy Konar and Dilip Dubey, were in jail and were not released to campaign in the election while a third, Dilip Mazumdar, in Durgapur was allowed to enter his constituency only a few days before polling. Haradhan Roy, CPI(M) candidate in Ranigunj, was arrested on the eve of election but under popular pressure had to be released.

In just one armed raid in Dum Dum on March 5, six days before polling, a large number of persons were killed, over a hundred were injured and arrested, hundreds of houses and shops were gutted. All the election offices of the CPI(M) were burnt down. With this, the whole constituency of Dum Dum was "occupied" by the ruling Congress gangsters. Sonarpur was the target of attack everyday. In the morning of February 17, Nirmal Chatterjee, a CPI(M) worker, was killed by known notorious anti-social elements mobilised by the Congress and according to the complaint made by the wife of the man they had just murdered, she was raped by these congress hoodlums. The police had to take into custody the leader of this gang but influential Congress and CPI leaders moved for his release on

bail. Twenty-year old Ashima Poddar was arrested in North Beliaghata and she complained of being molested in the police lock-up. There were a number of other cases of such assaults on women. Similar intensified attacks were going on in other constituencies also—Tollygunj, Dhakuria, Jadavpur, in the South of Calcutta ; Baranagar, Panihati, Khardah, Noapara, Titagarh in the north of 24-Parganas district, in many of the 25 constituencies in Burdwan district and elsewhere. An election procession led by two CPI(M) Members of Parliament, taken out in North Beliaghata, Calcutta on March 5, after duly informing the Home Secretary and the Commissioner of Police, was attacked with bombs and one of the MPs, Samar Mukherjee, the Deputy Leader of CPI(M) in the Loksabha was injured. The police had strict orders not to arrest the Congress hoodlums. A few days before the election Congress hoodlums tried to disrupt the election meeting of Prativa Mukherjee by hurling stones and kidnapping some election workers.

CEC gets a taste of it

Rather than give more and more details of the terror from different areas, it is enough to relate just one incident involving the Chief Election Commissioner, Mr. Sen-Verma, himself. On being requested by the Left parties, on February 17, Mr. Sen-Verma, went round some of the areas to assess the situation for himself. He along with others was proceeding along Talpukur Road towards Mianbagan Bustee in Beliaghata constituency, Calcutta where 10,000 voters live, when ruling Congress hoodlums took up menacing positions on the overhead railway lines armed with bombs, revolvers, pipe-guns, etc., threatening to attack the Chief Election Commissioner if he attempted to visit Mianbagan Bustee or any of the other terror-ridden areas of the constituency—where 64,000 of the 78,000 voters lived. The police officer escorting Mr. Sen-Verma asked him not to proceed any further because the police would not be responsible for his safety and security. The CPI(M) candidate, Krishnapada Ghosh, repeatedly requested Mr. Sen-Verma to go and see for himself and asked him, "If the Chief Election Commissioner

cannot visit the area, where is the possibility of campaigners of the Left Front going there and how can there be any free and fair election ?” The Election Commissioner also saw areas where CPI(M) candidates and ex-members of the Assembly were unable to move about freely or even live in their homes because of the attacks by armed gangs of the Congress supported by the police. But all this did not prevent the Chief Election Commissioner from doing his duty to the Congress rulers by declaring that the pre-poll climate in the State was quite satisfactory.

Every incident that was taking place was being brought to the notice of all the authorities—the Prime Minister, the Governor, the Chief Election Commissioner. But not a thing was done to stop these attacks on the Left Front candidates and their campaigners or on the voters. In fact, with the approach of the polling, conditions got worse and worse.

Thus the setting for the “free and fair” election in West Bengal was : nearly 660 workers and supporters of the CPI(M) killed, thousands assaulted and injured ; about 1000 workers of opposition parties and trade unions detained without trial ; tens of thousands arrested and implicated in cases ; warrants issued for the arrest of tens of thousands of workers of political parties and mass organisations ; daily intensifying terror in at least 34 constituencies.

Even with all this, it was certain that even in these 34 constituencies, if there was peaceful polling, the Left Front would increase its vote. The questions were : will the Congress rulers permit the electorate to vote and to how many constituencies will they extend their plan ? Did they have any other plans to put into operation ?

The answers to these questions were provided on the eve of polling, on polling day and the subsequent days during which counting of votes took place.

Departure from Usual Practice

The personnel for conducting the election was changed in a big way and many regular employees of the Government who

had been earlier appointed for poll duty, but could not be relied upon to act as obedient tools of the Congress party found their appointments peremptorily cancelled—some of them on March 10, the day before the polling.

Instructions to Presiding Officers from Returning Officers this time included two astonishing paragraphs which made a big departure from the practice followed hitherto.

The two paragraphs read :

- (vii) “As ballot papers will be supplied to you in bundles of 50 or less, it will not be possible to shuffle individual ballot papers as used to be done hitherto. It would be enough if the first three or four bundles of ballot papers are shuffled and the bundles used at random and not in consecutive serial order.
- (viii) You should take special care to hand over the packets containing the ballot paper account and the paper seal account separately to the officer-in-charge of the receiving centre. The packet containing the ballot paper account and the paper seal account should not be sealed. In the room in which the sealed ballot boxes are kept in safe custody before counting, the ballot paper account and the paper seal account of each station should be kept on top of the ballot box or boxes from that station and so these accounts should be delivered separately.”

Why were these official instructions given not to shuffle the ballot papers as they should be shuffled, not to use ballot papers in consecutive serial order, and not to seal ballot paper and paper seal accounts ? Combined with other departures from the usual practice—declaring holiday on March 10 (the day previous to the election day), postponing counting of votes (except in three constituencies) to March 13 while polling was over on the 11th—these instructions facilitated tampering and even change of ballot boxes, substitution or adding of ballot papers, replacing ballot paper and paper seal accounts, etc.

With what happened on polling day and counting days, the plan of “combined operations” of the Congress rules can be accurately described now.

There were the usual election promises on the eve of poll by the Prime Minister and large-scale distribution of money. Ruling Congress workers were promised jobs after the elections ; a number of Primary Schools were suddenly sanctioned with a view to giving employment to Congress supporters ; a large number of permits for buses and taxis were issued—all to the Congress supporters ; lavish cash rewards were distributed in many cases ; the Prime Minister promised to sanction Rs. 143 crores for West Bengal, to re-open the Martin Light Railway, etc., if the Congress was voted to office ; the Second Hooghly River Bridge project and the tube railway for Calcutta were made dependent on Congress victory. The All India Radio and Film Division of the Government of India were shamelessly put into service for the Congress party. Even with all these highly corrupt and objectionable practices, the Congress knew that it could not sway the voters. Then came the rest of the plan of “combined operations.”

At the beginning of the campaign, gangsters belonging to the ruling Congress-CPI alliance were threatening voters with dire consequences if they tried to vote for the Left Front candidates. In fact, the voters were told that they would not be allowed to vote in that case. But when they found that the trend was in favour of the Left Front they amended their tactics because they could not trust the voters, not even supporters of the Congress. So, in many areas the voters were told they need not go for voting since they would any way vote for the Congress-CPI alliance, their votes would be cast by volunteers of the Congress and the CPI.

On Polling Day

When I myself were round my constituency of Baranagar on polling day on March 11, I found that 100 of the 133 polling stations in the constituency were under the occupation of the armed thugs of the Congress-CPI alliance with the full police

support, and that these thugs were chasing out the polling agents of the Left Front and were physically preventing the voters from voting. At 11 a.m., I demanded that polling he stopped. When the demand was rejected, I had no alternative but to withdrawing the polling agents from all the stations for their safety. By 4 in the evening reports of similar situation had reached from 18 constituencies when CPI(M) State Secretary informed the Chief Election Commissioner of what was happening. More reports arrived during the night and the next day, and it was clear that this type of open gangsterism had been the general feature in fifty-one constituencies (a few more than that had been listed by the Left parties).

About seventy thousand of the total of 114,000 voters of Baranagar constituency were prevented from going to the polling stations. The gangsters in occupation of the stations took hold of all the ballot papers, stamped them on the symbol of Congress supported CPI candidate and put them in the ballot boxes.

The procedure for voting this time required every voter to put his signature or thumb impression on a counterfoil attached to the ballot paper and this had increased the time for casting a vote. On the average it took about a minute to cast a genuine vote and not very much more than 600 votes could be cast in any one polling station during the ten hours of polling. But in Baranagar it was reported that within four hours after the polling started, 933 out of 963 votes in station No. 91, 1080 out of 1090 in station No. 72, 858 out of 880 in station No. 93, 728 out of 800 in station No. 94 had been cast. The total votes cast were about 100,000 out of 114,000 voters and the election was almost over 1 p.m.

In Beliaghata North, 10,000 voters in the Mianbagan Bustee were not allowed to come out of their houses from 5 p.m. on March 10 to 5 p.m. on March 11. Fortyfive thousand voters from ward Nos. 30, 31, 34 and 35 were not allowed to go near the polling booths. Among them were 9,000 Muslim voters from Ward 31.

In Manicktolla constituency, Calcutta 32,000 voters were prevented from voting ; in Entally, 25,000 voters mostly Muslims were not allowed to cast their votes ; in Tollygunge 75,000 voters were prevented from voting ; in Ballygunj about 30,000. In the 24-Parganas—Dum Dum, Khardah, Panihati, Noapara, Titagarh, were totally affected by this gangsterism. In Sonarpur, in this district, 50 per cent of the voters were not allowed to vote. A number of other constituencies were partially affected. in Howrah district, Bally, Howrah North, Howrah South, Howrah Central, Domjur and Amta were the affected constituencies. The terror was the most widespread in Burdwan district where the CPI(M) had won 24 out of the 25 seats in 1971. The totally affected constituencies in this district were Nadanghat, Kalna, Memari, Burdwan South, Burdwan North, Manteswar, Barabani, Asansol, Khandaghosh and Durgapur. The rest of the constituencies were partially affected. A number of constituencies in other districts were also affected.

Intimidation of Polling Officials

While thus voters were being prevented from approaching the polling stations, men belonging to the Congress and CPI entered the stations fully armed, intimidated the Presiding Officers and polling officers wherever necessary, scared away the voters who had managed to queue before the stations, closed the doors of the stations, forced the officer to issue them the ballot papers and they themselves signed or gave thumb impressions on the counterfoil, stamped the papers on the symbol of the Congress or CPI candidate, folded the papers and inserted them in the boxes. In Cooch-behar in Tufanganj constituency, a polling station No. 93 was captured by armed rowdies connected with a religious institution and votes were forcibly cast in favour of Congress. The polling officer's written protest was not taken into consideration during the time of counting. In Naihati constituency in booths 11 and 67 where there are 750 and 1214 votes, not one genuine voter was allowed to cast his vote. In other cases where genuine voters took the ballot papers after signing or giving thumb-impression on the counterfoil, the

papers were snatched from their hands, stamped by the gangsters and then given back to the voter to cast in the box. In many stations where voters resisted and stamped the papers themselves on the symbol of their choice, if that symbol happened to be of the parties of the Left Front, the papers were snatched and torn. From many stations reports have come of heaps of torn ballot papers lying about. Polling agents of Left Front parties who protested against all this were either physically thrown out or threatened into silence.

Apart from the constituencies mentioned, in about 30 other constituencies, about 450 polling stations were under the occupation of Congress-CPI gangsters who stamped the ballot papers and cast them as they wanted.

The people including some supporters of the Congress tried to protest against this total violation of their right to free vote but the police were under orders not to take notice of such protests. Nine people were killed on polling day by the police, CRP or Congress-CPI gangsters—two in Baranagar, one in Titagarh, one in Howrah, one in Tollygunge, one in Sodpur, one in Beliaghata North and one in Burdwan.

Left Front Agents Barred

Though the Governor and police officials had repeatedly given the assurance that polling agents of the Left Front parties would be given all protection to do their duties inside the polling stations, the agents of these parties could not enter 40 stations in Baranagar, 23 in North Beliaghata, 60 in South Beliaghata, 90 in Dum Dum, almost all the booths in Khardah, Burdwan North and Burdwan South, Kalna, Memari, Nadanghat, Barabani and many other constituencies. Polling agents in thousands of other stations where they were allowed to enter them were held practically as captives by Congress-CPI gangsters. The police, which have all the power to shoot and kill people on the streets, in lock-ups, jails, said they could not give the minimum protection to the polling agents. Obviously the police was directly involved in the conspiracy and had instructions not to intervene against the Congress-CPI gangsters.

In 63 stations in Beliaghata North Constituency, the gangsters threatened polling agents of the CPI(M) candidate with pistols and pipe-guns. It is enough to narrate the experience of one to realise the plight of all the polling agents. The polling agent in a station in the CIT Office was beaten by the gangsters, his appointment letter was snatched away, his food packet was thrown away and one of the gangsters sat next to him with a pistol aimed at him from 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. and in his presence all the bogus stamping of votes was done. Everytime the Polling agent protested, he was mercilessly beaten. At one stage, the gangsters began dragging him out threatening to kill him and only the pleadings of the polling officer saved his life.

Another polling agent from Baranagar gave this report. At about 9-30 a.m. three hoodlums entered the station and questioned his presence. When he drew the attention of the presiding officer to this, a revolver was aimed at him and he was asked to go and sit next to the presiding officer. Another twelve gangsters then joined them. They asked the voters standing in the queue outside to leave the place. They said, "You go away. Why do you unnecessarily take the trouble, we will cast the votes on your behalf." But the voters did not move away. Then some of the hoodlums stood at the doors brandishing arms to prevent the voters from entering, while the others asked the presiding officer to issue the ballot papers to them offering to give the thumb-impressions on the counterfoil themselves. When the presiding officer protested saying he might lose his job, the gangsters told him, "If you sign you will retain your job, otherwise you will lose your life." The presiding officer then began signing the papers and all the votes were cast by 11 a.m.

In many stations in many constituencies protection was asked for polling agents and though promised, it was never given by the police and these agents were drive out of the stations at the point of guns. The Chief Electoral Officer was also sent list of some polling station which was endangered by the hooligans and seeking his help for peaceful polling. But no action was taken.

The experience of the presiding officer in Baranagar which he has related is perhaps the experience of all polling officers who were not servile to the Congress-CPI gangsters and were terrorised into acting as they wanted. This officer reached his place of duty on March 10. Two persons were introduced to him and another polling officer, one of them belonged to the Congress and the other to the CPI. They told the officers how the police in Dum Dum had helped them to clear the constituency of CPI(M) cadre, assured them full security and asked the officials to co-operate with them during polling. When polling started at 7 a. m. on March 11—with the agent of the CPI present and no agent of the CPI(M)—there were about 200 men and women in the queue outside. After about an hour, some volunteers came from outside and began asking the voters from the open window to vote for the CPI. As the officer closed the window, he was threatened. In another half an hour, ten rowdies demonstratively walked into the station and took up positions inside. The officer protested, he was threatened and asked to keep quiet. One woman voter on refusing to vote for the CPI candidate and in front of the officials, her ballot paper was snatched away. NVF guards and policemen on duty advised the officer to keep quiet as nothing could be done. The officer asked the polling agent of the CPI candidate to ask the men of his party, the rowdies, to leave the booth. He pleaded helplessness. Again, as a young girl protested against not being allowed to vote freely, she was dragged away by her hair. Thereafter, they asked the voters to disperse and ordered the officer to sign and hand over the ballot papers to them. They then closed the doors and began stamping the ballot papers. By about 12 noon, about 1090 votes had been cast. They left a few papers unstamped and asked the officer to seal the box. The officer said, according to rules, polling had to continue till 5 p.m. and he could not seal the box before that time. After 5 p.m. the two leaders of the Congress and the CPI asked the officer to fill up the presiding officer's Form which is a confidential report. He was reluctant to do it in their presence but they forced him to do it. Before leaving they said that Jyoti

Basu had polled 90 per cent of the votes in that station and the adjoining station last time and this time they were reversing that and they threatened the officer with dire consequences if he disclosed anything of what happened during the day. In many booths of several constituencies the ballot boxes were filled in on the night of the 10th and the first voters who queued up before the booths before 7 a.m. were told that their votes had been cast even before polling had begun.

Gangsters Capture Booths

In Krishnagore Constituency Sri Amritendu Mukherjee, CPI(M) candidate, was promised in writing all help by the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police, Nadia District when he expressed apprehension of gangsterism by ruling Congress workers. But on the election day, his agents were driven out by armed gangsters from 22 polling stations (where about 18 thousands voters were to cast their votes) within a few hours of the start of polling. The District Magistrate took the unusual step of accompanying the candidate and his agents to visit some stations, incognito. When he questioned a rowdy, he was threatened and even when his bodyguard revealed his identity, the rowdies continued to give provocative slogans. The District Magistrate left the place without taking any steps for a free and fair election. Thereafter as was only to be expected, the rowdies took full control of the stations and stamped ballot papers with impunity after chasing away the voters. The District Magistrate on second thoughts retreated and failed to perform his duty, because the Government of India had left no doubt of how the administration should act to put back the Congress into power.

In Noapara Constituency, 24-Parganas district, Jamini Saha, the CPI(M) candidate, informed the Returning Officer on March 10 at midnight that ballot papers were being forcibly seized by Congress gangsters in a particular polling station and requested immediate action. But no steps were taken and on March 11, station after station was captured, voters chased away and ballot papers stamped by a few armed rowdies.

In Khardah Constituency, 24-Parganas district, in most of the polling stations, agents could not be sent as the police refused to escort them in areas where armed Congress-CPI gangsters were operating. By 9 a.m. on March 11, operation of the gangsters was extended to other areas. The CPI(M) candidate sent a telegram to the Election Commissioner and contacted other officers. By the 12 noon CPI(M) officers and houses of its supporters were attacked and set on fire by the hoodlums. But the police lent a helping hand only in rescuing the trapped men and women. No action was taken against the culprits. The District Magistrate and a police officer reached the police station at about 3-30 p.m. and asked the candidate why he was sitting there. On being told that he was the victim of "free and fair election", the District Magistrate left the place perhaps fully satisfied that he had acted according to the desire of the Congress leadership. The some District Magistrate on being informed by me at 11 a.m. on the day of polling of the situation in Baranagar visited the area at about 2-30 p.m. long after the election was over, did not think it necessary to meet the complainant and reported back that the situation was normal.

Tampering with Ballot Boxes and Papers

While gangsterism thus ruled over fiftyone constituencies where no free voting was allowed, in the other constituencies where to some extent, the voters could exercise their will large-scale tampering of ballot boxes and ballot papers was resorted to. The two new instructions given to the presiding officers quoted earlier facilitated this tampering.

Those who did this tampering in their enthusiasm overreached themselves and left behind a lot of evidence.

Many of the ballot boxes came to the counting tables with either their seals broken or without seals.

In the constituencies where the SUC candidates were contesting on behalf of the Left Front, the party had replaced its earlier seal of "SUC" with signatures of their party leaders. The seals which the party's agents affixed on their boxes bore

the signature of their party leaders but when the boxes were examined before being opened for counting, the seals were found to be the old one with "SUC" on them. The riggers had not noticed the change and had forged the earlier seal and used it to reseal the boxes after opening them stealthily.

The depository where the boxes from the Asansol, Barabani, and Jamuria constituencies were kept was visited by certain persons sent from Calcutta and no one else was allowed to go near the room. The purpose of the visit is clear.

The ballot boxes of the constituencies of Bankura Sub-Division of the District, were taken in lorries to the Circuit House at Bankura, escorted by the Central Reserve Police. Inside the room where the boxes were kept, heaps of ballot papers were stacked under a cover according to an eye witness. Manipulation of votes could have been the only purpose of this.

In Cooch-behar District numbers of unused ballot papers of Sitai constituency were exhibited by Left parties to the Press and there is no explanation as to how these were found lying about.

In Diamond Harbour, 24-Parganas District, where the ballot boxes of many constituencies were kept, after the work of manipulation was over while the extra papers were being removed, about 50 ballot papers of Kulpi constituency fell out and were collected by a passer-by.

Any one who has cast a vote knows that only one folded ballot paper can be inserted at a time through the aperture on top of the ballot box. Yet when the boxes were opened from many stations in many constituencies forty to fifty papers bunched together had been found. They could never have been inserted into the boxes through the aperture, the boxes must have been opened to enable such bunches to be put in.

Ballot papers of one constituency were found in boxes of other constituencies. For instance, ballot papers of Mainaguri constituency were found in boxes from Kharba and Kalchini, of English Bazar in boxes from Gazol, of Kumarganj in boxes from Tapan, of Champdani in Chinsurah, of Tollygunj in Dhakuria, of Balagarh in Chinsurah, of Tapan in Raiganj, of

Barabani in Hirapur, of Beliaghata North in Gopiballavpur and so on.

Ballot papers of Entally constituency, serial Nos. 101493 to 101499, bearing the signature of the Presiding Officer and stamped in favour of the CPI(M) candidate were found on the streets of Calcutta. Ballot papers of Kulpi and Magrahat West constituencies duly stamped in favour of Left Front candidates were found on the banks of the Hooghly River. Ballot paper No. 104632 of Suri constituency stamped in favour of SUC candidate was found on the street.

More Votes Than Voters

In quite some cases there were more votes in the boxes than the number of voters. In the Domkal constituency, in booth No. 52, the total number of votes in the electoral list is 500, but 685 ballot papers were found in the ballot box from this booth. In the Hot House (CIT) Booth of Manicktolla constituency, there were 810 ballot papers in the box while the number of voters is 801. In Jhargram constituency total votes polled in Booth No. 59 was 320, but 458 ballot papers were found in the box. In booth No. 31 in Ghatal, 500 ballot papers were found while the total pool was 300.

In Jhargram constituency, the total votes polled were a little over 39,000 as calculated from reports from polling agents and the figure was also confirmed by the Returning Officer. But when the boxes were opened, there were 10,000 more ballot papers.

A bunch of counter-foils which are supposed to be deposited with the Returning Officer was found outside a polling booth in Gopiballavpur. There are many many more such instances.

In the Domkal constituency, in as many as four anchals which constitute a sprawling area where the Left Front has hundreds of workers and thousands of voters, not a single vote stamped in favour of the Left Front candidate was found in the boxes which was noticed with surprise by the counting agent when they were emptied.

In some constituencies in Calcutta, there was peaceful polling in some polling stations of the same constituency with forcible take-over by Congress gangsters of others. There are also eye witness accounts of voting having taken place in some constituencies on 10th night in private houses where some ballot boxes were brought.

At The Time of Counting

After the experience of polling day, the Left parties apprehended that counting would also be done under the auspices of the armed thugs of the Congress and CPI. The authorities promised that none other than authorised counting agents and the officials would be allowed into the halls where counting was to take place. The fate of this promise was no different from that of all the earlier promises.

Normally eleven to fourteen counting agents are allowed for each candidate and the candidate and his election agent are allowed free access to the counting places. But on March 13, the counting halls were packed with men of the Congress and the CPI, their trouser pockets bulging with revolvers. While the police officers stood like statues, these men took control of the counting halls. Right in Calcutta, in the office of the Collectorate, a few yards away from Writers' Building and the police headquarters, hordes of Congress volunteers, recruited mostly from the scum of the underworld had taken over the counting halls. They burst bombs right in front of the police officers. Instead of taking any action they tried to explain it away as cracker bursts in celebration of victory—when the counting had not even started. All objections raised by the Left Front candidates, their election agents and counting agents to the presence of these thugs were ignored by the officials while the thugs brought out their revolvers and took threatening postures.

Then the counting began and from beginning to end it was a farce.

Bundles of ballot papers stamped in favour of Left Front candidates were stacked together with a few congress of CPI votes on top and at the bottom and the entire lot was counted

as votes for the Congress or CPI. This was detected in a number of constituencies including Bishnupur West, Uttarpara, Chandernagar, Haripal etc. Some impartial counting officers also raised objections but to no effect.

A ballot paper stamped on more than one symbol is invalidated. In the Purbasthali constituency in Burdwan District, a counting officer affixed a rubber stamp on his thumb and began stamping on the Congress symbol on the ballot papers already stamped in favour of the CPI(M) candidates and a large number of votes were invalidated. No protests were of any use and hence the counting agents of CPI(M) had to leave. In Kamarhati by employing the same method 16,000 Left Front votes were invalidated—25% of the votes polled were invalidated, something unknown before.

In Bagnan constituency, the CPI(M) candidate was leading by 6000 votes in the first round of counting. Counting was suspended and after a few hours, the Congress candidate was declared elected with a margin of 1228 votes.

In Hingalganj there was grave irregularity in counting and the CPI candidate was declared elected by a margin of 403 votes.

During the counting in Bishnupur constituency where it was found that the Left Front candidate was leading, attempts were made to disturb the counting. But the counters were not wholly successful.

In Entally, Taltala, Canning etc., new ballot papers, stored for the purpose, were mixed with those in the boxes to give victory to Congress and CPI candidates.

In the Arsha Constituency of Purulia District, in Behala West and Rajarhat Constituencies in 24-Parganas District, in South Uluberia and Bagnan Constituencies in Howrah District among others there are similar reports of various tactics being employed to change the results in favour of the Congress during counting.

After the experience of counting on March 13, the parties of the Left Front decided to withdraw their agents from the counting. And after that everything was done by the Congress-CPI thugs as they liked.

Thus from the pre-poll violence to the violence on polling day, the prevention of a free vote, the tampering with ballot boxes and papers, the malpractices during counting and even at last stage declaring defeated candidates as elected—the whole election process was rigged.

It was no Indira Wave

Yet the Congress rulers stoutly deny that there has been any rigging, that the CPI(M) vote had fallen only by three per cent which is nothing abnormal and the increase in the Congress vote is due to the “Indira Wave” and the Bangladesh Victory. This is all humbug. The “Indira Wave” was at its highest at the time of the election in March 1971. But then that wave had not touched the West Bengal shores. In that election the Congress vote had slumped to the all-time low of 27%. This despite the fact that there was no Left and Democratic unity to fight the Congress. The “Indira Wave” is not rolling so high even in the other States swept by it in 1971. From 1971 to 1972, the Congress vote has come down from 55 to 52 per cent in Andhra Pradesh, from 63 : 8 to 56.62 per cent in Maharashtra, from 53 to 46.9 per cent in Haryana, from 71 to 53 per cent in Mysore, from 64 to 48 per cent in Delhi. While thus the “Indira Wave” is receding all over the country after riding high in 1971, in West Bengal which stemmed the wave in 1971, it is alleged to have begun riding high suddenly in 1972 when Left and democratic unity had been reforged to fight the Congress, with the Congress vote amazingly increasing from 27.3 per cent in 1971 to 49.4 per cent in 1972. Who do the Congress leaders think are naive enough to believe this wave theory of theirs ?

As for the victory in Bangladesh, it was the Left Parties which had campaigned amongst the people in support of the Bangladesh freedom struggle while the Congress was keeping quiet. If there is any swing because of this issue it should be in quiet. If there is any swing because of this issue it should be in favour of the Left. Again how can the Congress leaders claim that the Bangladesh victory gave them votes in West Bengal

while in adjacent Assam, another State bordering Bangladesh where hundreds of thousands of evacuees had taken shelter the congress vote came down from 57 per cent in 1971 to 53 per cent in 1972.

No, all this political swing theory cannot explain the increase in Congress vote. If there is any political swing it is in favour of the Left and Democratic forces who have reformed their unity. In fact the Congress alarmed at its dismal prospects took recourse to terroristic and fraudulent methods.

Not any theory of political swing but the total and unashamed rigging of the whole election can explain this tremendous increase in the Congress vote. It is with this rigging that the Congress has succeeded in its aim of preventing the Left Front from winning a majority or even entering the Assembly in sizable force.

The election results confirm this.

The phenomenal decrease in Left votes in the 51 constituencies mentioned above do not prove any "swing", they only confirm the Leftist charge of rigging and gangsterism. Here we cite only three instances to illustrate the point. In Kalna the Leftist vote is recorded as having decreased from 31,890 in 1971 to 929 only in this election a year later ; in Nadanghat the decrease is from 34,288 to 2,621; and in Manteswar the Left vote fell from 29,750 to 5,149. This by itself constitutes a damning evidence of the large-scale rigging and gangster operations that have already been described.

What "Swing" Theory Cannot Explain

The "swing" theory also cannot explain why the Left won the election in Garden-Reach constituency, a Congress-CPI stronghold, while losing in Kabitirtha, a Leftist stronghold. These two are adjacent constituencies, and the composition of the electorate is very similar in two areas. The only plausible explanation is that in Garden-Reach the Congress (R)-CPI combine which had secured about 13,000 more votes than the CPI(M) in 1971, was cocksure of an easy victory this time, and did not think it necessary to employ any extra-ordinary rigging

operation here ; whereas for Kabitirtha a large-scale rigging was necessary in their view and was employed because the total Left vote—CPI(M) plus Forward Block—in 1971 was about 5000 more than the Congress(R) vote. As a result of the rigging operation in Kabitirtha the Congress(R) vote jumped up to 28,568 from 19,322 while the Left vote increased to 27,685 from 24,991. In Garden Reach, however, the Congress(R) CPI vote declined from 28,231 to 24,245 whereas the Left vote increased from 15,493 to 25,625. The same pattern of results can be seen in a number of constituencies in the district of Purulia, Midnapore, and Birbhum. In Purulia district, Hura, Kashipur, Manbazar, Para, and Raghunathpur are adjacent constituencies ; in the first three of these the combined votes of Congress(R), CPI and the Ajoy Mukherjee group in 1971 could be estimated as very much larger than the Left vote ; no special rigging was felt to be necessary in these three; in the result, therefore, Congress(R)-CPI Ajoy Mukherjee vote declined in all three constituencies in Hura from 19,905 to 15,127 ; in Kashipur from 20,417 to 14,220 ; and in Manbazar, from 22,014 to 19,920. In the other two close-by constituencies where the Left was very likely to win, the Indira magic inevitably worked and Congress votes were increased by thousands. Similar figures are seen in Midnapore, where the Congress(R)-CPI-Ajoy Mukherjee votes declined substantially, while the Left vote increased appreciably in at least 15 constituencies ; these were “sure seats” for the Congress(R) and its allies, and no special rigging operations were employed. Midnapore district is a stronghold of Congress-CPI and Ajoy Mukherjee Bangla Congress. The total vote of Congress alliance has decreased from 1073154 to 920428, whereas the left vote has increased from 344353 to 416114. In Birbhum District, Mayureswar and Labhpur are adjacent constituencies ; they show the Garden Reach-Kabitirtha pattern of voting trend. In Mayureswar, the Congress(R)-CPI alliance had obtained a majority of nearly 13,000 over the CPI(M) in 1971, and therefore were “sure” of a comfortable margin in 1972 and employed no large-scale rigging, their votes declined from

21,699 to 15,089 and the Left vote increased from 8,723 to 13,936. But in Labhpur, which the CPI(M) had won in 1971 and where the Left vote was higher than the Congress alliance vote by more than 5000, large-scale rigging operations were, of course, carried out ; as a result, while the Left vote was reduced from 17,559 to 14,976, the Congress Front vote showed an increase from 12,267 to 15,304. It must be a curious “swing ” indeed which operated against the Leftists only in Leftist strongholds, and reduced Congress(R)-CPI votes in many of their won strongholds. The Indira-wave must also be considered a very wild lawless wave, of which even the most sophisticated wave-mechanics of modern physics is unaware.

There is no explanation of the Left victory in Hariharpara according to the “swing-due-to-Indira-wave” theory. The Prime Minister herself addressed an election meeting here a few days before the polling. There was the full paraphernalia of aeroplanes, helicopters, Army and police mobilization, and all the rest of the ceremony that accompanied her throughout her election campaign at the expense of the Government. Curiously, Hariharpara, a relatively weak seat for the SUC, remained unaffected by the magic wave emanating from the Prime Minister. The backroom boys of the Congress(R) could not foresee this egregious failure of the Wave, and Hariharpara escaped the rigging-net.

Equally Bankrupt Theory

Unable to establish the “swing theory”, some of the apologists of the Congress(R) shift to another plank on occasions ; at least one radio-commentator offered this alternative theory. According to this alternative theory, although the Leftists retained their votes by and large or even increased their votes in quite a number of constituencies and therefore one cannot speak of a “swing”, yet the Congress(R) was able to mobilize a very large number of ‘new’ voters, voters who generally remain inert and had never exercised their franchise on any previous occasions ; these voters, according to this theory, voted en bloc in favour of the Congress(R) this one time in their life. This theory,

apologists feel, is required also to explain the incredibly heavy polling in polling stations occupied by the Congress(R)-CPI combine ; such stations, almost invariably, show 80% to 90% polling, while the general average varies from 50% to 60% at the most ; the picture becomes truly fantastic when one looks at the voting figure for Baranagar and Dum Dum, for example; in Baranagar, as a result of the occupation of 100 polling stations by the Congress(R)-CPI gangs the total number of ballot papers used as votes rose to 86% of the total electorate; in Dum Dum the corresponding figure was 70.7%—these are all India records.

(a) This theory also finds no support from evidence. Had this been true, such 'activization of inert voters' or mobilization of new voters should have been most perceptible in areas where the Congress(R)-CPI combine could exert their maximum influence. Midnapore District is obviously such an area, being a traditional stronghold of Congress(R)-CPI-Ajoy Mukherjee combination. As has already been stated, in at least 15 constituencies in this District the Congress alliance suffered a decline in the number of votes, and the Left votes increased. But, what is more, the total votes polled also decreased. There was neither a 'swing' nor any sudden urge on the part of the 'inert voters' or 'new voters' to cast their votes. (b) The inventors of this theory have to explain why this sudden 'activization of inert voters or new voters' took place only in those constituencies which were Leftist strongholds but were occupied by the Congress(R) with police support ; and more over, they have to explain, why in even these constituencies there was no general pattern of 'activization', but only the polling stations under occupation on the polling day showed the fantastic polling of 80% or more of the electorate. The ghostly inert voters, who presumably appeared from nowhere as a result of the Indira-Wave, must have been gifted with supernatural powers too for in most of these polling-stations the greater bulk of the "votes" were cast in two or three hours' time.

Siddhartha Ray's Arithmetic

Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the present Chief Minister of West Bengal, apparently felt that his apologists were failing to convince anybody, and so, in a press conference held in New Delhi on the 28 March, produced his own "explanation". As reported in *The Statesman of Calcutta* in the front page on the 29th March, Sri Ray told a press conference that the CPI(M) allegation that the election had been rigged was totally unfounded, "even on the basis of pure arithmetic (quotation marks in *The Statesman*), because the party had secured nearly 29% of the votes this time, as against nearly 32% in the 1971 elections. It had received only 3% less votes. If elections were rigged this would not have been possible. On the other hand, his party had gained 3% votes."

Sri Ray appears to claim that rigging could be suspected only if the CPI(M) vote had been reduced to zero. In so far as the objective of any rigging is merely to ensure the 'victory' of the ruling party's candidates in a majority of constituencies, no rigging expert would ever go to the extent of making the opposition vote disappear altogether. As it is, the Congress(R) "experts" overshot their mark, and by overfulfilling their target, have thoroughly exposed themselves in the eyes of the people. Even according to Sri Ray's mode of 'reasoning', he has to explain how the CPI(M) vote was reduced to 2% at Kalna, to less than 5% at Nadanghat, to less than 10% at Manteswar, to less than 12% at Dum Dum constituencies which the CPI(M) won by very large majorities in 1971. Would he agree that there is some basis for the Leftist charge of rigging in these constituencies, for example, and therefore, the allegation is not 'totally unfounded' ?

But this is not the whole of this remarkable performance in "pure arithmetic". Sri Ray is reported to have said further, "The reason that made a big difference in the number of seats won was that there was little opposition this time from the Congress (O), Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc, Muslim League, the PSP, the SSP, Gorkha League and the Lok Sevak Sangha. "We got all their seats and if you add their seats up with ours,

you will see why we got the number that we have got.....” (The Statesman, Calcutta, 29th March; the quotation mark with in the report is in the newspaper.)

The number of seats won the by parties named by Sri Ray in 1971 elections are : Congress (O)—2 ; Bangla Congress—5 ; Forward Block—3 ; Muslim League—7 ; PSP—3 ; SSP—1 ; Gorkha League—2 and the Lok Sevak Sangha—nil, the total number of seats won by these parties in 1971 was therefore 23 and no more. Let us neglect the facts that tell against Sri Ray’s premise ; for example, the fact that the Forward Block was with the Left Front this time, and only a few defectors from the Forward Bloc went over to the Congress(R) ; or, the fact that while Ajoy Mukherjee and some of his followers went over to the Congress(R), the Bangla Congress led by Sri Susil Dhara was opposed to the Congress (R). Let us neglect these facts, and merely add up these 23 seats to the 105 seats won by the Congress (R) in 1971 as the Press was instructed to “add up” by Sri Ray in that refresher course in new arithmetic which was called a “press conference”. According to the old arithmetic the total would be 128. But according to Sri Ray that would be wrong ; we should see not 128 but 216 if we knew this new “Congress arithmetic” invented by Sri Ray.

Some Congressmen are unashamedly propagating that they have followed in the footsteps of the United Front Government but only overdone things a little. But this blatant justification will be treated with the contempt it deserves. Yet it is worthwhile remembering that no general election in West Bengal has been held under the auspices of the United Front Government. When however, some by-elections had been held during the United Front regime, there were never any complaints by the Congress of lack of freedom to approach the electorate or terror or rigging. Congressmen were not detained without trial or implicated in false cases by the thousands.

In order to convince the people outside West Bengal another simple argument is assiduously being put forward that the victory of the Congress was due to the revulsion of the people against alleged violence and other crimes committed by the

CPI(M) particularly when it was in the United Front Government. What is sought to be blacked out is that in 1970 March, the United Front is shought to be blacked out is that in 1970 March, the United Front Government fell and Congress rule from Delhi was imposed on West Bengal leading to massive terror and killings by the Central Resereve Police, West Bengal Police, Naxalites and Congress gangsters with the help of the administration. With all the alleged charges against the CPI(M) during President's rule making it responsible for all ills of West Bengal, the general election was held in 1971. But these charges were rejected by the people and the CPI(M) emerged as the first party despite the 'Indira Wave' all over India.

Points Congress cannot explain

To sum up, the points which cannot be and have not been sought to be explained by the Congress, are—

1. How in districts where the Congress-CPI-Ajoy Mukherjee group are strong and far stronger than the Left parties and where therefore, no special measures of rigging were thought necessary, their combined votes have decreased and Left votes have increased, whereas in the districts, and seats, where the combined Left votes were much more than their combined votes (Congress alliance), the votes of Left parties have gone down and the Congress alliance votes have gone up. In Midnapore District for instance, their total votes went down by 1 lakh 50 thousand whereas Left votes went up by 75 thousand.
2. How invariably in the Left strongholds and traditional seats record majorities for the Congress alliance like 40,000, 60,000, 75,000 have been registered and Left votes reduced 2%, 5%, 10%, and 12% etc. ?
3. How in all those seats which the Congress hoodlums captured record majorities were registered with 70-85% votes being cast whereas the average vote in the State was 50% to 60% ?
4. How could so many votes be cast in a few hours' time ?

If there had been such a political swing in favour of the Congress, where is the jubilation of the masses in the Congress victory ? Where lakhs assembled to greet the United Front ministers when their Government was formed, the Congress could not get more than 2000 people to greet its new ministers. The people are shocked and bitter. Even many who voted for the Congress are morally on the defensive.

In a note to the Central Congress leadership some leaders of the ruling Congress in West Bengal have stated "It would have been much more honourable for the Congress to come back to power with a strength of 150 to 160 in a House of 280 through free and fair elections. The victory resulting from rigged election has not brought glory to the Party. It would be impossible to prove the rigging of the elections in a court of law. Still it can be said without hesitation that the politically conscious people of West Bengal are hanging their heads in shame for being deprived of the right of franchises by terroristic and other unfair means."

Violence Continues

The Congress rulers themselves know, despite their verbal assertions, that the CPI(M) and the Left Front are far from defeated. Hence, even after their "massive victory" in the elections, they are afraid of democracy and are keeping up the violence and terror against the democratic movement.

In the two weeks since polling thirty workers of the Left parties have been killed. About 20,000 more families have been thrown out of their houses and their areas in Baranagar, Beliaghata North, Belgachia, Dum Dum, Tollygunj, Jadavpur, Cossipore, Sonarpur, Mahestolla, Asansol, Barabani, Kalna, Burdwan, Khardah, Kasba-Tiljala and other places. Innumerable workers and supporters of the Left Front are being detained without trial and implicated in false cases. In many cases where the accused are likely to escape conviction or are given bail by courts, they are promptly detained without trial, thus making a mockery of democracy.

Trade Union function has been made impossible in about 300 factories and work-places. Offices of CITU, UTUC etc. are

being occupied, their funds are being looted. Workers are being prevented from reporting to duty and are being coerced to join INTUC unions. Hundreds of workers and their families are without work and earning and they and their families are starving. The Congress rowdies are also disrupting production and creating chaos in many factories on the plea of capturing unions.

Many teachers of schools and colleges who are left-minded are being forced to submit resignation, and work in many educational institutions is already disrupted.

Elected municipal bodies are attacked by hooligans of the youth and student wings of the Congress and their functioning made impossible, paving the way for suppression by the Government. Already the Calcutta Corporation has been superseded because the Leftists had secured a majority. Some Student Unions under the leadership of the Leftist students are being forcibly taken over by armed Congress hoodlums with the help of the police and in same other cases, elections are being similarly interfered with.

In the rural areas, big land-owners emboldened by the Congress victory, have already begun evicting share-croppers with full support from the local administration. Land distributed to poor peasants, land recovered from illegal benami possession is being re-captured.

The question of seeking remedies in law courts has been raised by some people. But the laws relating to elections hardly provide for any remedy in a case like the one which has been described. The Peoples' Representation Act has not envisaged the crimes which have been committed by the administration at the top-most level to nullify an entire election. Moreover, even a few election petitions may continue for an almost indefinite period. The nature of the case demands the setting up of a completely impartial tribunal which should have no connection with the Government or with the ruling party and which should have full powers for a through and searching enquiry. Even such a tribunal can only ascertain the truth ; it cannot give any remedy to the people of West Bengal for existing laws preclude such remedies. But for the restoration of Parliamentary

Democracy such a step will be of help and ultimately the vast masses of the people must assert themselves in order to restore and extend democracy.

People Will Win !

In the grave situation created by the Congress party in West Bengal the Left parties have decided to boycott the Assembly to register their eloquent protest against the subversion of democracy by means of terror and rigging. The Assembly does not represent the freely expressed will of the people and the boycott is an aspect of the struggle of the people for restoration of democratic processes. Outside the Assembly also the Government constituted through such elections is continuing its violent attacks against Left and Democratic parties and mass organisations with the help of the Congress gangsters in order to root out all opposition. The Left and democratic forces in West Bengal will carry on the struggle in the confidence that democratic people all over India will rally in defence of democracy and beat back the offensive of the ruling classes and the Congress Government.

The Left and democratic movement in India cannot be suppressed by those who represent the vested interests and are mouthing the slogan "one nation, one party, one leader". Confident of the support of the people, confident in their fighting spirit and capacity to sacrifice, the forces of progress and democracy will march forward.

APPENDIX I

Large-Scale Gangsterism

Some glaring examples of fantastic election results are given below. These constituencies are among those that repeatedly returned CPI(M) and Left candidates in past elections with huge majorities,—the Left often securing more than 50% of the votes polled. A difference of 200% to 400% or more between election results of 1971 and 1972 shows to what absurd length the Congress rulers have gone in rigging the elections. These constituencies belong to the category of those 51 constituencies

which were subjected to large-scale gansterism apart from other methods of rigging.

Constituency	1971 Election (Votes polled by)		1972 Election (Votes polled by)	
	Congress + Allies	CPI(M) + Left	Congress Front	Left Front
1. Noapara	17,371	50,060	48,112	22,599
2. Titagarh	27,770	33,119	50,656	23,158
3. Khardah	31,364	35,440	62,460	21,813
4. Panihati	24,279	58,545	74,765	27,540
5. Baranagar	32,287	43,340	69,145	30,258
6. Dum Dum	31,423	40,736	91,428	15,023
7. Maniktala	15,682 (Con.) 9,214 (CPI)	16,773	43,238	21,622
8. Beliaghata North	20,345	23,318	53,875	10,968
9. Tollygunj	22,741	32,788	49,096	28,372
10. Domjur	19,952	34,445	30,550	29,675
11. Amta	11,712	30,665	26,322	24,710
12. Kalna	24,930	31,896	62,336	929
13. Nadanghat	22,317	34,288	61,617	2,641
14. Purbasthali	15,542	30,617	32,486	14,746
15. Memari	21,166	39,366	53,119	11,239
16. Jamalpur	21,234	22,396 (FBM)	30,827	15,935
17. Raina	19,142	31,549	29,297	22,671
18. Khandakhosh	17,976	25,274	29,463	17,451
19. Bhatar	17,868	21,111	31,822	11,974
20. Monteswar	19,632	31,603	53,768	5,159
21. Burdwan North	18,430	35,313	36,808	17,595
22. Burdwan South	26,985	28,257	47,092	16,544
23. Mangalkote	16,814	28,814	25,379	18,118
24. Barabani	19,485	20,211	29,214	11,150
25. Chakdah	21,040	29,301	33,144	24,576
26. Krishnagar West	16,101	20,003	25,552	14,982
27. Nabadwip	10,535 (Cong. + BC) 11,311 (Con. O)	28,324	34,745 (Con.) 1,888 (Con. O)	13,504
28. Nagrakata	9,542	22,811	21,429	14,463

Note : There are 23 more constituencies of similar nature.

APPENDIX II

Mass Swing Away From Congress and Towards Left Front

To cover up their crime of rigging the elections, the Congress leaders have invented the theory of a mass swing towards the Congress and Indira Gandhi. But the election results in Congress strongholds show just the opposite trend. In those constituencies where the Congress, CPI and Bangla Congress of Ajoy Mukherjee are very strong, and the Left is very weak, and where the Congress polled higher votes than the combined Left votes in 1971 elections the Congress votes this time have in most cases gone down, in some cases have remained stationary and only in a few cases have slightly increased, whereas the Left votes have generally increased. Not that all these constituencies were altogether left out of the rigging operations, but there was no need of any special rigging as there was little possibility of the Left winning. Hence the trend is unmistakable. The following are some of the constituencies to show the trend—a mass swing away from the Congress.

Constituency	1971 Election (Votes polled by)		1972 Election (Votes polled by)	
	Congress + Allies	CPI(M) + Left	Congress Front	Left Front
1. Mayureswar	21,699	8,723	15,089	13,936
2. Vishnupur	22,636	10,891	20,455	12,354
3. Bankura	26,668	11,927	28,082	16,315
	(or 31,668?)			
4. Chatna	13,399	5,465	14,896	10,547
5. Hura	19,905	8,994	15,127	11,560
6. Kashipur	20,417	6,492	14,220	9,949
7. Manbazar	22,014	1,910	19,920	18,487
		(LSS 13,090)		
8. Keshiary	27,236	13,543	22,697	17,443
9. Narayangarh	43,031	4,651	33,591	11,014
10. Kharagpur Local	37,764	8,121	26,481	15,075

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Constituency	1971 Election (Votes polled by)		1972 Election (Votes polled by)	
	Congress	CPI(M)	Congress	Left
	+ Allies	+ Left	Front	Front
11. Kharagpur	34,864	5,885	26,732	7,093
12. Midnapur	45,760	3,308	32,009	7,882
13. Garbeta West	26,801	12,705	23,073	14,650
14. Garbeta East	33,718	13,452	23,269	14,891
15. Keshpur	35,850	16,907	29,055	19,954
16. Pingla	40,133	11,804	29,460	20,335
17. Pataspur	42,872	8,982	33,844	13,087
18. Contai South	22,969	4,940	20,001	5,723
	13,685 (Cong O)		19,834 (Cong O)	
19. Moina	40,021	13,578	28,493	14,924
20. Pashkura West	40,643	6,420	28,090	9,209
21. Pashkura East	34,898	8,533	29,356	11,313
22. Pursura	31,599	13,953	32,324	15,594
23. Alipur	33,317	6,012	31,277	13,226
24. Barabazar	34,764 (Cong + J.S.)	6,231	27,606	7,682
25. Jorasanko	27,227 (Cong + J.S.)	10,300	27,887	10,777
26. Garden Reach	28,228	15,493	24,245	25,625
27. Bhangar	18,617	10,415	11,593 (Cong.)	13,459
	10,868 (ML)		10,951 (ML)	
28. Haroa	22,142	13,572	21,239	17,935
29. Hasnabad	25,360	8,162	25,274	12,817
30. Swarupnagar	36,479	9,032	33,669	13,232
31. Basirhat	22,962	7,705	29,897	17,610
32. Hariharpara	4,538 (Cong.)	4,888	18,585 (Cong.)	21,315
	26,301 (ML)		5,525 (ML)	
33. Suti	19,504 (Cong.)	16,472	25,565	27,085
	5,092 (ML)		No ML	
34. Sujapur	29,291 (Cong.)	4,116	32,911	9,418
	7,514 (Cong O)			
35. Manikchak	26,027	12,046	25,460	18,036
36. Englishbazar	22,072	10,280	25,116 (Cong.)	14,281
	12,063 (J.S)		6,319 (J.S)	

Constituency	1971 Election (Votes polled by)		1972 Election (Votes polled by)	
	Congress +	CPI(M) +	Congress Front	Left Front
	Allies	Left		
37. Kushmundi	28,428	9,604	24,403	7,478
38. Karandighi	20,715	17,005	19,500	17,681
39. Jalpaiguri	33,902	14,520	30,231	19,064
40. Mal	27,079	12,708	25,939	16,030
41. Sitai	30,289 <small>(incl Cong. O)</small>	16,565	28,592	15,345

Note : Midnapore Dist. with 35 seats is a stronghold of the Congress, CPI + Ajoy Mukherjee's Bangla Congress. In this district, the total votes polled by Congress + allies, was 10,73,154. It has decreased to 9,20,428 in 1972. The votes polled by CPI(M) + the Left was 3,44,353 in 1971 and it increased to 4,16,114 in 1972.

APPENDIX III

Election Results Manipulated By Special Rigging Operations

This chart shows how election results were manipulated by special rigging operations. These are some of the constituencies which are traditionally strong Left areas. The CPI(M) and the Left won these seats in successive elections with substantial majorities. But this time the results have been changed in the opposite direction. The huge differences between the voting figures of 1971 and 1972 elections cannot be explained by any theory of a mass swing. Appendix II has shown that if anybody talks about a mass swing, it was against the Congress in Congress strongholds. It is preposterous to suggest that a magical "Indira-wave" created havoc against the Left in Left areas only, but had little effect in areas where the Congress itself is strong. There cannot be two diametrically opposite "waves" in the same districts and in adjoining areas. There was no report of open gangsterism in the following constituencies. They were subjected to special rigging operations. Only glaring instances are given in the chart below :

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Constituency	1971 Election (Votes polled by)		1972 Election (Votes polled by)	
	Congress + Allies	CPI(M) + Left	Congress Front	Left Front
1. Murarai	9,319	20,612	25,883	11,627
2. Rampurhat	11,103	18,058	21,151	17,061
3. Suri	13,433	20,150	26,579	20,894
4. Dubrajpur	6,406	22,661	19,975	17,066
5. Nanur	17,570	18,486	25,018	17,743
6. Durgapur	42,435	40,999	47,390	37,348
7. Katwa	20,990	27,656	33,061	21,703
8. Galsi	12,314	23,897	22,416	18,145
9. Ukhra	CPI(M) won by a margin of 4,000 in a straight contest		21,329	13,490
10. Onda	14,402	19,048	19,679	14,363
11. Barjora	20,226	28,849	27,196	21,130
12. Raghunathpur	10,010	16,739	13,841	13,481
13. Ghatal	18,207	28,725	24,847	22,554
14. Tarakeswar	13,308	28,945	28,224	23,758
15. Polba	21,554	26,089	29,787	23,545
16. Chandernagore	18,734	31,322	28,327	28,366
17. Chanditala	6,807	18,707	21,978	18,561
18. Udaynarayanpur	18,609	31,069	30,915	23,955
19. Kalyanpur	16,319	25,579	32,138	19,662
20. Uluberia South	11,984	22,491	23,316	23,034
		10,990 (FB)		
21. Jagatballavpur	13,577	27,541	22,433	24,063
22. Shibpur	10,295	30,731	31,109	24,941
23. Belgachia	22,235	25,012	36,734	24,660
24. Kamarhati	18,272	47,359	28,690	22,524
25. Bhatpara	40,173	39,307	49,187	35,680
26. Nahati	26,784	37,153	37,511	33,466
27. Kakdwip	22,899	27,775	36,812	25,067
28. Patharpratima	18,493	36,490	30,213	29,657
			1,151 (BC)	
29. Mathurapur	23,331	27,358	32,562	23,564
30. Kulpi	9,758	20,341	31,067	15,555

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Constituency	1971 Election (Votes polled by)		1972 Election (Votes polled by)	
	Congress + Allies	CPI(M) + Left	Congress Front	Left Front
31. Magrahat East	22,216	27,208	34,533	25,902
32. Falta	15,776	30,715	29,277	24,747
33. Barupur	20,118	25,875	30,579	22,878
34. Diamond Harbour	27,150	36,147	35,457	26,861
35. Bishnupur West	20,109	34,395	27,945	28,540
36. Kultali	25,594	34,428	32,964	27,215
37. Haringhata	25,374	31,717	30,328	22,663
38. Santipur	16,530	23,482	27,272	18,626
39. Chapra	14,337	17,047	27,514	13,228
40. Tehatta	11,787	20,383	27,455	18,835
41. Karimpur	13,847	22,489	27,557	16,019
42. Bharatpur	10,818	21,085	23,320	17,724
43. Domkal	7,434	21,733	22,299	21,668
44. Nabagram	11,746	24,366	22,154	19,660
45. Gajol	18,640	19,243	26,075	14,561
46. Mekhliganj	15,982	23,876	25,816	18,233

Half A Million Take Part in Kerala General Strike*

News agencies as usual circulated and newspapers printed that the general strike in Kerala, on May 16, 1972 called by the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, had little response from the workers. What was termed a failure by them was in fact a successful strike of over half a million workers—the most successful general strike so far called in the State by any single trade union centre on its own.

While the strike was complete in the plantation, cashew, coir and handloom industries, it was partial in the State Road Transport and private motor transport.

Agricultural workers who are working at present responded *en masse* to the strike call.

In attempts to break the strike, the police made arrests and lathi-charges in Trivandrum and other places.

In Idikky, the workers defied the ban on strikes in the project area and joined the action.

Reports from the districts presented the following picture.

Cannanore

In Cannanore district, the strike of May 16 was more complete than on any previous occasion. Normal life came to a standstill in the towns and villages, with no buses either of the State Transport or private transport on the road. In this district the strike in transport was complete.

The strike affected all industrial and commercial establishments with over 60,000 workers participating in the action—25,000 in

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, May 28, 1972.

the handloom industry, 20,000 in bidi, 1500 in private transport and 125 in State transport, 5000 in the plantations, 3000 in toddy-tapping, 1900 in cashew, 500 in matches, 500 in lorry, taxi and auto-rickshaw, 500 in China Clay, 500 in tiles, 500 in timber, 400 in textiles, 750 in co-operatives and 400 municipal employees.

Demonstrations and rallies were held by the striking workers in all centres. Striking bidi workers demonstrating near Karyakode bridge were lathi-charged by the police. Many were injured. Another lathi-charge was reported from Pappinisseri. In Tellicherry, striking workers who picketed Right Communist blacklegs before the Dinesh Bidi Company were arrested by the police. Except seven who belong to the Right Communist union, all the workers of the factory participated in the strike.

Kozhikode

Fifteen thousand workers in Kozhikode City and ten thousand in the rest of the district participated in the strike action. Workers of textile mills, saw mills, tile factories, oil and flour mills, timber factories, toddy-tappers, headload workers in the vegetable market and goods-shed were among those striking work.

The establishment affected by the strike included the Gwalior Rayons of Birlas, the Government-owned Hydrogenation Factory, Malabar Oil Mill and Government Ice Factory, Commonwealth Textile, New India Ceramics and West India Steel.

The striking workers held a huge demonstration and rally in the City.

Malappuram

Thousands of workers from the plantations, tile and bidi factories, transport and Non-Muster Roll employees of the PWD, from this district participated in the strike.

The majority of the plantation workers in the Nilamboor-Perintalmanna belt were among the strikers. Other establishments affected were the Janata Tile Works in Parakkadavu, Malabar

Metal and Allied Factory in Chelari, match factories in Airkarapadi and Pandikad and the Kottakkal Tile Factory. The majority of the workers in the port, fisheries, toddy-tapping and headload workers in the various markets responded to the strike call.

Palghat

Twelve thousand workers organized in 22 unions affiliated to the CITU were on strike in Palghat district. Agricultural workers also stopped work for the day.

Twelve hundred workers in private motor transport struck work with the result that not one service could be run. CITU members of the State Road Transport were also on strike.

Among others who were on strike were 3500 toddy-tappers, 1500 plantation workers, 1000 bidi workers, 200 engineering and metal workers, headload workers, workers in textiles, oil and rice mills, timber factories, Government Farm, milk supply, municipal employees, PWD employees and employees of shops and other establishments.

Twentyfour workers were arrested for picketing in front of the Madras Spinners.

The striking workers held a demonstration and rally in Palghat town.

Trichur

Twentyfive thousand workers in industrial establishments and 20,000 agricultural workers struck work in this district in response to the CITU's call. They included workers of the State and private transport, plantations, tile, textile and cashew factories and toddy-tappers.

Twentysix workers including the Joint Secretary of the union were arrested in front of the Chandrika Tile Works in Karuannoor. The police tried to force the workers in the private motor transport to join work but failed and the bus services remained more or less paralysed.

Ernakulam

Fifteen thousand workers from various industrial establishments and a large number of agricultural workers joined the strike in this district.

In the State Road Transport, workers and ministerial staff employees belonging to the CITU and workers of the Alwaye depot and garage and the Ernakulam depot were on strike. In private transport, there was complete stoppage of all services in Perumbavoor, Muvattupuzha, Ernakulam, Alwaye, Narakkal and Paravoor.

Idikky

Defying the ban on strikes in the Idikky Project area, workers of the project went on strike paralysing the work of the main departments of the project like the underground powerhouse in Moolamuttom, the Pressure Shaft, Power Tunnel, etc.

In all, about fifteen thousand workers from this district were on strike on the day. The strike was complete in the Peeramedu-Udumbanchollai areas of Idikky and in the Indo-Swiss Project in Munnar.

Kottayam

Ten thousand workers from industrial establishments and nearly twentyfive thousand agricultural workers from the district responded to the CITU's call and went on strike on May 16.

Alleppy

Fifty thousand workers connected with the coir industry in this Ambalapuzhai-Karthigapally taluks and five thousand workers from other industrial establishments in the district participated in the general strike.

Fifty thousand of the two and a half lakh agricultural workers who have work at present also struck work.

There were centralised demonstrations by the striking workers in all the taluks.

Quilon

Fifty thousand workers, many of them from the cashew industry, were on strike in Quilon district.

Trivandrum

A hundred and fifty thousand workers engaged in coir, handloom, toddy-tapping and quarry industries along with workers in the transport and other industrial establishments were on strike in Trivandrum district.

Attempts to break the strike by the police began at midnight. Police patrols were out in strong contingents on the main roads and centres of the city and in the City and Central Bus Stations. Nearly three hundred persons sleeping on shop verandahs or returning from late night cinema shows were arrested from the Main Road and Chala Bazar. Three lathi-charges were made by the police during the night and in protest against this wanton police attack, all the shops in Chala Bazar and on the Main Road observed a hartal while the workers went on strike. Comrades C. Kannan and E. Balanandan, President and General Secretary of the Kerala CITU, in statements congratulated the workers who had successfully struck work defeating the attempts of the ruling classes and their parties who had called on the workers not to respond to the call of the CITU.

Comrade Balanandan referring to the arrests referring to the arrests and lathi-charges in Trivandrum and other places said the workers had recorded their protest facing this repression. No central trade union organization on its own had been able to organize such a successful strike in the State, he said.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement On Soviet-U.S. Joint Communiqué*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on May 30, 1972 :

The Soviet-USA communiqué and the statement of principles issued from Moscow in the wake of Mr. Nixon's visit will hardly impress anyone. As if to make the point clear, Dr. Kissinger emphasised that the statement represented only "an aspiration and attitude" and that either side could ignore it at will, adding that "no set of principles can be used like a cook book".

At least on the U.S. side, the high-sounding principles have been declared with unmatched cynicism and no serious intent. These principles, together with the earlier agreement on "limitations of anti-ballistic missiles systems" and "certain agreed measures with regard to strategic offensive arms" do not really constitute an assurance to the world that it will be free from American blackmail and threats from its genocidal weaponry. If numerical limitations are accepted on certain arms, there is at the same time, complete freedom to improve their destructive capacities. Here is no agreement to reduce the stock of nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination. At best it is an agreement to maintain a balance between the two countries keeping American power of aggression against the rest of the world intact.

In the face of this reality, what importance can one attach to the statement of principles which spaciouly talks of peace, of solving disputes through negotiations, of claiming no special

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, June 4, 1972.

rights, of formally accepting the sovereign equality of all nations, of complete disarmament ?

The leaders of the Soviet Union also cannot escape the charge of extreme cynicism and opportunism in signing a statement on equality of nations with Nixon who is raining bombs on Vietnam and trying to wipe out the freedom-fighters.

The proviso that “both sides should agree not to have unilateral advantage at the expense of the other” is presented as a step in the direction of world peace. In reality, it screens the aggressive character of American imperialism and enables Nixon to pose as a champion of peace.

Millions of people in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are directly or indirectly fighting U.S. imperialism in their struggle for national liberation. The world Communist movement has correctly denounced American imperialism as the gendarme of world reaction. By accepting to recognize its security interests, the Soviet leaders will objectively encourage its aggressive appetite. It should be remembered that the American imperialists claim to be in Vietnam to safeguard the security of the USA.

It is agreed in the statement of principles that the two sides “will do their utmost to avoid military confrontation”. The world proletarian movement welcomes and supports peace between nations. But should this mean that the USA will be permitted to carry on its aggression against others with impunity as it was allowed to do when it recently escalated the war by mining the North Vietnamese seas ?

Similarly, the provision that “the USSR and the USA have a special responsibility as do other permanent members of the Security Council to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would serve to increase international tension” is likely to mean pressure of both countries to slow down the tempo of anti-imperialist liberation and democratic struggles in the name of avoiding world war. This has been the experience in the past. And an agreement of this type with the imperialists can have no other effect.

It is quite clear that as in his visit to Peking, in his Moscow negotiations also, Nixon has done his best to exploit the Sino-Soviet differences in the interest of American imperialism, without making any real concessions. He has continued his murderous attacks on Vietnam while talking about peace both in Peking and Moscow and succeeded in diverting attention from his criminal role. In doing this, he was confident that the two Socialist Powers will not join hands to rebuff him. The joint statement is virtually a Soviet certificate to him that he is negotiable despite his innumerable crimes in Vietnam. The outcome of Moscow negotiations once more underlines the necessity of Sino-Soviet understanding to rebuff and defeat American imperialism.

The P.B. calls upon all democratic forces to intensify their agitation against American imperialism whose conspiracies in the sub-continent are continuing and render all help to the fighting Vietnamese people.

Struggle For Occupation Of Surplus Land In Kerala*

The struggle in Kerala launched by the Action Council of Peasants and Agricultural Workers for occupation of surplus land of landowners and against taxes complete its second week on June 7 with extension of the struggle to eleven more centres in addition to the eleven centres where surplus land was being occupied during the last two weeks.

The surplus land which was being occupied since May 25 totals 13,000 acres owned by nine landowners. The Government has not refuted this fact. But it refuses to take over this surplus land. In this situation the Action Council which met on June 1 decided on the extension of the struggle to more centres.

The Action Council also decided that the owners would not be allowed to enter the land on which the struggle is going on and enjoy and benefits from that land.

The Council reviewed the struggle so far and found that public opinion was solidly behind the struggle and the only opposition to it came from those landowners who were illegally keeping surplus land and are totally isolated from the people.

The Right Communist Chief Minister and the Revenue Minister belonging to the Kerala RSP are making statements in New Delhi, to reassure their Congress masters, that the struggle has no mass support.

The Revenue Minister also suggested that the Action Council should call off the struggle and submit the names of the landowners with surplus land to the Government. For fifteen days the volunteers of the Action Council have been occupying

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, June 11, 1972.

13,000 acres of such surplus land and asking the Government to take it over. A Government which refuses to do this small thing talks of names being submitted to it !

Everyday six to seven hundred volunteers of the Action Council are being arrested and sent to jail for occupying surplus land and picketing district Collectorates and offices of RDOs. And as the struggle is extended to eleven more centres, more volunteers participate in it everyday.

June 5 was Women's Day when both the occupation of land and picketing of Government offices were done by volunteers of the Mahila Federation. The previous evening, women all over the State organized torch light processions.

The Action Council has accepted the proposal of the Kerala Socialist Youth Federation that its volunteers would occupy surplus land and picket Government offices on June 9.

The central jails and sub-jails in the State are all overcrowded. In Alleppey, V. S. Achuthanandan had to go on an indefinite hunger-strike and A. K. Gopalan on a one-day token hunger strike in Trivandrum Central Jail against the overcrowding and the difficulties of the prisoners.

As batches of jailed volunteers are being released after serving their terms, reception rallies and demonstrations are being held all over the State taking popular support to the struggle to a still higher stage.

Whatever the Ministers might say in New Delhi there has been no struggle for quite some time in Kerala of such magnitude and with such popular backing.

The Central Government had been delaying for months the decision to give protection to the Kerala Land Reforms Amendment Act by including it in the Ninth Schedule to the Constitution. It was the announcement of the struggle which woke up the Centre and forced it to rush through the Constitution Amendment Bill to give protection to the Act.

But along with this, the Centre got the State Government to amend two provisions of the Act—one to validate the land transfers that had taken place between 1957 and 1963 and the other to widen the scope of the definition of those for whom

fifty per cent of the surplus land should be reserved. The first amendment will reduce the amount of surplus land that will become available for distribution while the second will adversely affect the claims of the Scheduled Tribes and Castes and Christian converts from them to fifty per cent of the surplus land.

The Action Council has demanded the withdrawal of the State Government's Ordinance making these two amendments.

The struggle will go on, the Action Council has declared as it enters its third week, till the Government takes over all the surplus land and distributes it and withdraws the unjust taxes.

Chronicle of Struggle for Land : Kerala

May—28 Fourth Day:

Being Sunday with no Government offices open, there was only occupation of surplus land in the eleven centres in the eleven districts and no picketing of Government offices today.

Among those who occupied the surplus land of George Thomas Kottukapally in Kaduthiruthi was the father of Comrade Gopalan who is undergoing life sentence in the Trivandrum Central Jail.

Trivandrum district:

Thirty volunteers under the leadership of Sreenivas Das were arrested after they occupied the surplus land of the former Maharaja of Travancore in Mudavanmugal Palace. Since the court was not sitting on the day, the arrested persons were taken to the Central Jail to be produced in court the next day.

Quilon district:

Twelve volunteers under the leadership of Ayyappan Pillai entered the surplus land of Mankombil Swamy in Thekkumbhagom village and were arrested.

Alleppey district:

Twentyfive volunteers led by Kunhu Kunhu were arrested after they occupied the surplus land of Murikkan in

Marthandamangalam. The volunteers were all from Kattara village.

Kottayam district:

Twentyfive volunteers from Meenachil village under the leadership of Isaac were arrested for occupying the surplus land of Kottukapally in Kaduthiruthy. Apart from the father of Gopalan who is undergoing life imprisonment in connection with the Velloor Case, seventyfive-year-old Idavelikkal was among the volunteers.

Idikky district:

Fifteen volunteers under the leadership of T. M. Gopalan were arrested after they occupied the surplus land of Madpparambil Mani Varghese in Thodupuzha. Demonstrations and rallies were held all over the district at the call of the District Action Council. In the whole of Thodupuzha taluk intense preparations are going on to give receptions to the first batch of volunteers who will come out of jail on May 31.

Ernakulam district:

Twentyfive volunteers from Chengamanad and Nedumbasseri led by K. Bhaskaran were arrested from the surplus land of Madapprambil Mani Varkey and were remanded till May 31.

Trichur district:

K. C. Thomas led the twenty-six volunteers who occupied the surplus land of Vadhyar Mana in Cheruthiruthy and were arrested.

Palghat district:

With the arrest of twentyfive volunteers led by C. Mani, who occupied the surplus land of P. R. Swamy Iyer in Alathur, the number of arrests in the district totalled 253 including fifteen women volunteers.

Malappuram district:

Twenty volunteers under the leadership of P. P. Ambujakshan entered the surplus land of the Nilambur Palace. They were arrested and released on personal bail and ordered to appear in court on June 3.

Kozhikode district:

Thirty volunteers led by Kanaran were arrested from the surplus land in Thottilpalam which belonged to the Pearce Leslie Company and had been illegally transferred by it. They were kept in police custody for fifteen hours without being given any food.

May 29—Fifth Day

Six hundred and twentythree volunteers were arrested during the day from the eleven districts for occupation of surplus land and picketing of Government offices. Total number of arrests since the struggle began is over four thousand.

Trivandrum district :

Thirtythree volunteers led by Surendran Nair were arrested for occupation of surplus land and fortyfive volunteers under the leadership of Trivandrum Corporation member J. S. Stanley who picketed the office of the RDO in Trivandrum were sentenced to seven days in jail.

Quilon district :

Eleven volunteers under the leadership of K. Kesavan were arrested for occupation of surplus land and fifteen volunteers led by K. Vidyadharan were sentenced to seven days imprisonment for picketing the Quilon Collectorate. Thirteen more volunteers under the leadership of E. I. Daniel were arrested for picketing the office of the RDO in Adoor.

Alleppey district:

Twentyfive volunteers who occupied the surplus land at Marthandamangalam under the leadership of K. G.

Parameswaran Pillai, sixteen volunteers who picketed the Alleppey Collectorate and twenty volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Chengannoor were arrested. The volunteers who picketed the Collectorate under the leadership of C. K. Kunhu Panickan were sent to jail for ten days.

Kottayam district:

Twentyfive volunteers from Ramapuram panchayat led by Raman Nair occupied the surplus land at Kaduthiruthy and were arrested. They were sent to jail for fifteen days. Twentyfour volunteers led by Jayadas who picketed the district Collectorate were sent to jail for ten days.

Idikky district:

Fifteen volunteers under the leadership of Narayan Nair who occupied surplus land at Thodupuzha and eighteen volunteers who picketed the Nedunkandom Taluk Office under the leadership of Kunhu Kunhu were arrested.

Ernakulam district:

Twentythree volunteers led by N. Pankajakshan who occupied surplus land near Paravoor were arrested and remanded to custody, while twentyfive volunteers who picketed the Ernakulam Collectorate were removed by the police and seventeen of the twentythree volunteers under the leadership of M. K. Babu who picketed the office of the RDO in Muvattupuzha were sent to jail for four days.

Trichur district:

Twentysix volunteers under the leadership of C. K. Chakrapani who occupied surplus land near Cheruthiruthy were sent to jail for one month. The volunteers who had been arrested the previous day were also sentenced to a month's imprisonment. Another twentysix volunteers, led by C. V. Francis, who picketed the district Collectorate were also arrested by the police.

Palghat district:

Twentysix volunteers, five of them women, led by V. Chamunni were arrested for picketing the Collectorate. The five women volunteers and five others on the ground that they were under-aged were let off while the remaining sixteen were sent to jail for twenty days.

Kozhikode district:

Twentyfive volunteers led by V. Kumaran who occupied surplus land in Thottilpalam and twentyfive volunteers under the leadership of T. K. Moti who picketed the office of the RDO were arrested. The volunteers who occupied the surplus land were sent to jail for ten days and the picketers for three days.

Cannore district:

Twentyfive volunteers led by M. P. Kunhiraman Nambiar occupied surplus land in Cheemeni and were sent to jail for four days. Twentythree volunteers led by P. Damodaran who picketed the Cannanore Collectorate were let off with a warning, while twentyfive volunteers under the leadership of E. K. Sadanandan who picketed the office of the Tellicherry RDO were sent to jail for five days and twentynine volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Kasargode were sent to jail for seven days.

May 30—Sixth Day

On the sixth day of the struggle, 673 volunteers were arrested in the State—254 for occupation of surplus land in the eleven centres and 419 for picketing Collectorates and offices of RDOs.

Districtwise—

Trivandrum:

Twentysix volunteers arrested for occupation of the surplus land in Mudavanmugal Palace. Fiftyone volunteers arrested for picketing the office of the RDO were sent to jail for ten days.

Quilon:

Sixteen women volunteers under the leadership of the District Vice-President of the Mahila Federation, V. K. Anandam, were arrested. Ten volunteers who picketed the district Collectorate were sent to jail for seven days and 14 volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Adoor were arrested.

Alleppey:

Twentyfive volunteers who occupied surplus land were sent to jail for one month while the volunteers who picketed the District Collectorate were sentenced to ten days in jail. Twenty volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Chengannoor were remanded to custody.

Kottayam:

Twentyfive volunteers occupied the surplus land in Kaduthiruthy. One of them was let off, being under-aged. The rest were sent to jail for 15 days. The twentyfive volunteers who picketed the Collectorate were sent to jail for ten day.

Idikky:

Fifteen volunteers who occupied surplus land in Todupuzha were sentenced to ten days' imprisonment while 29 volunteers who picketed the Taluk Office were let off by the Court.

Ernakulam:

Twentysix volunteers who occupied surplus land were sent to jail for five days, 15 volunteers who picketed the Collectorate were sentenced to seven days' imprisonment and excepting one because he was under-age, the 28 volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Muvattupuzha were sent to jail for four days.

Trichur:

Five of the volunteers who occupied surplus land were let off and the rest 21 sent to jail for a month. Twentysix volunteers who picketed the Collectorate were sent to jail for 15 days.

Palghat:

Twentyfive volunteers who occupied surplus land were sent to jail for 20 days. Twentysix volunteers including seven women volunteers, picketed the Collectorate. The women volunteers were let off, the other 19 were sent to jail for 20 days. Twentyfive volunteers picketed the office of the RDO in Ottappalam.

Malappuram:

Twenty volunteers who occupied surplus land were arrested and 14 volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Perintalmanna were remanded to custody till June 14. Fifteen volunteers who picketed the district Collectorate were let off by the court.

Kozhikode:

Twentyfive volunteers who occupied surplus land were remanded to custody for two weeks and 25 volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO were remanded for three days.

Cannanore:

Twentyfive volunteers who occupied surplus land were sent to jail for four days, while 30 volunteers who picketed the office of the RDO in Kasargode were sentenced to one week's imprisonment. Twentyseven volunteers who picketed the Collectorate were let off with a warning. Twentyfive volunteers were arrested for picketing the office of the RDO in Tellicherry.

May 31—Seventh Day

A total of 587 volunteers were arrested—251 for occupying surplus land and 336 for picketing Government offices.

Districtwise—Trivandrum 25 and 15; Quilon—20 and 30; Alleppey—25 and 25; Kottayam—20 and 21; Idikky—15 and 16; Ernakulam—25 and 50; Trichur—26 and 26; Palghat—25 and 50; Malappuram—20 and 29; Kozhikode—25 and 20; Cannanore—25 and 54.

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Most of the volunteers were sent to jail for terms varying from ten days to one month.

The occupation of surplus land in Quilon district was by volunteers of the Socialist Youth Federation and the picketing of the Quilon district Collectorate by ten women volunteers of the Mahila Federation, led by K. N. Devaki Amma, and the office of the RDO in Adoor by twenty volunteers of the Federation led by Bhabani Amma.

June 1—Eighth Day

Six hundred and fortysix volunteers of the Action Council were arrested during the day—248 for occupying surplus land and 398 for picketing Government offices.

Fiftyone of the volunteers were arrested in Trivandrum, 39 in Quilon, 70 in Alleppey, 45 in Kottayam, 32 in Idikky, 68 in Ernakulam, 52 in Trichur, 75 in Palghat, 53 in Malappuram, 51 in Kozhikode, and 105 in Cannanore.

In Alleppey district the picketing of the office of the RDO in Chengannoor was by 29 women volunteers. There were five women among the volunteers arrested for picketing the Palghat Collectorate. The picketing of the Quilon Collectorate was done by volunteer belonging to the Headload Workers' Union.

No Joint Campaign with Jana Sangh, Swatantra, Syndicate*

Statement issued by Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on June 10, 1972

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on June 10, 1972 :

The Polit Bureau's attention is drawn to the Press Conference held in Delhi by Comrade Jyotirmoy Bosu, our Party's whip in the Lok Sabha along with the leaders of the Swatantra and Congress (O) immediately after the session was over.

The Polit Bureau appreciates Comrade Jyotirmoy Bosu's successful initiative to expose the ruling Congress's shady dealings with Big Business, as in the Election Poster issue and more than shady affair, that of Sri-Nagarwala's Rs. 60 lakh State Bank cash question and the suspicious death of Sri Nagarwala and the investigating officer. The Polit Bureau also appreciates that our Parliamentary group has been able to mobilise all Opposition parties including the Congress (O), Swatantra and Jana Sangh against the Government on these issues, on the floor of the Lok Sabha, to effectively pin down the Government and the ruling Indira Congress.

Press reports say, "During the inter-session period some of the parties propose to focus the attention of the people on the two issues through public meetings, publication of posters" in which the Jana Sangh will also be drawn.

The Polit Bureau wants to make it absolutely clear that whilst every party is free to carry on its own campaign, our Party cannot jointly campaign outside Parliament even on these

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, June 18, 1972

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issues, with Jana Sangh, Swatantra and the Congress (O), as their whole policies are diametrically opposed to our Party's policies. They represent the same ruling classes of Big Business and the landlords as does the ruling Indira Congress and they advocate extremely avowed reactionary policies.

Ensure Safety Of Women In West Bengal : Deputation Demands Of Prime Minister*

A deputation of the Paschim Banga Ganatantrik Mahila Samiti met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in New Delhi on May 29 to submit to her a memorandum detailing the attacks on and torture of women which continue under the Congress Government.

The deputation was led by Kanak Mukherjee and consisted of Pankaj Acharya, Manjari Gupta, Madhuri Dasgupta, Vimal Ranadive, Bibha Ghosh Goswamy, MP, Gita Chatterjee, Binapani Bhattacharya and Harimaya Devi.

The deputationists reminded the Prime Minister of the delegation of the Samiti which had met her on November 24, 1970, to submit a memorandum describing the inhuman tortures on women under President's rule in West Bengal. "At that time you told our delegation that you would enquire into the matter and we hoped the situation would improve. But the happenings of the last one and a half years, specially of the post-election period have belied our expectations".

The leader of the earlier delegation to the Prime Minister, 72 year old Smt. Jyoti Chakrabarti, who is also the President of the Samiti, was herself attacked on May 22, 1971, and seriously injured in her house. She has also been ousted from her house.

Murder and Rape

The memorandum listed the eleven women who have been murdered by the goondas and CRP during this period—nine of

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, June 18, 1972.

them before the elections and two afterwards. Two others—ten-year old Swarna Das and eight-year old Sukla Dey—were also murdered by the goondas.

Hundreds of women have been seriously injured, many have been molested and raped by anti-social elements with the help of the police and the CRP.

On November 6, 1971, twenty-year old Ashima Poddar was arrested and she has complained of police molestation in the lock-up.

On February 17, Geeta Chatterjee was raped by anti-social elements mobilised by the local Congress after they had brutally murdered her husband, Nirmal Chatterjee. The police had to take into custody the leader of this gang, but influential Congress and Right C. P. leader got him released on bail.

Geeta Chatterjee, herself a member of the deputation, told the Prime Minister of what the hoodlums had done to her right in the presence of her four children just a few seconds after the killing of her husband.

Before the elections these goondas were recruited by the Congress and used as Chhatra Parishad and Yuva Congress volunteers. They were armed with modern weapons. The memorandum cited Chhatra Parishad leader Sudeep Banerjee's appeal to the youth to surrender arms to the police, Minister of State for Home Subrata Mukherjee's statement that anti-social elements had infiltrated into the Congress and the Note to the Congress High Command from some West Bengal Congress leaders including members of the AICC which said, "some of the top leaders [of the Congress] deliberately instigated the politically untrained youth to indulge in violent activities and helped them to procure lethal weapons" as corroboration of this fact.

Attacks Still Continue

During the election period, these goondas acted as the storm-troopers of the Congress-Right C. P. alliance, creating a reign of terror in areas which are strong bases of the democratic movement. About twenty thousand persons, workers and

supporters of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Left Front, many of them with their families, were evicted from their homes and sent out of the constituencies where they lived. On polling day they became masters of the day and rigged the election and prevented many women along with others from exercising their franchise.

After the elections, the goondas in their victorious march with Congress flags in their hands launched barbarous attacks in those areas which are known as the strongholds of the Left forces. Another twenty thousand families were forcibly uprooted from their homes and localities and their conditions today are worse than those of evacuees.

The memorandum lists a few of the post-election incidents.

In Entally in Calcutta the Congress goondas declared that no political worker except of the Congress would be allowed to live in that locality. The local leader of the Mahila Samiti, Lila Purakayastha, was ordered to leave her house and in her absence the goondas forcibly occupied it.

In Bijpur, 24-Parganas, the house of the local Secretary of the Samity, Sabita Chatterjee, was attacked thrice by Congress goondas armed with sten-guns and they created such terror that many members of the Samiti were forced to leave the area. In Katwa, Burdwan, Congress goondas who came in search of her husband killed Purnima Bandopadhyay with iron rods. In Jamuria of the same district, Meena Mukherjee, widow of martyr Nikhil Mukherjee, was driven out of her house.

Girls Kidnapped and Tortured

In the Kurti tea garden, Jalpaiguri, Congress goondas attacked the house of Robin Das on March 14 and not finding him there, mercilessly beat his parents and ordered them to leave the locality. Next day stark naked they danced before women tea garden workers and abused them in filthy language. When the women protested, they left. But the police came and arrested one woman worker, Rapni Bhagat and while she was being taken to the thana, in police custody she was tortured by the goondas. In the same area, Left Front candidate Punai Oraon's wife was driven out of her house and it was looted. They took

away one adivasi girl, Santi, from the house and confined her in a room for a whole night, tortured her and then handed her over to the police.

In Chakdah town, Nadia district, the goondas along with the police attacked many houses at Palaspara and beat women and children. In Madanpur of the same district, on March 31, Yuva Congress elements kidnapped Namita Mandal and confined her in a room for six hours and tortured her and then handed her over to the police.

In the Nishchinda area of Howrah district, the goondas looted the houses of Neela Chakrabarti, Sipra Bhattacharjee, Shephali Chakrabarti, Manorama Bhattacharjee and Bhanu Upadhyay and forced them to quit their houses. In the Bamangachi area of the same district, the goondas attacked the house of Geeta Bose and stabbed her.

In Haltoo, 24-Parganas, when Mukul Bhattacharjee a teacher and local Secretary of the Samiti who had earlier been ousted from the area came back to join her school, she was dragged out of her house and mercilessly beaten on May 16 by goondas who came from the nearby Congress office. She was again forced to leave the area.

In many areas, the goondas are threatening young girls : we will make you Geeta Chatterjee and Ashima Poddar.

There are innumerable cases of such assaults on women. These activities of the goondas have made the functioning of democratic organizations impossible.

Prevented from Joining Work

Many women teachers who are Left-minded are being forced to submit their resignations. Among them are six women teachers and the headmistress of the Gandhi Colony School in Tollygunj and two women teachers of the Belgachia Saheed Memorial School. Others are being threatened everyday and in some places being prevented from joining the schools.

Workers who are earning members of their families are prevented from reporting for duty and their wives and children are facing starvation.

Innumerable workers and supporters of the Left Front are being detained without trial and implicated in false cases. In many cases the accused are likely to be acquitted or are given bail by courts, they are promptly detained without trial. A number of them have been sent to the Cuddalore Jail in Tamil Nadu where their conditions are indescribably bad.

The memorandum says, "We do not know how long this will continue but we feel that this situation should be ended immediately. The honour of women is at stake, the minimum rights of women to live with their husbands and children are being taken away, the democratic rights of the people are being thrown overboard, the democratic functioning of mass organizations have been made practically impossible.

"Under the circumstances, we, on behalf of the Paschim Banga Ganatantrik Mahila Samiti, demand that :

"An immediate enquiry should be made about the goonda, police and CRP atrocities, specially on women in West Bengal and the culprits should be punished;

"Immediate steps should be taken to stop the goonda, police and CRP repression;

"Normal functioning of democratic mass organisations should be restored;

"The authorities concerned should see that those thousands of uprooted families are sent back to their residences without any fear and they should be given due protection;

"The right of teachers, workers and employees to work in schools, factories and offices should be restored immediately;

"All arrested persons of political and mass organisations should be immediately released;

"Those political prisoners sent to Cuddalore Jail should be brought back to West Bengal and pending the release of all political prisoners should be given the status of Class I prisoners;

"All repressive measures including the MISA, PVA, the Maintenance of Public Order Act should be withdrawn;

"Fundamental democratic rights of the people as written in the Constitution should be guaranteed."

Smt. Indira Gandhi was not prepared to accept that these atrocities were committed by her own Congress party. She said, "How can I believe what you say ? The world is praising us for what we are doing..."

The advocates, teachers and housewives in the delegation gave accounts of how their own organizations were being attacked, just because they were opposing the present Congress policies of terror and attacks.

When the delegation pointed out to Smt. Indira Gandhi that Chhatra Parishad and Yuva Congress elements come with Congress flags and with the slogan "Indira Gandhi jug jug jiyyo", she immediately denied that they were her people. She said, "The Congress party has become a big party now. We are aware that some anti-social elements have entered our party. And, therefore, we are introducing a card system to check such elements."

But then she said, "This violence began before the Congress came to power in West Bengal... We know there was so much violence at that time...even women were not able to walk in the streets." At this point every member of the delegation challenged her statement, and asked her, "How many cases of rape were there before President's rule ? How many cases of murder of women were there ? How many families were forced to leave their houses ? Give at least one instance."

Geeta Chatterjee stood up, narrated her story. Smt. Indira Gandhi interrupted her and asked if she could tell the names of those Congress people who had murdered her husband and raped her.

Geeta gave those names which Smt. Indira Gandhi noted down. She told her those persons were still at large. Geeta finished with the question : "Who is responsible for the murder of my husband ? Who is responsible for dishonouring my modesty" and she broke down.

The delegation handed over an appeal to the Prime Minister on which 40,000 signatures of women had been collected by the Paschim Banga Ganatantrik Mahila Samiti demanding the

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release of political prisoners and bringing the detenus back from Cuddalore Jail to West Bengal.

The delegation held a Press Conference as also a public meeting.

The public meeting held at the Constitution Club Hall was presided by Bibha Ghosh Goswami, M.P. Prof. Rani Mukhia from Delhi introduced the delegation to the audience. Women building construction workers who won a victory recently attended in good numbers, as also women textile workers. Students from the Jawaharlal Nehru University and Delhi University were also among the audience.

Amidst spontaneous slogans from the audience of “Geeta Chatterjee lal salam” and “Geeta Chatterjee zindabad”, the meeting ended after members of the delegation had reported on the situation in West Bengal and on their interview with the Prime Minister.

Political Resolution Adopted by the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Held in Madurai on June 27 - July 2, 1972*

1. The international developments since the last Congress of our party reveal a growing aggravation of all the contradictions of the present epoch. They also reveal that the contradiction between imperialism and the national liberation struggles still continues to act as the focal point of all contradictions.

2. The monetary convulsions that were witnessed in the recent months in the capitalist world have only underlined the deep-going crisis of the world capitalist economy. For three consecutive years now the rate of increase in production has been falling in all capitalist countries.

The USA, the leading nation of the capitalist world, has itself been caught in the grip of an economic crisis from which it is finding it difficult to extricate itself. Its adverse balance of payments position has reached a new high. Inflation is ever-rising. This is the result of the militarisation of the economy, the huge expenditure on the war in Vietnam, expenditure on armaments to retain the global domination of the USA, and above all, to carry on its fight against the Socialist camp and the huge export of capital to the advanced and backward countries alike.

Inter-Imperialist Contradictions

3. The position of the dollar as the currency of the capitalist world has been seriously undermined. A furious struggle was waged by the U.S. to throw the burdens of the crisis on the other imperialist countries, notably West Germany and Japan,

*Published as a booklet in July 1972.

with the latter tenaciously resisting the efforts of the U.S. Ultimately, a compromise was struck, the U.S. devaluing the dollar by eight per cent, and West Germany and Japan revaluing the mark and yen by eight per cent. Despite this compromise, the monetary crisis continues. The dollar is quoted in the exchange markets below its par value.

4. Gone are the days when the U.S. reigned supreme and enjoyed an unchallenged position in the capitalist world. West Germany and Japan have emerged as serious rivals to the U.S. Moreover, the uneven development of the capitalist countries and the efforts of each one of them to strengthen its position in the competitive struggle, particularly in the midst of the crisis, are increasingly aggravating the contradictions between the imperialist countries. The spokesmen of France and Italy denounced the American efforts to dominate their economy through purchase of over-valued dollars. The struggle for markets, for trade and for spheres of investment is on in the crudest form.

5. The American pressure on the European imperialist Powers has led to a combination of Powers. With a view to consolidating the position of European monopolists in Western Europe, as against its erosion by the USA, these countries created the European Common Market. Great Britain, which was being kept off, is now being admitted to the ECM.

6. These economic conflicts and rivalries in the background of a deepening economic crisis are leading to differences and conflicts over major political developments in the international sphere. While most of these Powers have refrained from openly criticising the USA on important questions, they have left no doubt of their disagreement with U.S. policies by their refusal to support or extension of only lukewarm support to the U.S.

The French Government has been openly criticising the U.S. for its aggressive war in Vietnam. It has disagreed with the U.S. proposals in the Paris Peace Conference, and been urging for more effective efforts and constructive proposals to end the war.

The other imperialist Powers, while keeping mum on this question, have been refusing to lend any support to the USA in the Vietnam war. The SEATO is literally in a shambles.

The French Government has been openly raising its voice against the U.S. domination of Europe. The agreement, in principle, of the West European Powers, to the call of the Soviet Union for a conference on European Security stems precisely from this conflict. The Provisional Agreement between the Brandt Government of West Germany and the Governments of the Soviet Union and Poland and the agreement on Berlin are pointers to the trend of West Germany asserting, to a certain extent, its own independent policy.

In West Asia, as against the U.S. support to Israeli intransigence, the British and French imperialists have been seeking a solution to the West Asian crisis, for their interests demand the re-opening of the Suez Canal.

7. Most of the West European Powers, notably France and West Germany, have refused to accept the U.S. embargo on trade with China in strategic materials. They have developed trade with China, no doubt with an eye to the burgeoning market of China, with its population of eight hundred million.

As a result, the demand for the admission of China into the U.N. on its terms, i.e., simultaneous expulsion of the Taiwan clique was gathering more and more support and last year China got an overwhelming vote, signifying a stunning defeat for the U.S. policy of preventing the Peoples Republic of China from taking its legitimate seat in the U.N., pursued since the birth of the People's Republic of China.

8. The inter-imperialist contradiction was seen in the developments in the Indian sub-continent last year, with the struggle of the people of Bangladesh for national liberation. The United States was pouring its arms to Yahya Khan of Pakistan and abetting genocide of the population of Bangladesh. Its aim was to keep the tension between India and Pakistan permanently on the subcontinent, so that both the countries would be looking to the U.S. to ease the situation whenever tension mounted up.

Other imperialist Powers did not adopt the same attitude as the U.S. In the Security Council and General Assembly, Britain and France refused to vote for the U.S. resolutions. And when

Bangladesh emerged victorious, most of the countries did not wait long to recognise Bangladesh.

Contradiction Between the Workers and the Ruling Monopolists

9. As a result of this crisis, the class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries, including the USA, is taking a sharper form. The number of unemployed in the USA now exceed six million. The number of unemployed in Britain is about one million—the highest since the end of the war. In the ECM countries, the number of unemployed has reached over 1.5 million. The strike wave in all these countries is on an ascending scale during the last two-three years. Strikes in major industries involving tens of thousands continue for several months. The working class struggles are often supplemented by the struggles of students, youth and other democratic sections of the people on economic, political and various other issues.

10. The glorious struggle of the people of Vietnam, who have inflicted defeat after defeat on the invading American forces, has had its repercussions on the political thinking of the American people. The consciousness that the economic crisis, the inflation and consequent sufferings of the common people as well as the reckless loss of tens of thousands of American lives are mainly the result of the war has been growing. The Black people of America who are used as cannon-fodder in the Vietnam war, have become conscious of their rights and are inspired by the struggle of the people of Vietnam.

As a result, unprecedentedly large mobilisations and demonstrations condemning the Vietnam war and demanding the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam have been sweeping the length and breadth of the U.S.

Militant demonstrations and actions against the policy of racial segregation and discrimination against the Black people are also taking place.

In the midst of the crisis, a powerful section of the ruling classes has also raised its voice of condemnation of the war. The split in the ruling class has led to powerful exposures of

the perfidy of the U.S. which reached its high watermark in the publication of the secret Pentagon papers in *The New York Times*, and other national newspapers, which have proved that the American people have been dragged into the war by deceit.

Imperialism Vs. National Liberation

11. This period has seen further accentuation of the contradiction between imperialism and national liberation struggles, Vietnam continuing to be its focal point. In its desperation, American imperialism has extended war to Laos and Cambodia, with the hope that it can retrieve its position by this extended aggression. This hope has been shattered by the heroic resistance of the three peoples. Moreover, the people's liberation forces of South Vietnam have recently gone on a big offensive and inflicted tremendous defeats on the South Vietnamese puppet and American forces despite heavy bombing by American planes and the Seventh Fleet.

In Africa, in the Portuguese colonies, the struggle for liberation is getting intensified as also the struggle of the people of South Africa and Rhodesia for liberation from racist regimes. In West Asia, the Arab and Palestinian people are waging a struggle against the U.S. imperialists and their Israeli collaborators.

12. In Latin America, the struggle for national liberation against colonial exploitation by the U.S. is advancing. In Chile, the pro-U.S. puppet regime has been thrown out and the new Government has taken definite measures against the U.S. monopoly interests in the country. In this struggle, the people of Latin American countries are drawing inspiration from Socialist Cuba, which is also rendering them valuable assistance.

13. The seventyfive million people of Bangladesh rose in revolt against the military regime of Yahya Khan and for national freedom. The victory of this struggle has unleashed democratic forces in Pakistan itself and seriously undermined the position of U.S. imperialism in the Indian sub-continent.

14. The peoples and Governments of many of the newly independent countries are resisting the efforts of the imperialists to interfere in their affairs and dominate their economy. They

are also strongly resisting the imperialist efforts to shift the burdens of the crisis on to their shoulders.

15. Notwithstanding, therefore, all the manipulations of American imperialism, the liberation struggles get intensified, resistance to imperialism grows, and American imperialism is forced to stage many moves to get out of its present difficulties.

Aggravation of Contradictions Between Imperialism and Socialism

16. The last three years have also seen an aggravation of the contradiction between imperialism and Socialism with imperialist attempts to undermine Socialist regimes under cover of negotiations for *detente* and disarmament.

17. In contrast to the capitalist economy, the economies of the Socialist countries have developed rapidly, ensuring rising and prosperous living standards to the people.

18. It should be borne in mind that the world capitalist crisis is intensifying when one third of the world has gone Socialist and is making rapid all-round advance, when most of the former colonial countries have attained political independence under more favourable international conditions, and when powerful national liberation struggles and revolutionary working class movements have been sweeping all the continents. The Socialist countries, even though most of them had inherited extremely backward economies, have made rapid strides in industry, agriculture, science, technology, education, health and in other spheres of life. The countries of the Socialist camp have not only succeeded in building a social order free from recurring crisis of capitalist overproduction, unemployment, want and poverty, but also stand as the bulwark of peace, against war.

The economic, political and military might of the Socialist camp, in particular, the growth of the two big Socialist States, the Soviet Union and People's China, is putting the imperialist camp on the defensive and enabling the small and weak nations to defend their political independence, and also to secure scientific, technical and industrial aid for these countries in order to withstand the pressure of the imperialists and to

overcome their economic backwardness. The military aid rendered by the world Socialist camp has immensely helped the valiant liberation fighters of Vietnam and the countries of Indo-China to inflict crushing defeats on the U.S. and its puppet armed forces.

19. All these lead to the intensification of the central contradiction between imperialism and Socialism. Under cover of negotiations for *detente* and disarmament attempts by the imperialists to undermine the Socialist regimes are becoming intense. Despite the heavy defeats suffered by the U.S. in South Vietnam, it has extended the war to Cambodia and Laos. It has intensified the heavy bombing attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, continues to maintain its army of occupation in South Korea to prevent of the unification of the Korean people, continues to retain Taiwan as a military base against China and persists in the blockade of Cuba.

Despite talk of seeking a *detente* with the USSR and China, despite sugar-coated talk of disarmament, what are known as Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), the U.S. is feverishly perfecting and acquiring more sophisticated weapons like the MIRV missiles, nuclear submarines, supersonic bombers, thermo-nuclear weapons, and is developing Laser death-rays—all aimed at the Socialist world.

20. If these schemes of the imperialists could not succeed so far, it is because of the military and economic strength of the Socialist camp which has acted as a deterrent against the adventurist plans from imperialist quarters. It has become clear now that but for the preparedness of the Soviet military machine against the USA, the developing of nuclear weapons by China to forestall American attack, imperialism would have attempted a series of adventures to undermine the Socialist regimes.

21. The intensification of the conflict is seen in West Asia where the USA, apart from arming Israel to the teeth, is in feverish search of stooges in the ruling circles of the Arab world. It seeks to utilise them to undermine the unity of the Arab States in their struggle against Israeli aggression. It also seeks to undermine the influence of the USSR in this part of the world.

22. To sum up, the rapid growth of the economic-political and military might of the countries of the world Socialist camp, the tremendous victories by the peoples of Indo-China against the U.S. and their puppet armies, the fiasco of the so-called Nixon doctrine and the "Vietnamisation" of the war in Indo-China, the intensification and deepening of the national liberation struggles in a number of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the outbreak of the big national revolt against the military regime of Pakistan by the seventyfive million people of East Bengal and its victory and the formation of Bangladesh, the rising strike wave in all the capitalist countries, the throwing on the defensive of the aggressive NATO, SEATO and CENTO military blocs of imperialism and in the wake of deepening world capitalist crisis, the establishment of normal trade and diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and a number of capitalist countries, the triumphant entry of the People's Republic of China into the U.N., Nixon's visit to China and his climb-down on the question of Taiwan, the considerable easing of the tense situation that was prevailing between the Soviet Union and People's China during the 1967-68 period, the increasing trend of anti-imperialist opposition noticed from the under-developed and newly liberated countries, etc., present one picture of the situation. This is, of course, what is growing, reflecting the real revolutionary potentialities of our epoch, the epoch of transition to Socialism on a world scale.

Differences in the Socialist Camp

23. However, these positive features in the international situation should not blind Marxist-Leninists to the grave shortcomings and errors, political, ideological and organisational, that dog the present-day world Communist movement. The leaders of the two big Communist Parties, heading the two powerful Socialist States, the Soviet Union and People's China, have come to hold Right-and Left-opportunist views on a number of questions connected with the world Communist movement.

In practice, virtually every move of China is looked upon by the USSR as a conspiracy against itself and vice versa. China carries on a campaign against the Soviet Union as a “social-imperialist” State and the USSR also carries on a massive campaign against China as having abandoned every tenet of Marxism-Leninism and as an aggressive national State in collusion with U.S. imperialism.

This very disunity between the two mighty Socialist Powers gives encouragement to U.S. imperialism to launch wars of aggression in order to stifle national liberation struggles.

This becomes crystal clear from a telegram that Lyndon Johnson, then President of the USA, sent to U.S. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge in Saigon March 20, 1964, before the USA embarked upon its massive bombing attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which states : *“There is additional international reason for avoiding immediate overt action in that we expect a show-down between the Chinese and Soviet Communist Parties soon and action against the North will be more practicable after than before a show-down”* (Emphasis added, The Pentagon Papers, Bantam Books, 1971, page 285)

It was after the “show-down” between the two Parties that the U.S. sent in its armed forces massively, increasing it to over half a million, and directly began mounting attacks on the liberation forces.

24. It is true that the massive aid of arms given by the entire Socialist camp—above all by the Soviet Union and China—has enabled the brave people of Vietnam to fight back the U.S. imperialist forces and inflict defeat after defeat on them. It is also true that the massive anti-war movement in the U.S. that this heroic resistance gave rise to forced President Nixon to manoeuvre and agree to peace talks in Paris with the representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

Nevertheless, within a short time, the U.S. imperialists toppled the Government of Prince Sihanouk in Cambodia and installed a puppet regime and escalated the war and extended it to neighbouring Laos and Cambodia.

25. Faced with the mounting demand for peace from the American people, and faced with the Presidential election in November 1972, President Nixon had to undertake the visit to China, on a “pilgrimage of peace”, as he put it.

The declaration by the U.S. in the Chou-Nixon communique issued at the conclusion of the talks that the United States acknowledges that “Taiwan is a part of China” is a definite climb-down on the part of the U.S.

26. The American retreat from the twentytwo-year-long policy of containment of China is significant for the world revolutionary movement. It could be used to further weaken imperialism provided the entire Socialist world acts unitedly and in unison with the liberation and working class movements in the non-Socialist world.

27. While talking of a “pilgrimage of peace”, Nixon actually intensified bombing attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, just a few days before his visit to China. It must be noted that while China, in the Chou-Nixon communique, reiterated its support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, not a word of condemnation of or protest against the intensified bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is mentioned.

28. Nixon embarked upon his visit to Moscow two months later. However, faced at that time with the mounting defeat suffered by the puppet troops in Vietnam, Nixon not only further intensified the bombing attack of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and South Vietnam with the latest weapons with electronic devices but also had the effrontery to mine the ports and waterways of the DRV thus preventing help from the USSR and other Socialist countries from reaching the DRV.

Not only did the Soviet Union not take up the challenge but its leaders received Nixon and went through the scheduled programme.

The least they—the Soviet Union and China—could have done in the face of the challenge was to cancel the visit of Nixon and refuse to hold talks with him.

Although the Soviet Union in the Brezhnev-Nixon communique had expressed its solidarity with the Vietnamese people's liberation struggle and reiterated its support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, the communique contains not a word of condemnation of the piratical acts of the U.S. imperialists. In the face of this the declaration in the Nixon-Brezhnev communique of the principles of equality of nations and non-interference in their internal affairs becomes a mockery.

29. The fact remains that the disunity and differences between the Soviet Union and China have created a situation where, when armed counter-revolution on a massive scale has been exported by U.S. imperialism into the countries of Indo-China, when U.S. imperialism has mounted massive attacks of aggression on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, a member of the Socialist camp, the peoples of these countries have to bear the brunt of the attack single-handed. Particularly the Soviet Union and China do not join in a mighty effort to take effective steps immediately to put an end to the naval and aerial aggression but only assist the fighting people by supply of arms.

30. Both the USSR and China ignore the fact that in the former colonial countries, after independence, social contradictions develop between the ruling upper classes and the common people. Instead of relying on and encouraging the growing democratic movement of the exploited peoples, they rely on and essentially support the Governments run by the exploiting classes.

In pursuance of the short-term needs of their foreign policies, they seek to impose upon the Communist and Workers' Parties in these countries such policies as lead to their liquidation and merger with the parties sponsored by the ruling regime or virtually make them obedient adjuncts.

31. Both the USSR and China lopsidedly extol the anti-imperialist role of these States, while totally ignoring or whitewashing their anti-democratic and anti-Communist practices at home. In a series of these States in Africa, West

Asia and South-East Asia, the States and Governments supposed to be headed by the "progressive national bourgeois" and "petty-bourgeois" classes or strata have taken to the open and undisguised path of anti-Communism at home unleashing terror on Communists, banning the Workers' and Communist Parties and, in many cases, compelling them to merge in the so-called front parties sponsored by the respective ruling regimes. Many of the Governments are brutally suppressing, imprisoning and killing workers' and peasant leaders. Not a word appears in the Press of the Soviet Union and China about these repression and suppression and atrocities. Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Sudan, Algeria, Burma, Ghana, Indonesia, India, Ceylon, Pakistan and many other countries offer standing examples.

Many Governments in these countries were toppled by factional groups in the ruling classes, but both the Socialist countries lost no time in recognising the new regimes.

In Ceylon, more than ten thousand from among the youth who were in revolt were butchered by Mrs. Bandaranaike's Government and over 16,000 were held in detention camps. Yet the Soviet Government rushed MIG planes and the Chinese Government gave a huge loan to this Government and gave full support to the Bandaranaike Government in its repression.

In India, in West Bengal, organised violence is let loose on a massive scale. West Bengal is under the semi-fascist terror of the ruling classes. Gangs organised by the ruling party and Government with the help of the armed police, both State and Central, systematically carry out murderous attacks on the workers of the democratic movement, break strikes, occupy trade union offices, drive supporters of the democratic movement from their residences, prevent them from entering their factories. Thousands have been detained without trial. People are killed in cold blood while in police custody or in jail. Elections were totally falsified by terror and rigging.

In Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Rajasthan and several other States, the trade union and kisan movements face severe repression. Striking workers and agricultural labourers are often shot down. Persons in police custody are also shot down in cold blood.

Not a word of these atrocities and repression on the working class and peasants appears in the Press of the Soviet Union and China. The Soviet Party goes on showering encomiums on the Indira Gandhi Government as a progressive Government.

32. A regular genocide was organised by Yahya Khan's military regime to suppress the freedom struggle of the people of Bangladesh. Yet the Chinese Government continues to support the military junta of Pakistan and termed the struggle of the people of Bangladesh as a "secessionist struggle".

The solicitude shown by the Chinese Government in the Chou-Nixon communique to the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir is in strange contrast to its attitude to the freedom struggle of the people of Bangladesh.

Its refusal to see the reality of Bangladesh even after it emerged victorious in the struggle and its harping on the question of Kashmir do not help the cause of peace and democracy in the Indian sub-continent.

33. In these circumstances, the pursuit of calculated anti-Communist, anti-democratic policies at home and the adoption of anti-imperialist positions in certain matters of foreign policy are proving admirably suited to the class aims of the bourgeois regimes of the newly liberated countries. They fit in well with the capitalist path of development that they have embarked upon, following the attainment of political independence. If the leaders of the big Socialist States imagine that they have been shrewd in extending them aid and utilising them in the struggle against imperialism and its war machinations, the capitalist regimes of these newly liberated countries have every reason to gloat over the fact that they have been able to successfully bargain between the opposing camps of Socialism and imperialism in furtherance of their path of capitalist development and simultaneously suppress the democratic movement at home with impunity.

It is tragic to witness that the leadership of the CPSU is selling this as the 'non-capitalist' path and 'National Democratic State'. Parties following them in these countries unashamedly collaborate with these bourgeois Governments giving them the

endearing titles of “revolutionary national democracies” and “transitional Governments to usher in the Socialist millennium”.

34. The strengthening of the revolutionary working class and democratic movement alone is the firm guarantee for the successful struggle against imperialism in these countries. It is the suppression of the democratic movement that creates favourable conditions for the U.S. imperialists to recruit stooges from the ruling circles, to plot toppling of the existing regimes and instal puppets who would toe the U.S. imperialist line. Already this has happened in a number of countries of Africa and Asia.

35. Thus, the period under review has thoroughly exposed the concept of the so-called “non-capitalist path and national democracy” conjured up for the newly liberated countries under capitalist rule as nothing but an utterly opportunist hoax. Such is the singular lesson that stands out on the issue.

36. If the Right-opportunist thesis of the so-called “national democracy” and “non-capitalist path of development for several newly independent countries still under bourgeois-landlord class rule” was blown up as a Right-revisionist myth, the Left-opportunist and adventurist thesis of armed insurrections and wars of people’s liberation as a slogan of action irrespective of the objective situation for most of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, advocated by the CPC, fared no better and ended in fiasco. Naxalism and its disastrous results in India are a standing example as to how this ultra-Left adventurist line has only helped the ruling classes to unleash terror against the mass struggles to disrupt them. It also shows how the petty-bourgeois adventurists become easy tools in the hands of the ruling classes to attack the mass movements and especially our Party, the CPI(M).

37. The bankruptcy of these lines is being proved by the concrete experience gained by the revolutionary movements in country after country. It was proved in Bangladesh, where the bulk of those who at one time virtually supported the Yahya Khan regime under the mistaken idea that, being a friend of People’s China, that regime is anti-imperialist in character, had

to revise their stand and join the freedom movement against the Yahya regime; the few that persisted in their discredited line have been completely exposed and wiped out of the national life of Bangladesh. Similarly, in Ceylon, where the revisionist leadership of the Communist Party shamelessly joined the bandwagon of Mrs. Bandaranaike, it is today facing a serious political-organisational crisis. That party's leader and Minister, Peter Keuneman, is being sharply criticised by his own party for giving support to the semi-fascist legislation being piloted by the Mrs. Bandaranaike Government. The leadership of this revisionist party has been forced by the developments in the country and by the pressure of its own rank and file to take up a position of opposition to the semi-fascist legislation which has brought the coalition itself to a breaking point. In India, too, the revisionist line of openly and shamelessly joining the bandwagon of Indira Gandhi is steadily leading to the complete exposure of that party as nothing other than a satellite of the ruling classes.

38. Despite all this the very existence and growth of such a powerful Socialist community and the objective laws of development that came to operate thereby have been seriously undermining the positions of imperialism, and accelerating the forces of national liberation and social emancipation. How much more deadly blows imperialism would have been dealt, how the national liberation movements and the movements for social emancipation in the newly liberated countries would have advanced if the international Communist movement had stood united and the two giant Socialist Powers acted in unison, can very well be imagined.

All this sharply underlines the need and urgency of a principled and uncompromising political-ideological struggle against both the Right and Left-opportunist trends. The CPI(M) pledges to continue the struggle in defence of Marxism-Leninism, proletarian internationalism and the unity of the world Socialist camp and the international Communist movement.

Foreign Policy

39. The foreign policy pursued by the Government of India in recent times must be seen in the light of these international developments.

The foreign policy pursued by the Congress Government has always been one of playing between the two camps to suit the class interest of the big bourgeoisie. This policy of non-alignment and neutrality has been interpreted differently at different phases depending upon its class interest.

For years the Government of India which heavily depended on U.S. loans would not condemn American aggression in Vietnam. Its trade relations with Cuba, North Korea and North Vietnam have been virtually non-existent. The pressure from West German monopolists prevented it from recognising the German Democratic Republic. They pursued a hostile attitude towards People's China, trying to reap advantages for themselves from the U.S. They also attempted to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet differences by their anti-Chinese stand. By all these selfish manoeuvres they simply imperilled the nation's safety and imposed on it a burden of Rs. 1,200 crores per year for military defence which has risen to Rs. 1,400 crores in 1972-73. Under U.S. pressure they even rejected important deals with the USSR which would have helped the country. This policy has done immense harm to the national interests as it pinned its faith on U.S. imperialism which is consistently opposed to all liberation struggles and always took a hostile attitude towards India at every crucial turn in politics.

40. As the crisis of the capitalist system deepened and U.S. aid became less and less available, the Government had to turn more towards the Socialist countries for trade and aid. Under pressure of public opinion in the country, the Government of India began condemning the bombing on North Vietnam and demanded the withdrawal of American forces and invited Madame Binh to India. With the emergence of China as an industrial-military Power, with the fiasco of the American policy of containment of China, and under the stress of the economic crisis and mass pressure, they began talking of

normalising relations with China. They also opened consular relations with the GDR and raised the diplomatic representation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to ambassadorial level.

41. It was in this background of developing U.S. pressures against India in relation to the freedom struggle of Bangladesh that the Government of India entered into the Indo-Soviet Treaty. The treaty was the culmination of developments over a number of years which saw increasing military help from the USSR to the Government of India, apart from increasing trade and economic relations.

The treaty went further than any previous agreement between the two countries. This treaty forthrightly condemns colonialism and racialism, and provides for “most favoured nation” treatment in the relations between the two countries, apart from steps to remove the aggression or threats of aggression. It has now called for the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam and also called for the settlement of the problem on the basis of the seven-point peace proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

42. The anti-Chinese stand which the Government had adopted all these years had also ended in fiasco. The Government of India has now announced its readiness to normalise its relations with the People’s Republic of China and offers to settle the border question.

This course is a welcome development and in so far as the Government has succeeded in resisting pressure to continue its anti-China outlook, it is all the more welcome. The CPI(M) has always demanded friendly relations between India and China and for this ‘crime’ it was branded as anti-national and traitor. The correctness of our policy is seen today when the Government itself is forced to accept it and work for it. Only the revisionist traitors are unhappy and still continue their anti-Chinese slander.

43. The USA’s military pact with Pakistan and supply of arms always caused concern to the Indian Government. But the loans and credits secured by India served to tone it down and screen the inimical role of the U.S. imperialists from the Indian people. The enemy of India was presented as a helpful friend.

But under conditions of the Bangladesh struggle the treacherous character of the American imperialists could no longer be concealed.

A sharp conflict of interests developed between the Indian bourgeoisie and American imperialism in connection with the Bangladesh struggle. Never before had such a conflict come to the forefront and was witnessed by the ordinary man.

The U.S. Government declared India to be the aggressor, stopped economic aid, and threatened it by sending the Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal.

The Government of India, backed by the Soviet Union, supported the Bangladesh struggle despite American threats, faced the Pakistani aggressors and brought about the surrender of the Pakistani forces in co-operation with the liberation forces of Bangladesh, which ushered in the emergence of Swadhin Bangladesh and prepared to meet further blackmail.

It is true that in all this it was not relying only on the support of the Soviet Union. It had the sympathy of both France and Britain and also Nixon's Democratic Party opponents.

But nonetheless it was a sharp conflict of interests with the U.S. Government, protecting the military junta of Pakistan, arming it and asking India to bear permanently the burden of ten million refugees.

As a result, the entire bourgeois Press turned its broadsides against American imperialism and its threatening policies, exposing to the common man its hostility to the Indian people and the cause of democracy in Bangladesh. The enemy of the international working class is now identified as the national enemy of the Indian people, a consummation for which we have been working.

44. Even now despite talk of self-reliance, the Government of India has not given up its efforts at *rapprochement* with this confirmed enemy of the Indian people.

It is for the Party to unite the people against the U.S. conspiracies, create strong public opinion against its blackmail so that the Government does not succumb to U.S. pressures and blandishments.

Our Party has already demanded a moratorium on all debt payments to the USA, confiscation of U.S. concerns beginning

with the oil companies and stopping of all future loans from the USA.

45. The experience of the last three years further proves the fiasco of Government's policies and confirms the stand of our Party on a series of questions connected with foreign policy.

The Government of India has not yet given recognition to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, nor has it raised the status of the Consulates of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the GDR to ambassadorial level. It is not prepared to demand the withdrawal of American forces from South Korea and let the people of Korea decide their future without American interference. Nor has it resumed normal trade with Cuba. It continues its policy of trade discrimination against these countries. It is inviting British and West German capitalists to shift their labour-intensive factories to India by promising them supply of cheap labour and complete freedom to export their goods.

The heavy dependence of our economy on foreign finance capital, in particular U.S., and the anti-people policies of the Government led by the big bourgeoisie demand constant vigilance of the people against imperialist pressure and the Government succumbing to it.

Bangladesh and Pakistan

46. Our Party, from the beginning, recognised the struggle of the Bangladesh people as a national struggle for liberation of a people ground under military dictatorship and denied all democratic rights. Our Party demanded from the Government of India all moral and material help to the freedom-fighters, including the supply of arms and when the Provisional Government of Bangladesh was formed we demanded its recognition. In the initial stages we did not demand that armies should march into Bangladesh, as the situation was premature and would have only helped Yahya Khan to depict the freedom struggle as an India-Pakistan conflict. Our Party attacked the communalists and chauvinists who demanded war against Pakistan, but stated that if war was imposed on India by

Pakistan, because of our help to Bangladesh, it must be faced. We criticised the Government of India for its vacillations on the question of giving arms to the freedom-fighters and of recognition to the Bangladesh Government. The Government of India, after a lot of hesitation, had to embark upon this very course. We welcomed it although we knew that the Government did it out of considerations of class interests, for it objectively helped the freedom struggle of Bangladesh. Our comrades in West Bengal, facing a critical situation as they were by way of semi-fascist attacks from the Indira Congress Government, rendered inestimable service to the young Bangladesh freedom-fighters. They also did valuable work in the refugee camps. Our Party in Tripura also plunged itself into this work.

When the war was imposed on our country by the military junta of Pakistan, our Party lent its support to the war and declared the liberation of Bangladesh and defence of the country to be the only objectives of our people. At the same time, we refused to accept the one-sided burdens that the Government attempted to impose on the people and refused to surrender the workers' right to strike.

47. The Party's stand was based on proletarian internationalism, and the correct assessment of the various forces operating in the Indian sub-continent and on the immediate needs of the freedom struggle in Bangladesh. The entire course of developments has completely vindicated our stand.

One of the reasons why the ruling party could not exploit the issue during the elections in West Bengal was the correct attitude adopted by our Party towards this vital issue. Nevertheless, the ruling party, its leader Indira Gandhi, and the bourgeois Press put out a barrage of slanders during the last elections, that our Party in West Bengal was carrying on a whisper campaign among the Muslims that the Indira Congress Government had dismembered Pakistan.

48. The emergence of a sovereign independent Bangladesh and the changes following it in Pakistan raise new problems of foreign policy in the sub-continent. The Party must firmly

adhere to the outlook of proletarian internationalism and have a correct outlook towards the situation developing after the rout of the Pakistani forces.

The agencies of American imperialism are busy creating a reactionary set-up by seeking to win over the conservative elements with financial blandishments. Not all those in the camp of the people are imbued with a democratic, anti-imperialist and secular outlook. The conspiracies of American imperialism and the agents of the military junta are yet to be finally defeated. This can be done only on the basis of a democratic, secular and anti-imperialist programme—one defending the interests of the peasants, workers and other toilers, eliminating U.S. influence and extending democracy to all sections of the people. Such a programme can be implemented only on the basis of rousing the vigilance of the masses and ensuring their active participation in consolidating the newly won freedom. This is, of course, the task of the advanced democratic forces in Bangladesh itself.

49. Our Party has to rally our people against any attempts by the vested interests in our country to utilise the tremendous difficulties that face Bangladesh—difficulties of overcoming the ravage and of construction—for economic exploitation of the people of Bangladesh. For that would undermine the tremendous fund of goodwill and friendship among the people of Bangladesh towards India and its people and would be playing into the hands of imperialism.

50. The liberation of Bangladesh constitutes a defeat of American imperialism and weakens its capacity to use Pakistan against India. It has also released democratic forces in Pakistan itself so long held in check by the Martial Law regime. If they are able to assert themselves and emerge triumphant, it will mean a near-complete fiasco of U.S. policies.

51. It is in the interests of the people of Pakistan and India that the period of useless conflict should be replaced by a period of mutual sympathy and friendship. It is in the interest of the working class and the democratic movement in the two countries that the democratic forces in Pakistan are strengthened, that people's rights are protected and representative rule is

established. Any chauvinistic stand following the Indo-Pak war will only strengthen the reactionary forces and their patron, the American imperialists.

The fight against American imperialism in the sub-continent demands that India's foreign policy towards its two neighbours should be free from chauvinism and encouragement to economic exploitation by the vested interests in India, and should encourage the popular forces to echo the demand for friendship and mutual help, and the struggle against the common enemy.

II. Features of the Present Situation

The Indian economic crisis, despite the demagogic claims of Government spokesmen that it has been stemmed and tided over, has shown no signs of abatement in any of its major manifestations. The world capitalist crisis and the current monetary and trade war that is afoot among the leading capitalist States are sure to hit hard our dependent and crisis-ridden economy. The stupendous problem of looking after ten million refugees and the additional defence burden imposed on the country further aggravated the situation.

53. The new Congress rulers seek to create the impression among the public that the country's food problem is virtually solved. Four successive monsoons and good harvests since 1967, including the record harvest of 108 million tonnes of foodgrains in the year 1971, and the results of the "Green Revolution" have enabled the Government to stop food imports and ensure larger supplies to urban areas, though the prices are beyond the reach of the urban poor. It is, however, quite evident that the per-capita net availability of food during the last years has been stationary between fifteen and sixteen ounces per day. Food prices continue to rise, even though the traders, through their market manipulations, temporarily bring down the prices during the harvesting seasons in order to loot the peasantry.

54. The "Green Revolution" strategy which certainly enables the bourgeois-landlord Government to secure marketable surpluses from the rural rich in order to meet the requirements

of the urban areas, only results in transferring the problem of food scarcity from the cities to the villages, besides widening the gap between the handful of the rural rich and the great mass of the poor in the countryside. Introduction of more and more tractors and other machines in agriculture is enabling the landlords to increase the unemployment among the agricultural labourers and to decrease their wages. This "Green Revolution" strategy, in fact, is a strategy typical of bourgeois land reforms, and against genuine land reforms in the interests of the peasantry. It is incapable of solving the food problem, and only cripples the purchasing power of the vast majority of the rural population and aggravates the social contradictions in the rural sector. Life and experience show that the strengthening of the economic and political power of the narrow stratum of the landed rich assists the growth of reaction against the democratic and revolutionary forces.

The price policy of the Government in relation to the produce of the peasants follows the same course and aggravates the crisis.

The Government which has never guaranteed fair prices for the small, peasant producers, thus forcing them to sell their produce at harvest time at low prices to be purchased by big landlords, hoarders and moneylenders, allows these sharks to sell the same at enormous prices to the consumer. In order to prevent industrial and urban unrest from bursting out if foodgrains prices go up to sharply, the Government used to supply a certain amount of them at comparatively subsidised cheaper prices. But now with the stopping of foodgrains imports, it has been proposing to reduce the procurement price of wheat and raise the price for the consumer.

Though it has given up this proposal for the time being, in practice it will not purchase the produce of the small peasants, leaving them and the consumer at the mercy of unscrupulous landlords and traders. Unless it is forced to reverse its present policy and take up procuring of stocks of big holders at cost prices while guaranteeing minimum prices for the small producers, and distribute the grain to the consumers at cheap

prices within their means, the unrest will continue to mount more and more.

55. The Fourth Five-Year plan that was embarked upon after three long years of the so-called "Plan holiday" has been a miserable failure, as revealed by the reports of the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Plan. Instead of completely reversing their policies the Government of India and the Planning Commission are continuing the same old discredited policies in their document "Approach towards the Fifth Plan". The chosen methods of the Congress rulers, the methods of indirect taxation, inflation and deficit financing to loot the common people and to fatten the profiteers and the monopolists have reached unprecedented proportions. Since the Government does not attack the vested interests of the monopolists, landlords and the foreign imperialists, and its continued fleecing of the common people is evoking increasing mass resistance, it finds itself in a quandary so far as the resources for planned capitalist development are concerned. Whatever relief it might give, more Soviet aid, increasing trade with Socialist countries can neither alter the basic class realities of the situation nor, by any magic, transform the capitalist path into a non-capitalist path.

56. Industrial growth during the 1961-65 period was 10.8 per cent per year and during the two years of recession, 1966-67, was .8 per cent per year and had during the period, 1968-70, risen to 6.3 per cent per annum but again slumped to 3.5 per cent in 1971. The capital goods industry is the most hit. Under-utilisation of plant capacity in the public sector ranges anywhere between 25 and 40 per cent in a number of undertakings. There is a marked fall in railway earnings. Over 3,000 engineering and textile factories, mines and establishments remain closed. Lock-outs, lay-offs, strikes and numerous other forms of industrial disputes are on an ascending scale. The number of unemployed on the live register has been rapidly increasing in recent years. It now exceeds five million, while the real number of unemployed in the cities may be near about ten million. Official surveys put the total number of unemployed in the country at between 13 and 15 million. This is a hopeless

underestimate and the figure of the rural unemployed and underemployed runs into many millions. The number of educated unemployed alone, according to Employment Exchange Registers, was 2.3 million by December 1971.

57. The dependence on 'aid' from the imperialists is increasing. The Government of India is constantly begging them for more loans, loans to repay and service the old debts, loans to import necessary spares, equipment and machinery without which many industries will come to a grinding halt, and loans to finance Five-Year Plans. But the Government of India has been trying to fool the people with their hollow slogan of 'self-reliance' by quoting figures of 'net' foreign aid, i.e., after taking into account repayment and servicing charges of the old debts. During the last two years, India is paying more towards repayment of debts, 50 to 60 per cent of what it was receiving by way of 'aid'. It is this deplorable situation that was at the root of increasing concessions to the Indian monopolists and their growing collaboration agreements with the foreign imperialists. The Minister of Industrial Development openly admits that during the last three years, up to September 1971, as many as 625 collaboration agreements, including 43 agreements for financial participation, were sanctioned by the Government. The so-called export drive is not an index of the country's industrial prosperity, and the situation is such that India is neither able to finance its imports nor meet the requirements of the foreign debts. Apart from the big national drain, due to heavy export subsidies granted by the Government, the imperialists are utilising this weakness to enforce on us trade with their puppet regimes such as South Korea, South Vietnam and the like.

58. The simple fact that people living below the poverty line, i.e., on less than rupees twenty a month on an average, have increased from 50 to 70 per cent during the last twentyfive years after Independence, and that the per-capita consumption of clothing and other essentials remain stationary, speak eloquently of how the growing poverty among the masses is narrowing the home market—the main reason for industrial stagnation, closure of textile and engineering industries, and the

tremendous under-utilisation of plant capacity, both in the public and private sectors. Thus, the overall picture in industry and agriculture is a dismal one of a deepening crisis which finds no solution within the framework of the bankrupt capitalist path.

Political Developments

59. The quick political developments of the period, the rise and fall of United Front Ministries headed by our Party, the split in the ruling party, the disruption of Left unity, the victory of the Indira Gandhi Congress in the parliamentary elections, the Indo-Pak war over the Bangladesh struggle and the victory of the Bangladesh people, the victory of the ruling party in the Assembly elections of 1972 and the falsification of the West Bengal Assembly election results through terror and rigging took place in the background of the intense economic crisis through which the country has been passing. The effects of the crisis on the life of the people have already been described. The capitalist-landlord Government with all its manoeuvres has failed to get the economy out of the crisis. Like the rural areas, the cities also are now becoming explosive centres, with a huge number of unemployed swarming the labour market. With more than five million registered unemployed, with over three thousand factories and establishments closed, with educated unemployment exceeding two million and intensified starvation in the rural areas, the Government faces a critical situation. The Government recognises this and concentrates much attention on the question of the problem of the unemployed to soften the impact of the explosion that might take place, and raises hopes among thousands that something is being done. As a result of this situation, struggles, outbursts, and protests of different sections of the people are breaking out.

60. The Fourth General Elections uttered a serious warning to the Congress party, when its monopoly of power was broken in a number of States. The 1969 mini-general elections made it clear that the old monopoly of power could not be gained without a change in Congress tactics. Two tactical lines emerged

in the ruling party on how to deal with the rising mass discontent and consolidate the class regime. The syndicate is the advocate of an avowed reactionary line and joining hands with reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, made a serious bid to capture the stronghold of the Government in the Presidential election following the death of Dr. Zakir Husain. The danger could be averted only with the help of the Left and democratic forces, that is, with a combination of the Indira Congress with the Left and democratic forces. Indira Gandhi used the victory against the Right parties, both to consolidate her own party and disrupt the Left forces. In her fight against the platform of the Syndicate, the Indira Gandhi Congress came out with progressive slogans, addressed itself to the growing economic discontent among the people and with the help of the deserters from the Left and democratic camp, presented itself as the only viable alternative to the challenge of reaction. The very discontent generated by the policies of the ruling party was diverted against its rivals and also to disrupt the growing strength of the Left and democratic forces. Indira Gandhi posed as a radical in the gathering economic discontent and, at the same time, succeeded in preventing the Left and democratic forces from forging ahead. The ruling classes could be best served only by the line of the Indira Congress, who by advocating continued adherence to a non-aligned foreign policy and such measures as nationalisation of banks, abolition of privy purses and the general championship of the poverty-stricken, and the appeal to the oppressed minorities like the Muslims and the untouchables, made a political bid to sway the masses in the electoral battle. As a result, the platform of the Rightist parties stood exposed as the platform of the vested interests. The ruling party reaped full advantage from this in the absence of a united Left opposition facing the Congress.

The desperate struggle for winning the confidence of the people against the background of the economic crisis led to divergent tactical lines in the ruling party. The ruling Congress routed the avowed reactionaries and also disrupted the unity of the Left and democratic forces.

61. In this Indira Gandhi was helped by the leadership of the revisionist party who turned traitor to the cause of the people, and by the leadership of a number of democratic and Left parties who joined the bandwagon of the Indira Congress to fight the consolidation of Left and democratic forces. The leaderships of these parties showed their characteristic class vacillations. Frightened by the growing Left mood of the masses, they ran helter-skelter to join the Indira Congress and slandered the CPI(M) which was consistently heading the developing democratic forces. The SSP exhibiting the same class vacillations took exactly an opposite line and joined hands with the reactionary Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra alliance.

62. The unprecedented parliamentary victory of the Indira Congress, accompanied by the disruption of the Left and democratic forces, strengthened the hands of the ruling party in dealing with the masses. It gave freedom to the ruling party to act in Parliament according to its own dictates, and not under the pressure of this or that group. It was clear that the Indira Congress had been able to reforge in a big measure its lost link with the electorate and many of those who voted against it in the 1969 elections had trekked back to its banner.

Thus, the ruling party was no more in the same crisis in which it was in 1969.

63. However, the sweeping victory itself was accompanied by certain negative factors for the ruling party. In the first place, in spite of the terror launched against the people, and the persistent campaign of slander and murder directed against our Party, the West Bengal electorate increased our vote from 18 to 35 per cent between 1967 and 1971, i.e., by 100 per cent. We came out as the party with the biggest number of votes and the largest number of seats in spite of the disruption of the Left forces. In Kerala, also, against the same combination, our Party increased its vote from 25 per cent to 41 per cent between 1967 and 1971. In Tripura, our Party polled 44 per cent of the votes. These outposts of the Left forces faced Indira's challenge and showed that notwithstanding the treachery of the revisionists, the masses led by our Party could neither be bullied nor misled.

64. In the rest of the country, Indira Gandhi had to make a lot of opportunist alliances in order to have a secure majority in Parliament. For the first time, in the history of elections, the Congress had to leave out the entire field of Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu to another party, the DMK.

In Orissa, in the Assembly elections, it could not defeat the Swatantra and its allies.

65. The most outstanding development following the last parliamentary elections and the Bangladesh freedom war is the victory of the Indira Congress, by fair or foul means, at the last poll. By winning huge majorities, in almost all States, in the wake of a similar victory in the parliamentary election last year, the Indira Congress has virtually secured a monopoly of power for the Congress as it had before 1967.

The context in which this return of the monopoly takes place is quite different and reveals both the weaknesses of the democratic movement as well as of the ruling classes.

In the first place, the ruling classes and their party are coming out as a more consolidated force to face the people than before. The entire big bourgeoisie, its Press and organisation have rallied round the Indira Congress as never before.

In its confrontation with the rival wing, the Syndicate, the Congress has emerged successful, ousting the latter from the administration, though it continues to have a substantial following in several States.

During the course of this confrontation, the Indira Congress has addressed a successful rebuff to the advancing claims of the Jana Sangh, though the latter is still the main opposition party in some States with a sizable following.

Gains of the Ruling Congress Party

66. Despite the worsening economic situation, the ruling Congress has secured big electoral mandates on two successive occasions in all States except in West Bengal and Kerala where the democratic and Left movements are powerful. This is due to the fact that in most of the States, in the 1971 elections, the main confrontation, in the absence of a strong Left movement,

was between the ruling Congress and the extreme Right forces, with their crude reactionary platforms. The very discontent of the masses could be turned into a vote for the Indira Congress because of the latter's championing of the measures mentioned above.

The grim economic reality, however, could not be wished away and discontent and disillusionment were daily growing and would have registered a big impact on the elections, but for the advantageous factor of the Bangladesh struggle. Nonetheless, voting figures show a decline in Congress votes as compared with 1971 in major States. However, in spite of this decline the Congress got unprecedentedly big majorities in the Assemblies, partly because of the Indian electoral system.

The Indira Congress has another electoral victory within one year because it was once more in confrontation with the extreme Right forces, except in West Bengal. It was at the same time, able to utilise the Bangladesh struggle for its electoral advance.

67. The struggle of the Bangladesh people, the atrocities perpetrated by Yahya's army, the final victory—all constituted one of the most outstanding events in the history of the Indian sub-continent since Independence and it was no wonder that large sections should be swayed by them. The Congress made full use of its strategic position as the ruling party to claim all credit for itself for the liberation of the Bangladesh people. The outright defeat of the Pakistani forces in Bangladesh added to sentiments of national pride. The constant appeal to the feeling of national danger, the appeal to anti-imperialist sentiments in connection with the threat of the Seventh Fleet, the slogan of self-reliance in reply to the stopping of U.S. aid, coupled with the watchword of Socialism enabled the ruling party to ride the wave of national sentiment and sidetrack attention from economic realities.

68. The ruling party made use of national political issues facing the country, issues on which it held the initiative, to meet the criticism on its failure on "garibi hatao" and simultaneously adopted a Left and Socialist pose. It appeared to

be serious in tackling issues of policy, when it rolled down a number of discredited leaders, Chief Ministers, State leaders from their positions to give a new look to the leadership.

In all this, the ruling party had the enthusiastic support of the monopoly Press which advertised every small step as a big advance to befuddle the popular mind.

69. It shows how the ruling party is capable of using this or that immediate issue to consolidate its hold and disrupt the fighting ranks of the people. It shows that in spite of all the desperate economic battles waged by the people, the political influence of the ruling classes and their party continues its hold over the people, and that its changing political declaration and platform can easily deceive the masses. It shows that without a consistent political battle against the ruling party accompanied by a powerful mass movement as in Kerala and West Bengal, tables cannot be turned against it. It will certainly require a patient political struggle before the masses in the other States can be roused to give a serious political challenge to the present regime.

The Danger of One-Party Dictatorship

70. Today, the position is that the ruling party and the classes behind it are better consolidated in the administration and the legislatures to face the people. The huge majority in Parliament gives them a lot of freedom to deal with the rising discontent. Similar huge majorities in the State legislatures, with hardly any Left Opposition, except in Kerala and Tripura, places the democratic forces in an unenviable position.

The inability to appease large sections of masses through significant concessions, the dire need to thrust further burdens and use of weapons of repression combined with the weakness of the Left Opposition, the weakening of the other bourgeois parties, the impatience and intolerance of the ruling party towards all opposition, foreshadows a likely trend towards one-party dictatorship. The vantage point gained by the ruling party, now representing the united will of the ruling classes, is not likely to be surrendered easily.

This also portends a further attack and erosion on the rights and powers of the States and further concentration of powers in the hands of the Centre. The last few years have already witnessed this trend with the growing power of the bureaucracy and the financial dependence of the States on the Centre.

Today, with the virtual monopoly of power in the hands of one party, and the authoritarian trend in the Congress organisation, this trend will be strengthened.

Semi-Fascist Terror in West Bengal

71. If in the other States of India, the ruling Congress could get a sweeping victory, claiming democratic support, in West Bengal in confrontation with the united Left forces, from which only the treacherous revisionists had fled, the ruling Congress had to rely on gangsters, murderers and police attacks and all kinds of fraudulent means to rig the elections in order to get into power. There is not one crime that the ruling party has left uncommitted. From open invasion of booths, murders, attacks on voters to prevent them from voting, packing the ballot boxes with ballots in favour of the Congress, falsifying the results, everything was utilised to get the Congressmen and their stooges, the Right C.P., elected. The “largest democracy of the world” disclosed the biggest fraud in the conduct of elections—with the common man defrauded of his right to vote.

The ruling party was in dire need of this shameless and unbridled fraud executed without any finesse. Despite its substantial following, it had no hope of winning the majority. It was clear that large sections were swinging against it.

72. Here in the midst of the raging economic crisis the ruling party confronted the largest Left political force led by our Party. Its calculation to divide the Left had been foiled, only the Right C.P. traitors betraying the Left front. Knowing its weaknesses it formed a united front with the Right C.P., a breakaway section of the Forward Bloc and the Bangla Congress headed by Ajoy Mukherjee merged in it.

The ruling party was not confident of winning the elections till the last. As late as November 1971 the Central Government

had declared that elections could not be held in West Bengal. It was only after the Bangladesh development that they could get courage to approach the people.

It gambled on the effects of the Bangladesh struggle, demanded election eagerly and then found the people could not be taken in either by its claiming all the credit for the liberation of the Bangladesh people or its slogan of Socialism. The CRP raids, goonda gangs, military combings, curfew, Section 144 and murders and mass arrests were realities too grim to be ignored.

On the economic front also West Bengal was passing through the worst period, with a number of factories and mines closed—more than 140,000 workers thrown out of employment, with unemployment reaching 2.8 million and with almost the lowest wage level for the workers. Our Party, its allies, the trade unions, kisan sabhas and students' organisations—continued to lead big struggles despite repression and terror. This caused further erosion of Congress influence among the people.

73. Election came in the midst of continuing terror, semi-fascist attacks, planned assassinations and murders by hoodlums. These methods were extensively used by the Congress. Complicity of election and police officials in every kind of malpractice combined with the heinous criminal acts described above was resorted to secure victory for the Congress.

The election was virtually a war against the voters in many constituencies. It was a fierce expression of class struggle.

And yet 3,700,000 votes were recorded for our Party and another 800,000 for our allies in the midst of terror. This was a big defeat for Congress gangsterism. The lakhs who voted for us and those who were prevented from voting at gun-point showed their devotion to the Party and the cause of democracy.

The semi-fascist terror in West Bengal, the fraudulent elections reveal the desperate lengths to which the ruling party can go to retain its power in the interest of the ruling classes. Parliamentary democracy, right to vote, sanctity of Opposition parties are all to be thrown on the scrapheap if the ruling party's interests are endangered.

The ruling party could not view with equanimity the prospect of a Left Front led by us getting a majority in West Bengal. In conditions of West Bengal even a sizable Left Opposition could not be tolerated, because it would not be just a foil to set off Congress democracy.

The Full Meaning of West Bengal Developments

74. For the working class and its party, the CPI(M), it will be suicidal to neglect this emerging aspect of the bourgeois-landlord rule in West Bengal and forget that it is the shape of things to come whenever the masses seriously challenge the ruling classes. The happenings in West Bengal constitute the most significant development from the point of view of the revolutionary movement in India. Our Programme has correctly warned that it is the reactionaries that try their hand in suppressing the liberties of the people and abrogating parliamentary democracy when it ceases to serve their purpose. West Bengal developments confirm the above declaration of our Programme. They also show how we have failed to see the full import of the above formulation and underestimated the extent to which the ruling classes will go when their power is challenged. While the phenomenon is confined to West Bengal, it constitutes a warning to our class movement and shows the ferocious face of the exploiting ruling class in our country behind the talk of "garibi hatao".

These two sides constitute the reality of the Indian situation. On the one hand, faced by the desperate economic situation and the challenge of the united Left forces in West Bengal, the ruling party, undermining all democratic norms, uses fraudulent means and unleashes semi-fascist terror on the people. On the other hand, the same ruling party gets big majorities in other State legislatures on the basis of popular vote. Unaware of the grim happenings in West Bengal, kept in ignorance by the Press in the absence of a Left and democratic movement led by our Party, the people in these States have voted for the Indira Congress placing the ruling party in a virtually unassailable position in the State legislatures.

The battle against this danger is to be carried on taking into consideration the consolidated hold of the ruling party in most of the States and its following in West Bengal and Kerala. Its new tactics and approach to the masses and their demands as well as its new methods of intimidating the masses also should be taken into account.

These contradictory developments followed not only from the general weakness of the Left and democratic movement, from the weakness of our Party in States other than Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. They are also the result of the ruling party's tactics of dividing and disrupting the unity of the Left and democratic forces and the downright treachery of the Right C.P. leadership who acted as its fifth column.

Majority Without Lasting Stability

75. The ruling party has no doubt secured very big majorities in the legislatures and Parliament. But that does not mean that ahead of us is a period of stability in which the masses will patiently await the results of the policies pursued by the ruling party. Nor does it mean that the present inner unity of the party will continue for long and divisions will not develop in the present unassailable majorities under the stress of the deteriorating economic conditions.

On the contrary, the class situation in the country, the economic situation, and the deteriorating conditions of the masses make it inevitable that the discontent will mount up following the inevitable failure of the Congress to give relief to the people.

During the year that has passed since the 1971 elections the Congress hold over the people has been declining. The continued economic recession, mounting unemployment, continued rise in prices and taxation and in contrast the pitiful performance of the advocates of "garibi hatao", had already laid the foundation for a rapid process of disillusionment. But what would have been a big decline in influence and vote was arrested by the military victory in the Indo-Pakistan war and the victory of the Bangladesh people—both of which were falsely claimed by the Congress as its own victories.

But even then the decline in vote is there for all to see. Despite the advantageous factor of Bangladesh and the big lever it gave to the Congress to sidetrack attention from broken pledges, the percentage of Congress vote in recent elections has decreased substantially or remained at the same level in most of the States. It is, at the same time, true that the shift has not got crystallised round the Left forces in the absence of a powerful democratic movement headed by our Party. In the strong Congress States of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana the percentage of Congress vote has fallen, in some cases substantially compared with 1971. In Andhra Pradesh, it has declined from 55.7 to 52 per cent; in Maharashtra, it has fallen from 63.8 to 56.3 per cent; in Haryana from 63 to 46.9 per cent; in Mysore from 71 per cent to 53.6 per cent; in Delhi from 64.4 per cent to 48.6 per cent; in Bihar from 40.1 to 34.1 per cent; in Assam from 57 to 53.2 per cent.

This means that while we must take into consideration the increased electoral base of the Congress in the majority of the States, we must not ignore the incipient process of undermining started under the compulsion of the economic events.

Shifting the Burdens on to the People

76. The economic crisis is still deepening and the ruling class, with limited capacity to offer new concessions, must meet the demands of the masses with greater repression.

The fall in net foreign aid, the absolute decline in employment in the private sector, the large number of closures, the corrupt and ineffective bureaucratic set-up in the public sector, the high priced foreign loans and their repayment, coupled with the total failure to make any effective gesture towards the land-hungry rural masses, are now forcing the Government to yield more and more to the pressure of the monopolists and the big capitalists.

Certain features of the economic crisis which make new conflicts and instability inevitable must be noted.

Notwithstanding the successive good harvests for four years the industrial recession is not lifting; the purchasing power of the mass of rural population is decreasing and their starvation is increasing.

The ruination of the small producers of commercial and food crops is intensifying not only discontent but creating new difficulties for the expansion of the market for industrial goods.

The precipitous fall in the prices of cotton, jute, rubber, tobacco, oil-seeds and other commercial crops is creating a serious situation. The Government is following its usual policy of not intervening before the peasant is ruined.

The same situation is facing the small producer of foodgrains. Though the Government has agreed not to cut the procurement prices this year, yet for lack of effective support the prices are likely to fall leading to the ruination of the small peasant.

77. Under the stress of the recession, the falling rate of industrial growth, the incapacity to utilise full production capacities, the Government is turning more and more to the monopolists to take a lead in investment and industrial expansion. Under the guise of control and restrictions a number of new concessions are being announced to the monopolists and they are being asked to channelise their resources into the "core" sector. In the name of joint sector they are being permitted to enter the strategic sector with the help of public resources. At the same time, they are not being completely debarred from light and consumers' industries which are being offered as the special preserve for other sectors.

It is paraded that the joint sector will mean control of monopolists by the State. On the contrary, it will mean exactly the reverse and lead to a growing fusion of monopoly interests with the State.

All this means intense exploitation of the people, less employment, higher profits and prices. Similarly, the Government's attempts to bolster big capitalists through credit, finance and concessions only mean placing real burdens on the people.

78. To take the country out of the critical situation, created by decline in net foreign loans, especially U.S., the Government is seeking loans from other imperialist countries, and attracting private foreign capital on concessional terms.

The need for continuously increasing exports will lead to a further drive against the working class and the small producers of agricultural commodities in the name of competitive prices. The country and the people have been bearing a big burden of export subsidy which runs into crores of rupees, according to official figures. This is the price the people have to pay for repaying the costly foreign debts. It is defrayed at the expense of the common man.

79. All these make it extremely; difficult for the toilers to advance their claims and interests without meeting repression and violence at the hands of the authorities. On the contrary, every effort will be made to attack the present living conditions of all sections. The mass of the peasantry is going to be robbed by devious means. The employees and workers, all sections are bound to be similarly attacked and their demand for relief resisted.

It is not, therefore, surprising that the Prime Minister should have raised the demand for a moratorium on strikes for three years. Though the demand in its crude form is opposed even by Congress MPs, reading between the lines it is clear that moratorium in a disguised form is going to be imposed.

An enforced industrial peace is the demand of the big bourgeoisie and its Government.

Limited Capacity for Concessions

80. However, the ruling party does not intend to meet the situation only with denial of demands or repression, but seeks to keep its hold over the people by appearing to take progressive steps, by announcing relief measures, by presenting as progressive or Socialist, measures which are in the interest of the capitalist class as a whole. It is a continuous battle for the minds of the people, for their support through petty relief measures or advertised social measures.

Every concession which the Government gives to the monopolists and the big bourgeoisie is presented as a step in the interest of the people.

In the name of helping the backward districts and regions, concessions are being given to the monopolists and others, concessions which will enable them to exploit the cheap labour of these areas. In the name of taking over closed factories, the Government is abrogating all labour legislations and intensifying the process of exploitation, acting as the agent of the capitalist class to pass on the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of the workers. At the same time, this is being paraded as a measure to relieve the unemployment situation. The economic situation is such that the Government knows that mere advertisement of the aims and objective of the Fourth Plan no longer impresses the people. It has, therefore, announced plans to fight unemployment, advertised schemes costing 200-300 crores of rupees to relieve unemployment and is promising that every house in the rural areas has at least one wage-earner earning a hundred rupees a month. While in reality through various measures like increased taxation, high prices, unremitting inflation, the Government passes on the burden of the crisis to the people, it simultaneously poses to relieve the situation through such well-advertised schemes like those mentioned above.

81. The nationalisation of banks in the main was intended to centralise the banking resources in the hands of the Government in the interest of the capitalist class as a whole, without at the same time injuring the interests of the monopolists. It was further intended to offer credit facilities to a certain extent to some non-big sections of the capitalists who were finding it difficult to get on under the stress of the crisis and to a section of the rural rich. It was also intended to mobilise the capital resources from the rural areas and was paraded as mainly intended to serve the interests of the smaller men.

Our Party has been advocating nationalisation of banks as an important measure of social control. In the hands of a democratic Government, directly responsible to the people, such

nationalisation will be an instrument of controlling capitalist industry and meeting the needs of the smaller producer for credit. Our Party has no illusions that under the bourgeois-landlord Government this purpose can be achieved. Yet we also supported the nationalisation of banks measure because transfer of banks from private hands to the State enables the people to intervene more in its policies and fight their partisan class character. Besides, it is easier to press for relief measures from nationalised banks than from private banks.

82. These are really measures that give small relief to certain sections of the people but are used to create hopes and illusions and secure political allegiance of sections of the people for the ruling classes.

The revisionist hangers-on and the open apologists of Congress rule all paraded these measures as anti-monopoly measures meant to relieve the sufferings of the people or as instalments of Socialism. In reality, they are class measures to make the system work more effectively but at the same time, they are taken in a manner which offers some relief to some sections of the people and create wide illusions among the people. Unless these measures are concretely assessed and their real impact is separated from the illusions, their hollowness to solve the basic needs of the people cannot be exposed.

83. The agrarian measures of the Government follow the same path. Measures which are paraded as being in the interest of the peasant only benefit and are intended to benefit the landlord and richer sections. The "Green Revolution", supply of fertilisers and credit, development plans, co-operatives, panchayats—all have helped the richer sections, reducing the smaller and poorer sections to destitution. And yet hopes were raised and are continually being raised about co-operatives or the nationalised banks helping the peasant. Even the much advertised lowering of land ceilings has not yet come into operation, and when it comes the agricultural worker and the poor peasant will again be defrauded, though he may develop temporary illusions about getting a piece of land.

After the recent elections Congress leaders are again busy assuring that the law for lowering land ceilings will be passed. But in the meantime, those who will be affected have already anticipated the law and have taken all measures to render it ineffective, and the drive to evict the peasants from land is being intensified.

A section will continue to harbour hopes for land distribution under the Congress legislation. The advertising of the measure is intended to produce exactly this result whatever the actual relief it may provide.

Experience shows that without a powerful mass struggle of toiling peasants and agricultural labourers, no land reforms legislation can be implemented in the interests of the peasantry. To immobilise sections of the masses by providing paltry relief or creating hopes about it is precisely the purpose behind the various measures of the Congress.

Intervention Among the People

84. Because of the deteriorating economic situation, the Indira Congress organisation no longer relies only on propaganda and Governmental measures to maintain the allegiance of the people. The problems are of such a type that the Congress must constantly claim the attention of the people. The ruling party, therefore, through its various organisations has already started directly intervening among the people. The student wing, the youth wing, the Socialist Forum—all are intended to maintain the radical image of the Congress after the elections. In some States, these organisations directly organise demonstrations, take up some small immediate issues, demand firm measures against the monopolists and do everything to create an impression that the Congress organisation is serious about implementing its pledges.

85. In Kerala, where the democratic forces led by our Party are strong; and the problems of the people like rise in prices and unemployment are acute, the student and youth wings of the Congress take up these and other popular issues and

develop campaigns on them. In doing this, however, they do their utmost to infuse in the minds of the student and youth masses the poison of anti-Communism in general, antipathy to the democratic movement led by our Party in particular. This "agitational approach" adopted with a view to "depriving the Marxists of their position of leadership" in the mass movement led them in Kerala to join with democratic organisations led by our Party in united struggles of students and college teachers and to support the struggles of other sections of the people including Government employees. But the moment they found that these struggles were gathering momentum, they came out in their true colours and betrayed them.

86. It is significant in this connection that in recent times, on a number of occasions, the INTUC unions led by Congressmen have often been compelled to join hands with our unions in common struggles and strikes under pressure of their masses. Even the top leadership of some of these unions had to espouse the cause of the workers and join in united actions in several strikes.

87. The fact must be noted that these direct appeals to people sometimes for action are born out of the necessity to keep the masses under their control. They are intended to prevent the sway of the masses towards militant action and especially towards our Party and not for genuine unleashing of mass struggles. And yet the leadership may not be always able to restrain and control their followers and satisfy them with mere verbal appeals. It should be the task of our Party to intervene and help these sections in their struggle.

Attempt to Isolate Militant Trade Unions

88. The ruling Congress, in its bid for the masses and their political leadership, is taking several steps to reorganise the mass organisations under its control, to give effective aid to them through official policy and measures and to isolate and disrupt our base. All the official measures are directed towards one end—to establish the supremacy of Congress trade union organisation over the trade union movement.

One of the important measures it is taking to be able to isolate and fight our increasing trade union influence and hold the working class in a vice is the attempt to forge the unity of the INTUC, HMS and AITUC under official patronage. These efforts sponsored by the Government have now ended in the formation of a National Council of Trade Unions of these three organisations which will be used by the ruling party to claim labour support for its anti-working class measures. Consent for moratorium on strikes, for legislation on recognition without ballot, for intensification of work-load can be secured from these organisations and the working class and its unions penalised for refusing to accept them. It is through the intervention of these organisations that the Congress attempts to influence the workers and, at the same time keep up the pretence of support for its policy. And these organisations are being used as the spearhead of attack against the CITU and other Left unions.

The combination is also intended to stop the growing desire for united action among the workers, united action of their followers and the followers of CITU unions.

New Feature

89. However, it should be noted that the Congress-sponsored trade unions, students and youth organisations are not just instruments of mass contact with radical phraseology, not just weapons of securing access to larger sections of the masses. Their signboards are used to carry on class warfare against our Party, the militant trade unions and other mass organisations. As the experience of West Bengal shows, as the situation develops adversely for the ruling party, shady elements are recruited in these organisations and are turned into the unofficial army, the armed bands of the ruling party, to annihilate our Party cadres and mass leaders and destroy Left organisations under police protection. This is the dominant reality in West Bengal.

The Congress in West Bengal has attempted to consolidate its political following in the youth and student sections. No doubt it has succeeded in activising its dormant following to some

extent, though the stories about winning of one college union after another are just cheap propaganda stunts to provide a democratic facade for the criminal activities carried under its signboard. Simultaneously, shady and anti-social elements are recruited in the organisation to attack the democratic organisations.

The main instruments of the attack are the unemployed and lumpen youth recruited in the organisation often with the lure of jobs. Secret instructions have been issued to give jobs to the members of this organisation in factories and Government offices even by dismissing old hands. They constitute in the main the storm-troopers attacking trade unions, occupying trade union offices, murdering leaders of our Party, trade unions, kisan sabha and other mass organisations, and raiding working class and other localities including strong areas of the kisan movement. It is they who intimidate the employees and the common citizens, all with the direct help of the police. It is they who indulge in chauvinistic slogans to split the ranks of the workers and demand the dismissal of non-Bengali workers.

In its desperate bid for the masses, the Congress not only adopts new slogans and postures, intervenes in the mass movement through its organisations but also makes direct semi-fascist attacks against the Left masses.

It is necessary for the Party to expose this aspect of Congress intervention before the people in other States.

Congress Tactics of Splitting the Democratic Forces

90. The tactics pursued by the Indira Congress in relation to the oppositional democratic movement has been one of splitting the democratic and Left forces, of attempting to isolate our Party, and then to subdue it by repression.

91. The resolution passed by the Eighth Congress had noted that the political tactics of the ruling Congress was to attack the democratic forces and the U.F. that embodied the strength of these forces. At that time, the resolution did emphasise the splitting tactics of the Congress, but there could not be any mention of a new type of terror. This element arose in a prominent manner since the last Congress.

92. In order to disrupt the democratic forces, the Indira Congress, aided by its propaganda machine, its power in the Centre, and by the treacherous conduct of parties like the Bangla Congress, the Right C.P. succeeded in toppling the U.F. Government in West Bengal. With the help of the treacherous revisionists, the Muslim League, the RSP and other parties in Kerala, the Congress succeeded in overthrowing the Ministry, entered into an electoral alliance with these opportunist parties and secured a majority for their alliance in opposition to our Party. The U.F. against the Congress was replaced by the anti-Marxist front of the Congress, the Right Communists and their allies. These Governments headed by our Party were determined to serve as organs of developing the popular struggles and as instruments of giving the people much-needed relief, and of consolidating the democratic opposition. They were regarded as great danger-spots by the ruling classes and were, therefore, repeatedly attacked.

93. In West Bengal, they followed the same pattern by first starting slanderous propaganda against our Party and using the Right Communists and other allies as vehicles of that propaganda. The second U.F. Ministry collapsed under the treachery of these parties and the Congress sought to stage a come-back in the 1971 elections. Unlike in Kerala, the 1971 election in West Bengal was one which was fought in the midst of murderous assaults and mass terror, of CRP attacks, with parts of some constituencies rendered inaccessible. However, unlike in Kerala, there could be no united front between the deserters from the U.F. and the Congress, though there were some secret understandings and adjustments in certain seats and in spite of the terror, the Congress could not get a majority and the CPI(M) emerged as the biggest single party with 115 seats.

The Congress then formed a Ministry with the support of the Right C.P., Forward Bloc, Muslim League, Syndicate, Jana Sangh and others. But it could not run the Government in the face of the growing mass struggles under our leadership and

our strength in the Assembly. It dissolved the Assembly, afraid of our Party utilising the legislative forum to fight effectively its anti-people policies, without even giving an opportunity to the major Opposition party, the CPI(M), to form the Ministry.

Though in Kerala and West Bengal, we could meet the tactics of the Congress on the basis of our own strength, still it was a fact that the disruption of the united front against the Congress meant a serious blow to the democratic movement and made our task of mobilising the people against the Congress more difficult than before. This is precisely what it was intended for. The central idea was to break up the united front so that our Party in separation could be made a victim of severe repression.

In other States, where our forces were weak, the radical image of the Congress, the dispersal of the united front and the slanderous propaganda in relation to Bengal, all enabled the Congress to gather big dividends and disrupt the Left movement.

94. It will be realised that the central point in the tactics of the ruling party is to divide the Left and democratic forces and isolate our Party, to disrupt the democratic movement, and then to attack it. It was clear that the democratic movement would advance rapidly or slowly or get bogged down in so far as it was able or unable to counter this move of the ruling party and consistently work for the unity of the Left and democratic forces, which should be the only answer against the Indira Congress.

The Tactics of our Party

95. It was because of this that our Party was equally consistent in defending the U.F. and the unity of the Left and democratic forces in spite of all provocations from our erstwhile allies. It was the historic task assigned to us by the developing democratic movement, the correlation of class forces and the correlation of the various parties inside the classes. That is why our Party persistently tried to defend and work the United Front Government without surrendering their role as the mobilisers of popular struggle and movement. That is why our Party made serious endeavours to grant immediate relief to the people, at the sametime, exposing to them the limitations of the

Constitution and its provisions. That is why we openly encouraged mass struggles while in the Ministry and granted them full protection.

96. While fighting the machinations of the Central Government and the Congress, our Party was fully aware of the meaning of the Congress split and was the only party in the Left that took a correct class attitude towards both the wings of the Congress. The fatuous revisionist reasoning that Indira Gandhi represented the anti-monopolist progressive section of the bourgeoisie was rejected by us. The Party also rejected the opportunist reasoning of some other Left parties which had no qualms in joining hands with the Syndicate.

97. While carrying on this simultaneous fight, our Party continued its struggle for the unity of the democratic forces so that the mass discontent could be channelised in an effective political manner. The emergence of our Party as the leading Opposition party in the Lok Sabha on its own strength, the collapse of the PSP and SSP and the incapacity of the Right Communist Party to have even one member elected on its own strength—all these point to the correctness of our line. They also show how a contrary line pursued by the Left and democratic parties has only helped the ruling classes and the ruling party to consolidate itself.

98. In the 1971 election in West Bengal, despite every attempt to slander and isolate us, our Party succeeded in forging a united front with some Left parties, though some important Left parties formed a front of their own. The assembly and the parliamentary election results from the State and the sad plight of the Bangla Congress and the Right C.P. revealed how the people had appreciated our line and given a rebuff to the deserters.

In the post-1971 election period our Party continued the fight for democratic unity in the midst of semi-fascist terror, CRP and military combings. The Congress, on the other hand, sought to gather our erstwhile partners into a united front to fight us. These parties by their slander campaign against us screened the murders committed by the Congress goondas.

But our Party with its faith in the masses continued its appeals against the growing gangsterism and called for a united fight on issues facing the masses and affecting their living conditions.

The urge for unity among the masses often asserted itself and those parties had to join hands with us in several common actions in defence of the masses.

The various strikes, the bandhs in which these parties were drawn and the response of the people to the call to fight for their demands—all these were expressions of the intense battle for the people and the unity of the democratic forces waged by our Party in the midst of the spreading terror. These efforts of our Party were crowned with remarkable success on the eve of the 1972 elections when all the Left parties, except the renegade Right C.P., stood together to face the Congress in the electoral battle. It completely frustrated the Congress attempt to isolate us and drown our opposition in a sea of slander and brutalities.

The Left forces unitedly fought the terror, unmasked the Congress conspiracies and were able to expose unitedly the complete rigging of elections.

The Left forces have unitedly decided to boycott the Assembly refusing to recognise the farcical elections. The Congress in its game of intimidation has let loose gangster terror against the followers of the Left parties. Its hirelings have indulged in loot and murder, intimidation of workers following Left trade unions and attacked the bases of the kisan movement. The Left parties are unitedly exposing these semi-fascist barbarities and their united voice is finding a response from honest individuals and groups.

99. A similar battle, in different conditions, is being waged in Kerala, where our erstwhile partners together with the Congress constitute the Ministry. But that battle also draws together large sections of our people including those who are under the influence of these parties and thereby unites the people and the democratic forces from below. In the weaker States also, the Party pursues the same line of isolating the ruling Congress, while exercising vigilance against the other

reactionaries. It seeks to unite the democratic forces in strikes and demonstrations and actions of workers, peasants, students and others.

Revisionist Treachery

100. As against this, the treacherous line pursued by the leadership of the Right C.P. concentrates on supporting the ruling Congress party and attacking the Left forces headed by us. Whatever the ideological trappings given to this line, the essence has been to act as the tail of the Congress, and to attack our Party on behalf of the ruling classes by supplying a new ideological armoury to them. The charges of sectarianism, of Left adventurism, and of "politics of violence" —all are made to screen the Congress violence against the masses and our Party, to screen the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and to shepherd their own following into the camp of the Congress. This is the logical conclusion of the line of class collaboration advocated by them when they talk about the joint leadership of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. During the course of the last three years, the Right Communist leaders have done their best to undermine the united front from inside, supplied ideological excuses to all traitors and have acted as the fifth column of the Congress to destroy the unity of the Left. Their role during the U.F. Ministries in Kerala and West Bengal is well known. In Kerala, they have openly joined hands with the Congress against our Party.

In West Bengal, renegade Right C.P. leaders entered into agreement on certain seats, went with the Congress in the 1971 elections. A full-scale adjustment and alliance with the Congress could not materialise because others who had split from us would not agree to it.

In 1971-72 the Right C.P. leaders tried to sabotage every joint action and attempted to link up some of the Left parties with the Congress and its mass organisations. At the same time, they openly supported the campaign of murder and assaults, and the mass arrests, directly or indirectly by holding us responsible for the murders committed by Congress goondas or their own hirelings. In this period, their organised bands began

to participate growingly in armed attacks against us with the aid of the police. In many places, they joined hands with the Congress gangsters to attack and kill our cadres.

In 1972, the Right C.P. leaders threw off the mask entirely, broke away with all Left parties and openly formed an alliance with the Congress in the elections. Having become an appendage of the ruling party, incapable of winning seats through their own efforts, they participated in every crime during the election—from occupation of booths, murder, raids to falsification of the results of election in every possible manner.

101. The degeneration of the Right Communists into open supporters of the semi-fascist terror is the logical conclusion of their revisionist line blessed and sanctified by their revisionist patrons from abroad.

They started down the inclined plane describing the Indira Congress as progressive and representative of the interests of the anti-monoplist national bourgeoisie. Making the Congress split the central issue they followed a line which landed them in the Congress camp.

At the same time, the Right Communist leaders are capable of taking a demagogic stand against the Congress on this or that issue. They are often at pains to show that they are not merging with the Congress and that they consider only a part of the Congress to be progressive.

A section of their ranks is beginning to see through this fraud of class collaboration, and is beginning to question them. In fact, defections and dissent are increasing and, in many cases, the ranks demand from them forthright opposition to the Congress.

102. The debacle of the Right Communists is really a debacle before the mounting class struggle and the intensified mass actions that were developing. In fact, this is the main reason why most of the Left parties collapsed in 1971 and met with severe setbacks in the elections of that year.

The anti-Congressism of these parties was an expression of a purely parliamentary opposition to the ruling party. Their main concern was a policy and tactics that helped them in advancing their parliamentary gains.

They, of course, do not possess the proletarian class outlook which regards the electoral battle, the alliances and the mass struggles as a part of the great revolutionary battle and judges them from their effect on the main conflict.

While the need for forging a strong alliance of the fighting parties and masses against the Congress was extremely urgent, their class vacillations overwhelmed them. And these parties collapsed and rallied behind one or the other party of the vested interests.

103. Most of the traditional Left and democratic opposition parties and groups, while getting panicky in the face of sharpening class struggle on the one hand and the mounting political-ideological pressure of the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes on the other, had begun their back-sliding from the anti-Congress democratic fronts by 1969. All the Left and democratic parties except the SSP (which joined with the Syndicate) had thrown their lot with the new Congress, not only in opposition to the extreme Right alliance but also to actively fight against the CPI(M) and its close allies. Thus the leaders of the PSP, Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc, Kerala RSP and others assisted the ruling Congress party in different degrees and at different stages in smashing up the anti-Congress democratic fronts and in mounting attacks on the CPI(M) and the militant workers' and peasants' movements it is heading.

104. The collapse of these parties did not mean the collapse of the urge and need for democratic unity among the masses.

The need for the U.F. grows out of the very needs of the democratic struggle and the more the masses move into action, the greater will be the pressure on all parties working among the masses to forge a joint front.

This was strikingly demonstrated by the West Bengal developments. In 1971 many of the major Left parties had seceded from the front and there were intense clashes between them and the Left Front led by us. In 1972, the front was virtually restored under stress of the developing realities, with greater feelings of solidarity and friendship than before in the ranks of all parties and with stronger sense for unity and common action.

The struggle for Left and democratic unity must continue despite the fact that the leaders of some parties have deserted the common front and misled their ranks to break away from it. While unmasking the policies of these leaders the Party must seize the initiative for common action and constantly appeal to their ranks for joint struggle and unity.

Collapse of Left Adventurism

105. But it is not only the traditional democratic parties that have collapsed; the petty-bourgeois Left-adventurist trend which made its open appearance in 1967 has also reached the last stage of its degeneracy. Starting with the advocacy of armed struggle in the rural areas, in the name of organising revolution, it concentrated its fire mainly on our Party, created disruption in our ranks, and made a desperate attempt to tarnish the revolutionary image of our Party. Treating it first as a genuine expression of petty-bourgeois desperation, our Party, while making no concessions to it, fought it on a political plane. But the Party warned that petty-bourgeois adventurism must degenerate into an anti-working class, anti-revolutionary line and its inevitable destiny was to serve the interests of the ruling classes. This inevitable development has taken place during the last four years. Step by step, the advocates of armed struggle in rural areas have directed their fire mainly against the cadre of our Party and our trade union and mass leaders in West Bengal. Mouthng Left phrases, recruiting anti-social elements and actively helped by the police, these Naxalites themselves have murdered a large number of the 650 CPI(M) cadres and supporters who have been assassinated during the last two years. These Naxalite groups have now been honeycombed with quite a large number of CIA and police agents, who have penetrated into the ranks of the Naxalite groups taking advantage of their antipathy to our Party—the party of the working class. Our Party, from the beginning, had been warning about the penetration of these agents. Most of these Naxalites have since joined the Congress.

The more their terroristic attacks got directed against our Party, the more they were praised by the ruling party and the

Right C.P. as honest but misled people. The advocacy of armed struggle, the boycott of elections, the pretensions to fight revisionism, all divorced from the immediate needs of the class struggle and often in opposition to that struggle have led to the complete debacle of the group which is now riven by dissensions and accusations against each other of being police spies. Notwithstanding the above, our Party has repeatedly denounced the massacre of Naxalites by the police. The petty-bourgeois adventurist ideology supported by the CPC has done immense harm to sections of militant youth whose genuine desire for ending the present intolerable system was diverted into anti-revolutionary channels and pitted against the working class. The adventurist ideology became a systematic attempt to divert the minds of some sections of the young people from Communism and the revolutionary movement of the masses.

With all the degeneration of the main trend there is still need for a political struggle against it. The desperate economic situation of the petty-bourgeoisie provides fertile ground for the ideology among younger sections. The Party must combat the process of diverting the minds of the young people into anti-revolutionary channels.

106. It redounds to the credit of our Party that it alone among all the political parties raised an ideological and political battle against these elements and that, too, when it had to defend itself against murderous attacks. Undeterred by the support that their line got from the CPC, our Party fought their challenge in the popular movement, in mass organisations and in the students' movement, and succeeded in isolating and checkmating them. The success against the Right-revisionist as well as the Left-adventurist line follows from the correctness of our own Marxist-Leninist line. The revolutionary movement could have been completely undermined and disrupted had our Party not succeeded in meeting the challenge both from the Left and the Right.

107. The most shocking aspect is that the CPI(M) and its political and ideological and organisational lines are under attack from the two biggest ruling Communist Parties. Their

attacks are not confined to political-ideological criticisms and polemics of the CPI(M), but assume the shape of direct intervention. The leaders of the CPSU openly acclaim and support the Right C.P. when the latter is unashamedly collaborating with the Congress party and its Central Government in suppressing the workers' and peasants' struggles and murders of hundreds of the cadres and leaders of the CPI(M). The CPC, through the Radio and Press, was hailing and giving every encouragement possible to the so-called Naxalites who not only concentrated their disruptive attacks on the CPI(M) and its mass movements but also indulged in the assassinations of dozens of cadres and leaders belonging to the CPI(M).

Against Diversionary Tactics, A Fight for Unity

108. In spite of the debacle of the leadership of almost all the Left parties and the manoeuvrings of the ruling Congress, the struggle of the people for their living conditions will continuously be on the increase. Every political party which seeks to stem this struggle is adopting new manoeuvres to sidetrack or divert or to contain it. The Congress (O), the Jana Sangh, try to trim their sails to the new situation, with the Jana Sangh desperately seizing immediate issues of national importance like Bangladesh. Inside the Congress (O) also there are dissident voices which urge the leadership to adopt a new stance towards the people. Under the impact of the growing consciousness and the grim economic reality, several parties are forced to speak against the Constitution and demand change. The ruling Congress party itself was compelled to amend the Constitution though it is clear that it will not be used to the detriment of the basic interests of the exploiting classes it represents. Three years ago, when our Party condemned the Constitution as an instrument of bourgeois-landlord rule, there were voices of protest from Nijalingappa and other Congress leaders to the leaders of the revisionists. But the moment it suited the interests of the ruling party, it began to misuse and manipulate the Constitution, violating its provisions. This together with the incapacity of the Constitution to protect the people against hunger and poverty,

has brought about its denigration on a big scale and talk of its sanctity has ceased to impress the people.

109. Every class is trying to utilise the situation to its own advantage. The democratic demand for full autonomy to the States is being exploited by the vested interests in the States to increase their financial resources, to get additional power for themselves, and, once again, cheat the masses. To keep their privileged position intact, to protect themselves from taxation against heavy incomes earned from land, to keep the monopoly of their power in their States, these vested interests in the name of autonomy raise chauvinistic slogans, pit the working class and people of one State against those of another. They pretend to solve the unemployment problem by diverting the anger of the workers of that State against workers from other States, demand more concessions for themselves at the expense of others and establish an alibi for themselves by pointing to the Central Government. This disruption is often helped directly by the Centre when it discriminates against the democratic movements in advanced States. The Central Government created difficulties for the United Front Ministries in West Bengal and Kerala by withholding supplies of food and financial assistance and through several other measures.

110. The Central Government, intent on expanding the encroachments of the Centre on the States' autonomy, often yields to the diversionary demands of the vested interests in the States and, in fact, helps the forces of disintegration. Chauvinism, casteism, communalism are being used to divert the mass anger, to prevent class unity and to disintegrate the class consciousness of the working class.

The weapon of anti-Communism, through spreading of slanders through Press and official agencies, is being systematically used to prevent the growth of class unity of the working class and undermine the democratic movement.

How the policy of the Central Government leads to the disruption of unity is seen on the question of the official language. The retrograde policy of imposing Hindi on all instead of ensuring equality of all languages led to legitimate

resentment which was often used by the chauvinists for their own purpose.

This is also seen when the Central Government refuses to intervene promptly in inter-State disputes like river waters, boundary question, etc., and take a principled stand.

111. The working class and the democratic forces have to face this challenge of reactionary ideologies and appeals which come not only from the avowed reactionary parties but also from the Congress party. While struggling for the demand for real autonomy, the working class has to give primary importance to the unity of its own class in India and carrying on a struggle for the unity of India based on the equality of all nationalities. It should refuse to play second fiddle to the capitalists in the name of overcoming regional or State backwardness and has to fight attempts to set worker against worker in the name of fighting unemployment. The more the economic crisis deepens, the more unemployment increases, the more industries close down, the more will be the attempts of reactionaries to convert the anger of the common man into fratricidal channels so that the capitalist-landlord clique can come on top.

Placing above everything else the unity of its own class and the democratic forces, the working class must struggle against the reactionary forces which seek to divide the people on communal lines. The ruling Congress while continuing to speak of secularism, tolerates and encourages in practice religious obscurantism. The discrimination against the Muslim minority in employment and education and the use of Urdu language continues. The ruling party often poses as the opponent of both Hindu and Muslim communalism but often utilises both of them to divert mass discontent and strengthen its own position. Other minorities also suffer discontent and strengthen its own position. Other minorities also suffer from similar disabilities. The working class must take a resolute stand on the protection of religious and linguistic minorities and combine it with an ideological struggle against all forms of communalism.

Simultaneously, the working class must wage a relentless struggle against the oppression of the untouchables and tribals,

which once again sets toilers against toilers and is exploited by the Congress party and the vested interests to disrupt the common class movements. The monstrous oppression of the untouchables and tribals in the rural areas constitutes a continuous attack on the solidarity of the toiling classes and must be defeated at all costs.

Rising Struggles

112. The last three years have seen a continuous rise in the struggle of the fighting masses and various sections of the population have been forced to come into the fighting arena. Teachers and students, Central and State Government employees, bank and mercantile employees have waged prolonged struggles extending over weeks to secure their demands. At times, hundreds were arrested and put in jail. But the militancy of the fighters could not be crushed. There have been strikes of NGOs, there have been strikes of railwaymen, fighting police repression. There have been strikes of doctors, engineers and college teachers, of students against corruption of educational authorities, against police attacks and for academic facilities.

Youths and students backed by the democratic forces demonstrated on a very large-scale in various places demanding employment and unemployment relief. In many places they had to face arrest and brutal lathi-charges. Women in many places were in the thick of the struggle fighting with their menfolk, facing police and goonda brutalities, lathi-charges and firings. They added glorious chapters of heroic resistance at Durgapur, Greater Calcutta, Kuttanad and Alleppey and in the Telangana districts during this period.

113. Topping all this are the widespread struggles waged by the working class in almost all the States, but of course, headed by the working class of West Bengal. The upward swing in the strike struggles which showed its intensity since 1967 continued in 1970, when the total number of man-days lost reached the colossal figure of 19 million days. The struggle of the working class to resist the imposition of the crisis reached new heights in prolonged resistance facing even acute suffering. Strikes

have extended over months and the solidarity of the workers could not be broken. Lock-outs and closures have often been extended for more than a year and more often than not, the workers refused to accept too many burdens as the price of return to their jobs. Above all, the authorities have created new records of terror and repression in their dealing with the working class. Massacre of workers has taken place in several places and the widespread terror in Durgapur reached new heights. The strikes of the present period are no longer symbolic strikes but are grim battles in which blood flows.

114. In the various States of India, numerous peasants and agricultural workers' struggles have taken place in recent years, struggle against evictions, struggles for radical land reform, struggle for better wages for the agricultural worker. In many places, there have been struggle against famine conditions and the paltry famine relief granted by the Government.

The Kisan Sabha under the leadership of our Party has led numerous struggles with varying forms in many States. The forms varied from ordinary demonstrations and stayagraha to occupation of land. West Bengal, of course, has seen widespread struggles and the mass of peasants have been able to retain six lakh acres of land which they occupied during the U.F. regime. Kerala also has seen the struggle for implementation of the Land Reforms Act; in these struggles more than two lakh hutment dwellers participated and won the right of ownership on their homesteads. The mass of tenants in Kerala successfully retained their possession of the land and refused to pay rents. In other States, there have been numerous struggles with the peasants facing repressive measures also.

Apart from the direct struggles led by the Kisan Sabha, there have been numerous spontaneous struggles, satyagraha, protests organised by various other parties, protests which were organised under the compelling force of the peasants' pressure.

115. Equally striking has been the development of the struggle of agricultural workers in a number of States, especially in Kerala. During the last ten years, the percentage of cultivators in working population decreased from 53 per cent to 43 per

cent and that of agricultural labourers has increased from 16.7 per cent to 25.8 per cent. This tremendous increase in the agricultural workers which implies a terrific process of mass eviction is leading to widespread protests, discontent, actions and struggles. In Kerala, under the leadership of our Party, huge mobilisations, demonstrations and actions have taken place, placing the demands of the agricultural workers in the forefront. In these struggles, the Ministry led by the revisionists directed measures of mass repression against the agricultural workers but the struggle continued unabated.

The discontent in the rural areas was mainly expressed in local struggles and conflicts. It could not be co-ordinated and directed into a common movement because of the weakness of the kisan organisation, accompanied by an absence of common united actions with other organisations. This helped the ruling party also to disrupt it by sowing illusions through some of the declarations and administrative measures.

116. All over India in the last three years the people on several occasions have fought for their democratic rights, for asserting their civil liberties, for protesting against repression and anti-democratic and anti-working class legislation. These struggles varied from local protests to the Statewide bandhs as in West Bengal.

There have been repeated protest actions against police firings and killings of workers, peasants, students, or other citizens. There have been widespread protests against the grim repression in Punjab and Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tripura and Bihar and fight for civil liberties there. There have been widespread protests and actions against the repression and firings on the workers and peasants under the DMK regime in Tamil Nadu.

In Kerala, there have been repeated movements against the official attacks on democratic rights. In these protests and actions, thousands have been arrested, several have been sentenced to death in connection with the democratic movement. The struggle against the arbitrary action of the police, against repression and for civil liberties is reaching a new high in Kerala. In Kerala, besides, in the big electoral battles, the

democratic forces led by us joined issue with the Congress and its allies and showed their strength and power.

Struggle in West Bengal

117. The struggle for democratic right and civil liberties has reached an intense stage in West Bengal where the heroic masses and cadres of our Party are engaged in a grim heroic conflict to defend not only their civil liberties but often their homes and hearths.

For the last two years, the Congress rulers have vainly attempted to crush the mass forces by extending semi-fascist terror.

But now with the election results, neatly manipulated in their favour, and armed with this facade of a democratic mandate, they have unleashed uninhibited gangsterism on the people, on the following of the Left parties, especially on our Party.

Armed gangsters, with the full backing of the police and the CRP, have launched murderous assaults in area after area, particularly in Calcutta, 24-Parganas and Burdwan. Already thirty persons have been brutally murdered and hundreds wounded in this post-election orgy by the end of March. More than 20,000 people including women have been driven out of their homes. Including those who were evicted before the elections, the number reaches 40,000.

The intention is to destroy all the strong areas of the democratic movement, drive away the active workers and suppress the people. More and more workers of Left parties particularly of our Party are being hunted out and arrested on got-up charges or detained without trial. They are tortured in police lock-ups.

Party offices and offices of the mass organisations are being attacked, ransacked and forcibly occupied. Scores of trade union offices are being occupied by Congress gangsters, INTUC followers, Yuba Congress with the police helping them. The functioning of trade unions has been brought to a standstill in many places. The workers who are members of CITU and other Left unions are often forced to join the INTUC. Union cadres are threatened with murder if they attend factories and forced

to quit working. In many factories they are dismissed and replaced by Congress nominees. Teachers are being forced to resign.

The peasants following the Kisan Sabha are threatened with mass evictions.

Authoritarianism is baring its monstrous face in West Bengal. The fight for civil liberties and democratic rights means a fight to defeat this monster.

It is under these varying conditions that we have to carry on the fight for civil liberties and democratic rights all over India.

Fight for United Action

118. The situation facing the country after the last election is radically different than that in any earlier period. The shadow of authoritarianism is now lengthening over West Bengal. The West Bengal developments foreshadow what the ruling party will do when the democratic masses and parties offer a serious parliamentary challenge to the ruling party in other States.

The danger arises from the fact that the people in other States are ignorant of the meaning of West Bengal events, thanks to the monopolist Press which covers the misdeeds of the ruling party and slanders the democratic movement, that they still put their trust in the Congress party which has secured their vote in the recent elections. The danger arises from the fact that the Left stands disunited in the country, except in West Bengal.

The victory of the Congress in the recent elections, the weakness of the Left and democratic opposition, the context in which the victory has been achieved and the anti-democratic methods used to secure it not only in West Bengal but also in Bihar underline a trend towards one-party dictatorship in which democratic opposition parties will have no role to play.

This also creates the danger of further attacks on the autonomy of the States with the ruling party having its Governments in all the States, the process of eroding the powers of the States and augmenting those of the Centre is likely to be accelerated.

The centralisation of all authority in the hands of one person in the ruling party leads to authoritarian tendencies which directly helps the one-party trend.

The existence of all democratic parties is being threatened. Those who swear by the Constitution, who stand by the parliamentary path as well as others all realise that the constitutional liberties, including the right to vote, are no longer secure under the Congress rule. This calls for the widest possible front of all democratic parties, groups and individuals to resist the march to one-party dictatorship. Our Party has been consistently endeavouring to convince others that the attack on us constitutes a prelude to attack on the democratic movement. This is now being seen by others.

It is necessary, therefore, for all democratic and Left parties, all democratic groups and individuals to come together to battle against the rise of fascist trends, of one-party rule and protect the civil liberties and democratic rights of the people. It is necessary for all the democratic forces to come together and take stock of the situation following the election, to pronounce their verdict on the methods pursued by the ruling party in the elections and enlighten public opinion on the cruel happenings in West Bengal.

Our Party must do its utmost to bring together all democratic forces at this critical hour.

Our Party, at the same time, must learn to meet all the manoeuvres of the bourgeois-landlord Government and the ruling party. The various measures with which they consolidate the grip of capital, but which are paraded as advance to Socialism, must be exposed; their measures for relief, their legislation for ceiling and other steps must be properly assessed and exposed.

Our Party must attach importance to the ruling party's slogans on important national issues which sway the people. Failure to do so results in surrendering political initiative to the ruling party. Such pronouncements as self-reliance, resistance to external pressure on foreign policy, Socialism, must be taken seriously and properly answered to dispel all illusions.

In the desperate bid for the masses which the ruling party is making, every vantage point must be contested and the masses gradually freed from the corrupting bourgeois influence.

Without waging a concrete political battle on the slogans and pretensions of the ruling classes, the alternative path cannot become clear and people will not be rescued from the illusions created by them.

Lead Mass Battles

119. Our Party at the same time realises that the immediate activity of the masses will be in the direction of economic battles, defence of their living conditions, in the background of the economic crisis.

Our Party correctly gauging the need of forging unity in waging these battles had all along been waging a fight for united action and united struggles on all fronts. On the trade union front the formation of the CITU became a big instrument in seizing the initiative to promote united actions and unity in the course of the struggle. Persistently following the line of united front, overcoming the resistance of the revisionists and other reformist cliques, the CITU led by our Party has been successful in its application in forging common fronts in many industrial centres in the struggle against Government policies. It is the successful application of this line together with our initiative and strength that has enabled our Party in West Bengal to defeat the game of disruptors and the conspiracy of the Congress to isolate us from the masses. It is the same initiative, independent strength that is enabling us to unleash the full force of working class resistance in Kerala and also promote unity and joint actions. Tamil Nadu also reveals the same experience.

The ruling party in its endeavour to isolate us does not approve of the joint struggles. It is, therefore, taking steps to have a combined opposition of the INTUC, HMS and AITUC against us to oppose and sabotage united struggle. This will have to be overcome by strengthening the unity mood among the workers.

In West Bengal, the Congress goondas have unleashed violence against our unions, forcibly occupying trade union offices and bringing to a stop all trade union functioning in large industrial belts.

In the struggles for unity the working class must be made aware of these attacks and the demand must be raised for the full restoration of trade union rights in West Bengal and the curbing of gangsters.

The West Bengal trade unions will have to carry on the struggle for unity in conditions which are qualitatively different from those obtaining hitherto.

120. Our Party, understanding the economic reality and mood of the masses, the tactics of the ruling party must persistently carry out the line of united action to rally all the democratic forces against the ruling classes and thereby defeat its conspiracy to attack the advance guard of the democratic movement. It is beyond doubt that today in West Bengal and Kerala, the strength of the mass movement and political consciousness are at a higher level. But in all the States the masses have started moving on the basis of their economic experience and have started colliding with the ruling party. The disruption and dispersion of this economic struggle constitute the guarantee of safety for the ruling party. The widest unity in these struggles and consolidating this unity into broad and powerful organisations lay the basis for raising the political consciousness of the masses to higher level. To convert these struggles growingly into struggles for changing the basic policies, to politicalise them, is the key task before us.

121. In waging these economic struggles, initiative on political issues must not be allowed to be seized by the ruling party and the reformists. Elections, Constitution, legislation, parliamentary exposure, and, above all, the terror in West Bengal— all these must be in our hands direct weapons of political campaign and struggle. Pre-occupation only with economic problems and neglecting the political issues and failure to draw the masses into political struggles helps the ruling classes. Similarly, our Party has to take up, as a Party based on proletarian internationalism must take up, issues like the Vietnam people's heroic struggle against American imperialism, the butchery and suppression of the Communist and working class revolutionaries in different countries, popularisation of the achievements of the peoples of the Socialist world.

122. The uneven development of the mass movement and political consciousness has placed the advanced movement in West Bengal and Kerala in a difficult position. The democratic forces led by our Party must take effective steps to build their strength, and be in a position to support actively the advanced movements in the two States. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the Party everywhere links itself with developing mass struggles, initiates and organises them on the economic and political issues that are already setting the masses in motion.

Fight for the Common Demands

123. Taking into consideration the serious political situation, the CPI(M) calls upon all democratic parties, groups and individuals to come together for

1. Fighting the danger of one-party dictatorship; ensuring all constitutional liberties including free and fair elections and the right to vote.
2. For the end of the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal; withdrawal of CRP and the military; restoration of civil liberties; for the freedom of building mass organisations; for a fair and free election.
3. The withdrawal of all repressive legislations such as the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Prevention of Violent Activities Act, Preventive Detention Act, and the release of all arrested under these Acts; lifting of the Emergency and the Defence of India Act and Rules.
4. For basic change in the Constitution, to eliminate the misuse of the Constitution by the ruling party, to eliminate the monopolist-landlord exploitation, to ensure real autonomy for the States, to ensure the right to work and full civil liberties; to do away with the arbitrary powers of dismissal conferred on the President.

The Party calls upon all democratic parties and mass organisations to support the following demands and develop united action wherever possible :

1. For need-based minimum wage for the working class, against wage-freeze, lock-outs, lay-offs, and closure of

- mills, for taking over all such closed mills, for full trade union rights, for full democratic rights to the Central and State employees, abolition of the police verification system, against all anti-working class legislations, for full employment, and pending employment, relief to the unemployed; against introduction of automation and other measures aggravating unemployment.
2. Against inflation, rise in prices, deficit financing and heavy taxation, in particular the burden of indirect taxation on the common man.
 3. For radical land reforms in the interests of the peasantry; especially reduction of land ceilings and for ensuring land to the tiller; anti-eviction measures; for fair wages and full employment for the agricultural labourers; for allotment of free house-sites to the rural poor; and for debt cancellation of the agricultural and other poor in the villages and for cheap credit supply; and for guaranteed fair prices and good market facilities for agricultural produce. The State should take over wholesale trade in food and other essential commodities.
 4. For nationalisation of all foreign concerns; for moratorium on foreign debts; for nationalisation of all Indian monopolist concerns.
 5. For immediate introduction of free education up to secondary stage in all States. Provision of hostel facilities and full scholarships for all needy students; right of students to participate in the management of educational institutions and academic bodies.
- For drastic steps against those who indulge in outrages against scheduled castes and tribes; for immediate steps to put an end to economic and social oppression of these people by landlords, contractors, traders and restoration of lands seized by them.
 - For safeguarding the right of Muslim minorities; against any discrimination in employment in Government services and in educational institutions and against Urdu; for fighting the communal poison being spread by both Hindu and Muslim chauvinists.

- For equal status and opportunities for women in all fields.

The Party invites the sympathy, support and co-operation of all progressive individuals and parties for the following :

1. For breaking away from the British Commonwealth and for a really independent, genuinely anti-imperialist progressive and peace-loving policy.
- For all-out support to the people of Vietnam in their struggle against American imperialism, and recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam; for the recognition of the Government of Cambodia headed by Sihanouk; for withdrawal of U.S. occupation forces from South Korea and for peaceful unification of the Korean people, for full diplomatic status to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the GDR. For restoring trade and closer relations with Socialist Cuba.
 - For extending support to the African people fighting against the racist Governments of South Africa, Rhodesia and against Portuguese imperialism and to the people of Latin America and other nations fighting for their liberation.
 - For friendly relations with our neighbours, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and others.
 - For friendly relations with the People's Republic of China and closer ties with the Soviet Union and all Socialist countries.

124. This programme is of immense importance for the development of the political movement in the immediate future and all efforts should be made to rally all the democratic and Left forces inside the country round this programme. Intensive work should be made to approach these forces and make them realise the extreme danger lurking inside the country, and urgent actions should be launched on all the issues that concern the political, economic, cultural and other aspects of life. While firmly basing our work among the workers, agricultural labourers and poor peasants, we must strengthen our bonds with all

classes and draw them into these united actions and front by championing their demands against landlords, monopolists and imperialists. We should make continuous efforts to strengthen our contacts and spread our work among the students, youth, women and intelligentsia. The Party must strengthen its links with the masses in diverse forms and in manifold fields, so that it can meet the challenge thrown by the ruling party.

125. Facing this task confidently, our Party must recognise its present weaknesses in order to overcome them quickly. Compared to the needs of the situation, the organised strength is not up to the mark, the quality of Party membership, the ideological equipment—all these require to be strengthened in a great measure. In fact, there is a hang-over of the old past in many of our activities and actions. Each Party member and the Party as a whole must consciously endeavour to overcome this lag, and ideologically develop himself. The Party leadership must make ideological and political education one of the immediate tasks so that the mass movements can be properly led, the training of the cadres for building the Party is ensured. Our Party must take strong note of these weaknesses and realise that without removing these weaknesses there can be no developing the revolutionary movement in our country. Our cadres must realise that without a conscious understanding of the revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary practice.

We shall overcome these weaknesses and march ahead.

Our Party has been able to adopt a correct Marxist-Leninist line in our country and have pursued it against tremendous odds. Attacked from the Left and the Right, we have held our own, remaining loyal to our people and to our class, applying Marxism-Leninism to the concrete situation in our country. The results are there for all to see. Though constantly under attack, ours is the only Party that stands today firmly against the onslaught of the ruling class, refusing to haul down the banner of Marxism-Leninism.

Programme of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Amended by the 9th Congress in Madurai on June 27 - July 2, 1972

I. India attains National Independence

1. The military defeat of the fascist powers headed by Hitlerite Germany and the decisive role played by the Soviet Union in smashing the fascist aggressors, sharply altered the alignment of class forces on the world arena in favour of socialism. The crushing defeat inflicted in the war on the belligerent German, Italian and Japanese fascist powers, not only put these states out of commission for a long period, but also resulted in the general weakening of imperialism on the world scale. World imperialism proved utterly incapable of preventing the emergence of people's democratic states in a number of countries of eastern Europe which facilitated the formation of the world socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union. Inspired by these historic victories of socialism and the debacle of imperialism, powerful national liberation struggles against colonial rule swept throughout the countries of Asia. India, too, witnessed a mass revolutionary upheaval against British rule. Peasant revolts, general strikes of workers, student strikes, state's people's mass struggles developed on an unprecedented scale. The armed forces and the naval forces revolted in many places.

2. In face of the mounting tide of the struggle which threatened to develop into a general national revolt. British

This Programme was adopted at the Seventh Party Congress held in Calcutta on October 31—November 7, 1964. This Document is given in Volume No. 10 B under Item No. 2 of this publication. This Programme is amended by the 9th Congress held at Madurai in 1972 and the amended Programme as adopted is given here in this Document.

imperialism realised that it would be no longer possible to continue its rule. The Congress leadership, on the other hand, was apprehensive that if the struggle against the imperialists developed into a general revolt, the hegemony over the mass anti-imperialist movement would slip away from its hands. Under these circumstances, a settlement was reached between the British imperialists on the one hand and the leaders of the National Congress and the Muslim League on the other.

3. As a result, the country was partitioned into India and Pakistan and political power was transferred in India to the leaders of the Congress party on August 15, 1947. Thus ended the political rule of the British in India and a state headed by the Indian big bourgeoisie was established. With this, the first stage of the Indian revolution, the stage of the general national united front, chiefly directed against foreign imperialist rule came to an end.

4. The British imperialists hoped that, despite the transfer of power, they would be able, by their entrenched positions in our economy, to make our independence formal. But the course of historical development since then has been disappointing to the imperialists and their hopes were belied.

5. With the historic victory of the great Chinese revolution and the formation of the world socialist system, one-third of humanity has broken away from capitalism. Imperialism and colonialism, that enslaved nations after nations and ruined them, is today fast disintegrating. Ours is the era of the abolition of the colonial system and transition to socialism. On the ruins of colonialism, new independent nations have emerged and are emerging on to the stage of history of Asia, Africa and Latin America, India occupies an important place among them.

6. No longer is it possible for imperialism to hold back the march of history or block the way of national regeneration of the under developed countries. It is the world socialist system, and the forces fighting against imperialism for a socialist transformation, that determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society. The world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the

development of society. If only the people of the countries that have won their independence take their destinies in their own hands, they can, with the disinterested assistance of the mighty socialist system with its ever-increasing capacity, rapidly overcome their economic dependence and backwardness, defend and strengthen their national independence and trail a bright future for the people.

7. Our people hoped that the new national state would wipe out all the ugly legacies of the colonial past, would shatter all the fetters on our productive forces and unleash the creative energies of the people. They fondly hoped that India would rapidly overcome her economic dependence and backwardness, abolish want and poverty, and emerge as a prosperous industrial power increasingly satisfying the material and cultural needs of the people. Their hopes were belied.

8. The second stage of the Indian revolution demanded, for its immediate fulfilment, the complete abolition of feudal and semi-feudal landlordism and the distribution of land to the agricultural labourers and poor peasant gratis. It also demanded for its carrying out, the confiscation and nationalisation of British capital thus eliminating the predatory grip of foreign monopoly capital over our national economy. Abolition of landlordism and a thoroughgoing agrarian revolution would have at once shattered the age-old shackles on our agricultural production, and enabled it to take a major forward stride, provided food for our people, abundance of raw materials and ever expanding market for our industries and would have turned our agriculture into a major source of capital formation for our industries. Similarly, the confiscation and nationalisation of British capital would have placed in the hands of the newly born national state a vast sector of industry and foreign trade, whose profits would turn form a drain on the country as in the past, into an ever expanding source of investment in industry.

9. Although the working class, peasantry, middle class and the progressive intelligentsia constituted the main fighting force against imperialist rule and bore the brunt of its fury, it was, however, the bourgeoisie that remained in the leadership of the

liberation movement. After independence, the national state, headed by the big bourgeoisie, has failed to fulfil these urgent tasks of the Indian revolution. Afraid of the possible outcome that might follow such a thoroughgoing completion of the basic tasks of the democratic revolution, the big bourgeoisie compromised with imperialism and agreed that British finance capital would be allowed to continue its plunder, besides its acceptance to become a member of the British Commonwealth. In the background of mass upheaval in the native states which threatened to completely overthrow princely autocracy and feudalism, huge concessions were offered to feudal princes and their alliance sought to buttress bourgeois class regime. Landlords, the erstwhile supporters of British rulers, were welcomed into the Congress party. The Congress rulers, kept intact the British-trained bureaucracy to suppress the masses. Thus the democratic revolution was neither allowed to gather momentum nor were its basic tasks fulfilled.

10. The historical experience of the national liberation struggles of our time is that the bourgeoisie, if it heads the freedom struggle, does not carry forward the national democratic revolution to its completion. On the contrary, after winning political independence, as the social contradictions intensify, it tends to compromise with imperialism and allies with domestic landlord reaction. Equally does historical experience demonstrate that only when the anti-imperialist national front is under the leadership of the working class does the democratic revolution not only get completed in all its phases, but also that the revolution does not stop at the democratic stage but quickly passes over to the stage of socialist revolution. India's unfinished revolution, too, confirms this historical experience.

II. Bankrupt Path of Capitalism Leads to Growth of Monopolies and Danger of Neo-colonialism

11. Even before independence, the Indian bourgeoisie had attained a certain stature and had already established itself in certain branches of industry, such as cotton textile, sugar and cement. During the second world war, the bourgeoisie, mostly

the bigger sections, amassed enormous fortunes and considerably enhanced their economic positions.

12. After independence, the ruling bourgeoisie proceeded to develop the country's economy on the lines of capitalism, to further strengthen its class position in society. It should be noted here that the capitalist path of development the Indian bourgeoisie has chosen is in the period when the world capitalist system is fast disintegrating and has entered the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism. But possessing neither the technical base of a heavy industry, nor a colonial empire whose loot gave the imperialists vast capital accumulation, the bourgeoisie employed the state power it had won for appropriating the fruits of labour of the common people for its own capital requirement and for developing the economy along the lines of capitalism. The economic policies of the Congress government since independence have been consistently directed to this end.

13. The Indian bourgeoisie counted on help from the British and American imperialists to realise its aims, the price of which was the protection of their interests from the popular anti-imperialist upheaval which was gaining unprecedented sweep and strength by 1947.

14. But in the years after independence, the British and American imperialists, far from satisfying the needs of the Indian bourgeoisie, began to put all manner of pressure in order to draw the new Indian state into their war plans, began to set afoot-plans which would undermine even the political freedom that had been won. Despite repeated pleading by the bourgeoisie, the imperialists refused to help the building of a heavy industry, the basis of industrialisation. They forced the frittering away of the huge sterling balances accumulated by India out of the toil and sweat of our people during the second world war. Under the pretext of helping to save foreign exchange, they imposed deals with foreign monopolists detrimental to our national interests, as in the case of oil refineries, ship-building, chemical industries, etc. With the emergence of the world socialist system, while utilising socialist aid for building certain heavy industries, it actually uses it as an extremely useful

bargaining counter to strike more favourable deals with the imperialist monopolists.

15. Thus the dual character of the bourgeoisie which manifested itself during the years of the freedom struggle in the policy it pursued to mobilising the people against imperialism on the one hand and compromising with imperialism on the other, manifests itself in a new way after achievement of independence. Despite the growth of contradictions between imperialism and feudalism on the one hand and the people, including the bourgeoisie, on the other, and despite the new opportunities presented with the emergence of the world socialist system, the big bourgeoisie heading the state does not decisively attack imperialism and feudalism and eliminate them. On the other hand, it seeks to utilise its hold over the state and the new opportunities to strengthen its position by attacking the people on the one hand and on the other, to resolve the conflicts and contradictions with imperialism and feudalism by pressure, bargain and compromise. In this process, it is forging strong links with foreign monopolists and is sharing power with the landlords. Thus while not hesitating to utilise socialist aid to build certain heavy industrial projects, and to bargain with the imperialists and build itself up, it is anti-people and anti-Communist in character and is firmly opposed to the completion of the democratic, anti-imperialist tasks of the Indian revolution.

16. The economic planning that the government has resorted to is a part of this effort at building capitalism. This planning has nothing to do with socialist planning. Only an insignificant part of our economy is under the state sector and vast fields of industrial, commercial and other activities are left under private enterprise. These bourgeois attempts at capitalist planning come up against the spontaneous laws of capitalism and in the ultimate analysis genuine economic planning and capitalism are irreconcilable and they do not go together to any appreciable length. These five-year plans instead of mobilising the total material and man-power resources of the nation in order to make a forward stride in our economy and put it on the high road of rapid industrialisation and progress, mainly rely on the profit motive of the exploiting classes.

17. However, economic planning in an underdeveloped country like India, backed by the state power in the hands of the bourgeoisie, certainly gives capitalist economic development a definite tempo and direction by facilitating more expedient utilisation of the resources available under the limitations of the policies of the government. The most outstanding feature of these plans is to be seen in the industrial expansion, particularly in the setting up of certain heavy and machine-building industries in the state sector. Thus note worthy gain would not have been possible, but for the disinterested aid from the socialist countries—mainly from the Soviet Union. In addition, there has been considerable expansion in transport, communications and power in the state sector.

18. Government's budgetary and general economic policies especially its taxation measures and price policy, are determined primarily from the point of view of the narrow stratum of the exploiting classes. Colossal increase in indirect taxation and deficit financing which hit the common mass of people, constitute one of the main sources of financing the plans. The government actually relies on the profit motive for development and refuses to take any effective measure to hold the price-line. Inflation and rising prices constitute a powerful instrument for increasingly depriving the people of their share of the wealth created by their labour and its accumulation as capital in the hands of the private capitalists.

19. The banks, whose deposits swell as a result of deficit financing, insurance companies—even the nationalised Life Insurance Corporation—and special credit institutions created by government like the Industrial Finance Corporation, National Industrial Development Corporation, etc., all serve the interests of private capitalist aggrandisement. Further, the advisory board for the Reserve Bank of India as well as investment committees of the Life Insurance Corporation, is packed with representatives of the big bourgeoisie. They also adorn the boards of credit institutions like the Industrial Finance Corporation and many other state sector undertakings. As a result, enormous growth of

concentration of capital on the one hand and the interlocking of industrial and bank capital on the other have been rapidly developing under Congress rule and its five-year plans.

20. In the conditions prevailing in India, such heavy machine-building and other vital industries as have been built in the state sector, would not have otherwise come to fruition, for private capital was not in a position to find the required resources for these huge industrial projects. The building of these undertakings in the state sector has, therefore, helped to overcome, to a certain extent, economic backwardness and the abject dependence on the imperialist monopolies, and in laying the technical base for industrialisation

21. The state sector, or the public sector as it is otherwise called, can play a progressive role in an underdeveloped economy if it is promoted along anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist, democratic lines. It reduces economic dependence, creates and strengthens the capital base for industrialisation. It could be an instrument for weakening and eliminating the hold of foreign capital and also for restricting and curbing the growth of Indian monopolies. But the anti-people policies pursued by the government under the leadership of the big bourgeoisie, during nearly two decades of rule and three five-year plans, and their practical results belie all such hopes. Increasing concentration of wealth and the rapid growth of Indian monopolies have become a pronounced phenomenon. Penetration of huge foreign monopoly capital in both the state and private sectors grows uninterruptedly. The common people, workers, peasants and the middle classes are subjected to ruthless exploitation and oppression in the name of financing these plans for capitalist development. Thus, despite the flaunting of the state sector by Congress leaders as proof of their building socialism, the actual realities show that the state sector itself in India is an instrument of building capitalism and is nothing but state capitalism.

22. As a result of all these policies pursued by the government and by virtue of the fact that the big bourgeoisie heads the state, the influence of big business in our state sector has steadily grown, leading to increasing utilisation of it for

further bolstering up big capitalists. The bulk of credit facilities from the financial institutions has gone to build them up still further. All major contracts under the plan and otherwise emanating from government go to big business. It is big business again that controls the distribution of the products of several state undertakings. Apart from the growing links between state capitalism and the monopolies, government now invites capitalists including foreign monopolists to participate in the share capital of state-owned undertakings. This further distorts the growth of the public sector. Moreover, the state-owned concerns are placed in the charge of bureaucrats who are anti-democratic and hostile to labour. State capitalism loses its progressive character and becomes a weapon in their hands if the influence of big business and the control of the bureaucrats grow in the public sector. Both these harmful tendencies are already there in the affairs of our state-owned industries.

23. Contrary to the industrial policy resolution, announced by the government of India, that heavy and basic industries are reserved exclusively for the state sector, many of these industries already existing in the private sector such as Tata Iron and Steel, etc. were allowed to expand in a big way their capacity with huge financial and other forms of state assistance. With the growth of monopoly capital and with ever-expanding ties with foreign monopolists during these five-year plans, they feel competent today to run many of these key industries with foreign collaboration. Simultaneously, government has been relaxing the restrictions imposed by its industrial policy resolution and licences for setting up plants for aluminium, fertilisers, oil refinery and others are being freely granted to the private capitalists.

24. While the government has refused to eliminate the exploitation by the already entrenched British and other foreign finance capital, they offer them liberal concessions, guarantees and new opportunities for fresh big inflow. In the name of building a so-called self-generating economy and overcoming foreign exchange shortage, which again is largely the creation of their policies, the Congress rulers are inviting the monopolists

of Britain, the USA, West Germany and other western countries to come and invest their capital in India and earn huge guaranteed profits. The rapid growth of U. S. investments in certain key sectors brings to the forefront the growing danger of American penetration in to our economic and consequently political life

25. Thus the capitalist industrialisation that the big bourgeois leadership of the state has launched upon with its five-year plans and the building up the state sector are paving the way for the growth of Indian big business and together with it the perpetuation of the plunder by the foreign monopolists, through continued exploitation of India's cheap labour and other natural resources. Year after year, tens of crores of rupees are pumped out of the country as profits, dividends, freight charge and under other visible and invisible heads. These exploiters have nothing in common with our national interests. Ruthless plunder of our resources is their sole concern. They help the growth of Indian big business and other reactionary forces in public life. They overtly and covertly work for undermining our economy and for distorting and slowing down its rates of growth. A dangerous source of anti-national intrigue and machinations, the role of this imperialist foreign capital is fundamentally opposed to the interests of the nation.

26. Thus, under the five-year plans instead of reorganising our agriculture through radical agrarian reforms in the interest of peasantry and fully mobilising the resources from the foreign and Indian monopolists in the country, government on the one hand imposes heavy burdens on the people in the name of development on the other, makes the plan more and more dependent on so-called economic 'aid' from the imperialist countries, mainly the USA. Despite assistance of key importance from the socialist countries, despite the increase in trade with the socialist countries, despite the fact that Indian capital has grown in volume, the most glaring fact of our economic life today is that the country's economy as a whole is in many respects precariously dependent on western assistance and particularly U. S. assistance.

27. Far from this dependence getting reduced, it is actually increasing year by year. About a third of the total investments in the third plan will have to be found from foreign aid—mostly from the west. Apart from the foodgrains aid, India increasingly looks to the U. S. and other western countries for aid even for maintenance imports.

28. Simultaneously with our increasing needs of foreign aid concessions after concessions are being given to foreign capital. Hundreds of collaboration agreements between Indian and foreign capitalists are being sanctioned.

29. This heavy dependence of our economy on western aid both for development of the state sector and for industrial raw materials and components, as well as our food, and the concessions that are being increasingly given to foreign capital as well as the increasing penetration of foreign capital into our economy by means of their collaboration with our private capitalists—all this constitutes a serious danger to our country's future and to our capacity to pursue independent policies both internally and externally. It is this situation that breeds extreme right reaction in the country which openly advocates military alliances with U. S. imperialism and total subservience to it in the economic sphere.

30. The richest of the imperialists of the world, the U. S. has become the biggest international exploiter draining Asia, Africa, and Latin America of their riches. The U. S. imperialists seek to bring many states under their control, by resorting chiefly to the policy of military blocs and economic 'aid'. They utilise such 'aid' to put pressure on underdeveloped countries and extend their economic exploitation and political hold on these countries and thus have become the chief bulwark of neo-colonialism. They try to enmesh these countries in military block or draw them into cold war politics. International developments in recent years have furnished many new proofs of the fact that U. S. imperialism is the chief bulwark of world reaction and an international gendarme, that it has become the enemy of the peoples of the whole world.

In these circumstances, the penetration of American capital in India and our growing reliance on American "aid", are creating

a dangerous situation for our country also. They are utilising it to wrest more concessions for exploiting our country for establishing collaboration with Indian big business, for putting political pressure on our country as is evidenced on the Kashmir problem. They are penetrating all spheres of our national life—including social, cultural and educational spheres. They are establishing direct contacts with different reactionary elements in our country. They are corrupting our social and cultural life, as is evidenced by the spread of decadent imperialist culture in our country. While the Communist Party of India (Marxist) upholds the principle of free flow and exchange of modern scientific art, literature and culture between different peoples and states of the world, it is firmly opposed to the import of decadent imperialist culture. The Indian government instead of consistently carrying forward the banner of revolt raised by our national liberation movement against the decadent western imperialist education and culture, has been virtually encouraging by different means the penetration and spread of reactionary western literature, art and films in our country. The so-called schemes of cultural exchanges are in fact utilised to forge systematic links with the western and particularly U. S. culture which in turn is adversely affecting the new generation of our people in their ideological, social and cultural outlook. All this has posed a serious threat to our social, economic and political life.

31. Despite all this massive aid from the west and the socialist countries, despite the overfulfilment of the targets of taxation, the third plan is in crisis, per capita income has remained more or less stationary. No one expects the fulfilment of the targets of the plan.

32. Moreover, under these plans which have failed to harness the patriotic enthusiasm of the masses but solely rely on the private profit motive—and that, too, of Indian and foreign monopolists—the intense desire to get rich quick has been let loose on the community. Through blackmarketing and tax evasions, thousands of crores of rupees have been earned and are continuing to be earned by big business, which again is utilised not for productive investment, but in speculation on

urban land and property, and in commodity trade. Huge accumulation of this unaccounted money in the hands of a few is the biggest source of the rampant corruption and nepotism which defy all attempt at eradication.

33. Experience of the three plans demonstrates beyond any shadow of doubt that in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, particularly when it has entered a new acute stage, it is futile for underdeveloped countries to seek to develop along the capitalist path. The possibilities of such development are extremely limited. It cannot solve our basic problems of economic dependence and backwardness, of poverty and unemployment. It is incapable of ensuring the fullest utilisation of the human and material resources of the country. It gives rise to ever growing contradictions and is beset with imbalance and crisis. While it imposes unbearable burdens and inflicts misery on the common people; it gives them no hope of a better future and brings them into inevitable conflict with the capitalist path of development.

III. Balance Sheet of Bourgeois Agrarian Policies

34. In no field is the utter failure of the bourgeois-landlord government's policies so nakedly revealed as in the case of the agrarian question. Nearly two decades of Congress rule has proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the aim and direction of its agrarian policies is not to smash the feudal and semi-feudal fetters on our land relations and thus liberate the peasantry from age-old bondage, but to transform the feudal landlords into capitalist landlords and develop a stratum of rich peasants. They want to depend upon the landlord and rich peasant section to produce the surplus of agricultural products to meet the requirements of capitalist development. They also want to make these sections the main political base of the ruling class in the countryside.

35. The abolition of princely feudal states was carried out with assurance of paying the ex-princes and their families huge privy purse to the tune of several crores of rupees annually, besides leaving in their hands all their plundered wealth and vast tracts of agricultural and forest lands. The legislative

measures for abolishing intermediaries such as zamindars, jaigirdars, inamdars, etc., deliberately permit these intermediaries to retain big landed estates in the name of *Sir Khudkasht or Pannai* lands and guarantee colossal amounts of compensation to be paid to them. The abolition of these intermediary right has not been followed by a free and automatic transfer of proprietary rights to the toillers of the soil. On the other hand, millions of tenants have been either evicted outright, both legally and illegally, or forced to purchase the land rights paying varying prices to landlords. Thus, crores of rupees annually paid to the ex-princes as privy-purses, hundreds of crores of compensation paid to big intermediaries in instalments, and the vast sums of money the big landlords snatched away from the peasantry by selling the land-rights etc, have deprived agriculture of the badly needed capital for production and become a burden of the state profiting only the idle landlord rich.

36. The tenancy laws enacted for the ryotwari areas provide first and foremost, for the so-called right of resumption of land under the pretext of self-cultivation from the possession of cultivating tenants. The depriving of these tenants of their legitimate rights, on one pretext or another has taken away in itself all significance of the so-called fair-rent fixation, which in itself has been unfair in most cases. With large number of loopholes deliberately left in the legislations on the one hand their implementation by bureaucratic authorities dominated by the landlord element on the other, they have actually led to the eviction and uprooting of millions of tenants from the land and throwing them into the ranks of pauperised peasants and agricultural labourers.

37. Coming to the much-talked of legislations regarding ceiling on land holdings, these acts have been so framed as to enable the big landholders either to preserve their holdings untouched or to merrily split them up through fictitious partition among their members in such a manner as to make the ceiling law inapplicable to them. In most cases, ceiling itself is put high. Besides this, exemption of so-called 'efficiently managed farms', 'garden lands' and 'pasture lands' knocks the

bottom out of this measure. No wonder these laws, in most cases either remained on paper, or very little land has been acquired applying these laws for distribution among the toiling peasantry.

38. Consolidation of land-holding is another measure by which the Congress rulers seek to increase agricultural production. This, too, is attempted only in some states. Wherever it is implemented, the major gains have gone to the richer strata of land-owning classes. They have been enabled to manoeuvre and secure the best available lands and the best sites at the expense of the poor and middle peasants.

39. Let alone acquiring landlords, land for distribution to the tillers of the soil, the Congress government have refused in these long years of their rule to distribute the bulk of cultivable waste lands to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants under one pretext or the other. Millions of acre of such lands are found in several states. Here again, several influential landlords in different states occupy them, depriving the deserving peasant from cultivating these lands. Wherever the poor peasant doggedly stick on to the cultivation of these waste lands otherwise called *banjars*, heavy penalties are levied and collected from them year after year. In certain states, peasants evicted from project sites and sites of industrial enterprises have not been provided with alternate land and have swelled the ranks of landless labourers.

40. The agricultural labourers with either no land or with small pieces of land whose main livelihood is derived from selling their labour power constitute the single biggest section in our rural life. Thanks to the agrarian and other policies of the government, their ranks have been further swelled with millions of evicted tenants, ruined peasants and uprooted artisans. On all-India scale they form 30 to 35 per cent and in some states like Andhra, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Mysore, Orissa and Bihar, they form 50-55 per cent of the peasants households in our rural areas. From amongst them, thousands work as farm servants under landlords and rich peasants on annual basis. Despite the loud talk indulged in by the leaders of the Central

Government about legislation fixing their minimum wages and other amenities since 1948, practically nothing effective has been done so far to improve their living conditions and protect them from the brutal exploitation of the landlords. The so-called minimum wages legislation which was brought about in some states after years of promise and waiting is nothing but a piece of decoration for the statute book. The scale of wages and other conditions of work prescribed in these legislations are such that they are either much below the wage rates prevailing in the concerned areas and where higher rates have been fixed they have not been enforced. The vast bulk of these labourers neither possess small house-site nor a hut to live in. Six months in the year they are either completely unemployed or under employed. Several reports of the government and semi-governmental agencies clearly point out that their real wages are falling, their employment days are decreasing and their indebtedness is growing. Without a radical change in their living conditions, it is unthinkable to change the face of our degraded rural life and unleash the productive forces in the agrarian sector.

41. The community development schemes and panchayat raj (panchayats, block samities and zilla parishads) the government has initiated, despite the limited social amenities and benefits the people can derive from them, are in the final analysis another device to extend and consolidate the rich peasant and landlord base of the ruling class in the rural side. Consistent with its class policies, the government has been giving the richer sections of the peasants and landholders direct financial, technical and other aid almost to the exclusion of the other strata of cultivators. The bulk of the expenditure on the community development and national extension schemes flows into the pockets of landlords and rich peasants. Large sums are advanced to them as *taccavi* loans. Special agricultural loans are granted to them for the purchase of tractors, pump-sets, oil engines and for sinking tube-wells. It is they who grab the lion's share of the chemical manures and good quality seeds distributed by the government.

42. With the rapid expansion of money economy in the rural areas, forward trading and speculative holding of foodgrains and other agricultural commodities have grown enormously on the basis of expanding bank credit and otherwise. The tightening of the grip of Indian and foreign monopolistic trading interests over agricultural produce has rapidly grown, bringing in its wake intensification of exploitation of the peasants through unequal exchange and violent fluctuations of prices. As a result, the peasant is fleeced both as a seller of agricultural produce and as a purchaser of industrial goods.

43. All this has led to a considerable increase of usurious capital. According to the latest Reserve Bank survey, total rural indebtedness which stood at Rs. 900 crores in 1956 has gone up to over Rs. 3000 crores. The interest charges alone on this would amount, on a conservative estimate, to more than a hundred crores of rupees per annum. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the peasant to obtain credit for agricultural operations at normal rates of interest. Co-operative credit, government loans and bank credit all put together constitute but an infinitesimal proportion of total rural credit requirements and these are utilised mostly by the landlords and rich peasants. This dearth of credit is leading not only to deterioration in agricultural production, but also to the passing of land out of the hands of poor peasants. Government has consistently refused to scale down the burden of rural indebtedness.

44. The bankruptcy of these agrarian policies is revealed in the failure to solve the chronic food crisis. Despite spending thousands of crores of rupees on agricultural irrigation schemes and fertilisers, the increase in our agricultural production has been totally inadequate, and during the last three years, agricultural production has remained almost static. The result has been that India continues to import heavily from the USA under PL 480 foodgrains and raw materials. These imports have already swallowed over 2,000 crores of rupees during the years of Congress rule.

45. Today, after two decades of independence and Congress rule with all its multitude of agrarian reforms laws, land concentration remains intact and five per cent of the top households in the rural side possess as much as 37.29 per cent of the total land under cultivation whereas 70 per cent of the peasant families hardly possess 20 per cent of the land. It is common knowledge that the breaking up of the land monopoly and the distribution of land gratis to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants and the abolition of their heavy debt burdens are the pre-requisites for releasing the creative energy and labour enthusiasm of the millions of peasants. This alone can form the foundation for a tremendous expansion in agricultural production. Moreover, with the present agrarian relations, over a thousand crores of rupees find their way annually into the hands of the landlords and money-lenders by way of rent and interest which again is used not for productive purposes but for speculative trading and usurious money-lending. The abolition of these relations would thus provide an important source of capital for our industries and agriculture.

46. We cannot develop agriculture to a considerable extent and provide the country with adequate food and raw materials because the impoverished peasantry deprived of land is unable to purchase the most elementary agricultural implements and necessary fertilisers in order to improve its farming.

We cannot develop our national industries and industrialise our country in a big way because the peasantry constituting eighty per cent of the population is unable to buy even a minimum quantity of manufactured goods.

We cannot improve the condition of the working class because hundreds of thousands of hungry people forced by poverty to leave the countryside for towns swarm the 'labour market' increase the army of unemployed and lower the 'price of labour.'

We cannot rapidly work our way out of cultural backwardness because the poor and hungry peasants, constituting the majority of the population, are deprived of material means to give education to their children.

Thus the agricultural and peasant problems are of primary importance to the life of our country and stand as the foremost national question.

IV. Foreign Policy

47. The foreign policy of any state and its government, in the final analysis, is nothing but the projection of its internal policy and it reflects, in the main, the interests of the class or classes that head the government and the state in question. The foreign policy of the government of India naturally reflects the dual character of our bourgeoisie, of opposition to as well as compromise and collaboration with imperialism. Unlike the monopolist bourgeoisie, of the imperialist countries, the Indian bourgeoisie for its very development needs world peace and is hence opposed to world war. In a world sharply divided between the war camp of imperialism on the one hand and the peace camp of socialism on the other and faced with the situation when the imperialist camp headed by the USA launched its schemes of forging aggressive military alliances in order to bring different countries under its control, the government of India embarked upon the policy of neutrality or non-alignment to defend and safeguard the newly-won political independence of this country and to advance its own class interests. In pursuit of this policy, it seeks to utilise the contradictions between the camps of imperialism and socialism as well as the contradictions and conflicts between the U. S. and British imperialisms. The government of India has been interpreting the policy of non-alignment and neutrality differently at different phases depending upon its class interests.

48. In the early period after independence, while it was looking to the imperialists, and particularly the USA, for its industrial development, when it had faith in the invincibility of U. S. arms, the Government of India exhibited marked tendencies of succumbing to the blackmail of the imperialist camp and leaned heavily on it. The allowing of camps on Indian soil for the recruitment of Gurkhas by the British imperialists for the suppression of the Malayan war of independence, the granting of facilities for the French imperialist planes on Indian bases

on their way to fight against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the sending of help, even though nominal medical aid, to the American troops in Korea, the hesitation to accept the offered aid for industrial development from the Soviet Union were all clear indications of this trend. It was in this phase that India generally sided with the western bloc in the U.N—a fact openly and pointedly stated by India's representative in the U. N.—including the war of aggression launched against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the USA under the signboard of the U. N. and the resolution branding North Korea as aggressor.

49. Later, with the debacle of imperialist arms in Korea and Vietnam, with the growth in the economic and military might of the socialist world and the breaking of western—chiefly U.S.—monopoly of nuclear weapons, with the new unprecedented upsurge in the liberation struggle in Asia and Africa, all of which further altered the world balance of forces in favour of socialism, peace and national independence, with disillusionment in its hopes of getting massive aid for industrial development from the imperialists, with the growing possibilities of receiving from socialist countries' disinterested aid for building industries of key importance, with the growth of the peace movement and mass radicalisation inside the country as revealed in the first general elections, and with the conclusion of the U.S.-Pakistan agreement to enter into the SEATO military bloc with a view to pressurising India, began new phase in the Government of India's policy of non-alignment. This was the phase when the government came out against military blocs, against imperialist aggression, in support of colonial peoples' struggle, for prohibition of nuclear weapons and disarmament, and for Afro-Asian solidarity. This was seen in India's role in the conclusion of peace in Korea, its participation and active role in the Geneva conference for the conclusion of the agreements on Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, in the signing of the Sino-India treaty on Tibet embodying the five principles of peaceful coexistence, and in its role in the Bandung conference of Afro-Asian countries.

This new anti-imperialist content given to the policy of non-alignment played a positive role in international development. It ranged India more solidly against the policies of war and nuclear diplomacy, for peaceful solution of international disputes and for peaceful co-existence. India's own relations with the socialist countries became closer and more cordial and her international prestige rose, particularly in the countries of Asia and Africa.

50. Beginning from about the year, 1958, however the foreign policy of the government of India has been passing through a new phase. Its role in the Congo, its refusal to recognise the Algerian provisional government, its refusal to take a forthright and firm stand on several anti-colonial issues, its equivocal role as chairman of the International Commission in Vietnam and Laos, its stand at the Belgrade conference of non-aligned powers in 1961 which put India in opposition to most of the Afro-Asian countries, its role in the recent Cairo conference of non-aligned states and its approving recognition of imperialist-inspired Malaysia were all evidences of this new phase.

51. It is noteworthy that several countries of Asia and Africa which shook off their colonial yoke only recently, have taken a forthright and consistently anti-imperialist stand on these and similar issues. At a time when the world situation has become more favourable than ever due to the growing might of the socialist camp and the attainment of freedom by many countries of Africa and the upsurge of the freedom movement in the Latin American countries, one would have expected that the government of independent India would have carried forward the policy of non-alignment, peace and anti-colonialism in a more determined manner. Just the contrary has happened.

52. The growth of monopolies and big business in India and their growing links with imperialist monopolies, which are actively encouraged by the government, the increasing reliance of its five-year plans on aid from the western countries, particularly from the USA, despite the vital industrial, technical and economic aid rendered by the USSR and other socialist countries, government's inability to solve the basic problems

facing the Indian people and the contrast in countries where the working people in power have built within a short period a stable socialist economy, and growth and accentuation of social contradictions within the country due to the economic policies of the government—all this has a tremendous bearing on all the policies of the government, foreign policy being no exception. The new phase in the government of India's foreign policy is a result precisely of these developments and arises from the very class character of the present government. The increasing reliance on imperialist aid has enabled the Anglo-American imperialists to increasingly interfere in the dispute with Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir.

53. The border dispute with China leading to a border war between the two biggest states in Asia and the state of cold war existing since then, have further accentuated this shift in the government of India's foreign policy. The government's acceptance of military aid from the USA and Britain, and its continued wooing them for massive military aid, the VOA deal episode, the joint air exercises with the U. S. and British airforces, government's virtual acquiescence in the extension of the operations of the U. S. Seventh Fleet to the Indian Ocean, government's silence on the U. S. government's threat to extend its war in South Vietnam into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, its lukewarm reaction to the U. S. naval and air bombardment in the Tonkin Gulf area, and its virtual acquiescence in the Anglo-American effort at the establishment of a military base in the Indian Ocean, have all led to a position where the policy of non-alignment has been seriously jeopardised and is getting emasculated. Taking advantage of this situation, the imperialists mount pressure on India for its complete alignment with the west, while reactionaries in India seek to push the government still more along the path of further emasculation of its foreign policy of non-alignment and its total reversal. Unless these reactionary forces and their intrigues are thoroughly exposed and the objective source for such anti-national conspiracies are removed as quickly as possible, the danger always stares us in the face. As a result of all this, the

prestige of India has greatly suffered in the countries of Asia and Africa, and it has become the cause of concern for all anti-imperialist forces in the world.

54. However, the contradictions between the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism continue. This was sharply focussed on the issue of Kashmir and imperialist intrigues over it and when due to popular pressure, the VOA deal had to be abandoned

55. Although the government's foreign policy continues to be within the broad framework of non-alignment and opposition to world war, its increasing reliance on western monopoly aid to fulfil five-year plans of capitalist development, its growing economic collaborations with foreign finance capitalists, its continued membership of the British Commonwealth and as a result of all this, its prevarication on a number of anti-colonial issues in the recent period, objectively facilitate the U. S. designs of neo-colonialism and aggression and lead to India's isolation from the powerful currents of peace, democracy freedom and socialism and as such is harmful to our interests. It is thus evident that neither the policy of non-alignment nor its genuine implementation can be taken for granted with the big bourgeoisie leading the state and pursuing anti-people policies.

V. State Structure and Democracy Under Congress Rule

56. The present Indian state is the organ of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlord, led by the big bourgeoisie, who are increasingly collaborating with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development. This class character essentially determines the role and functions of the state in the life of the country.

57. After independence, the leadership of the Congress was expected to remodel the state structure of republican India on the basis of linguistic states, full autonomy to these states and regional or local autonomy to the tribal regions. Although it abolished the feudal states and merged them in the Indian Union under popular pressure and in the background of people's

struggles, yet, under the influence of the shortsighted and reactionary monopolist groups, it refused to reconstitute all the states on a linguistic basis. The solution of the problems came ultimately, though haltingly, under the stress of the struggle of the democratic masses. Even now, some unsolved problems remain.

58. The language problem is not solved satisfactorily. The languages of the different states are yet to be enshrined as the language of administration and courts and as the medium of instruction. English continues to hold the field in our administration and education. Even before the regional languages have come to occupy their rightful place in the administration and educational sphere and even while refusing to give practical effect to their equal status in parliament and in the central administration, attempts are being made to impose Hindi in place of English on the non-Hindi-speaking people. This gives rise to the fear that their languages would be denied their rightful place and suppressed.

59. Although our state structure is supposed to be a federal one, practically all power and authority is concentrated in the central government. The constituent states of the Indian Union enjoy very limited power and opportunities; their autonomy is formal. This makes these states precariously dependent on the central government, restricts their development and other nation-building activities and thus hinders their progress.

60. It is but natural that in such a situation the contradiction between the central government and the states should have grown. Underlying these contradictions often lie the deeper contradiction between the big bourgeoisie on the one hand and the entire people including the bourgeoisie of this or that state on the other. This deeper contradiction gets constantly aggravated due to the accentuation of the unevenness of economic development under capitalism.

61. In some states there are compact areas inhabited by tribal people have their own distinct languages, culture and traditions. These people are undergoing transformation and ruination in the new conditions of capitalist development. They have been roused to new consciousness, which finds no

opportunity for expression in their present condition of being scattered in small groups in the big states of the Indian Union. They demand regional or full autonomy to advance their regions where their numbers and geographical lay-out permit such a possibility. But the bourgeoisie for whom this tribal people become good sources of supply of labour in forests, mines, etc., and who, because of their tribal conditions, are easy prey for exploitation, denies their legitimate demands and suppresses them with force or disrupts them by some concessions to their top leaders.

62. The big bourgeois leadership loudly proclaims that ours is a secular democracy and is opposed to religious and obscurantist principles being imported into it. But the truth is, far from effectively combating the anti-secular trends the bourgeoisie gives concessions to them and strengthens them. Its leaders do not take a consistently secular stand, but are themselves victims of religious obscurantism. They try to distort the whole concept of secularism; they would have the people believe that, instead of complete separation of religion and politics from each other, secularism means freedom for all religious faiths to equally interfere in the political life of the people. This approach of the bourgeoisie can be clearly seen in several official documents and reports. Furthermore, the concessions that they give to the communalism of the majority community can be seen in the fact that, in constituting the National Integration Council the central government had no hesitation in appointing the representatives of the Jan Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha while scrupulously keeping out the representatives of non-Hindu communal organisations. Not stopping at that ruling classes do not hesitate to foment the differences between nationalities and communities to disrupt the popular movement in order to further their narrow class interests.

Our Party, therefore, has the duty to fight an uncompromising struggle for the consistent implementation of the principle of secularism. Even the slightest departure from that principle should be exposed and fought. While defending the right of every religious community—whether it is the majority or

minority—as well as of those who have no faith in any religion to believe in and practise whatever religion they like or to remain irreligious, the Party should fight against all forms of intrusion of religion in the social, economic, political and administrative life of the nation. Equally opposing the efforts of the leaders of all religious groups to interfere in the public life of the country, we should concentrate fire on the chauvinistic leaders of the majority religious community—the Hindus. At the same time, we should continue to point out to the minority religious groups that their legitimate rights can be defended and protected only on the basis of a consistent application of the principles of secularism.

63. In conditions of capitalist competition, the guaranteed rights to the minorities provided in the constitution are also not implemented. The bourgeois-landlord state thus fosters centrifugal and disruptive forces and fails to build the unity of the country on secure foundations.

64. The administrative system being based on a highly centralised bureaucracy, reflecting the growth of capitalist development, power is concentrated at the top and exercised through privileged bureaucrats who are divorced from the masses and who obediently serve the interests of the exploiting classes. The so-called panchayati raj of the people thus becomes an instrument of the ruling classes seeking to consolidate their power in the countryside. Real democracy of the people can have no place in such a bourgeois democracy run by the exploiters and their bureaucrats.

65. The judiciary is weighted against the workers, peasants and other sections of the working people. The laws, procedures and the system of justice, though holding the rich and the poor equal and alike in principle, essentially serve the interests of the exploiting classes and uphold their class rule. Even the bourgeois Democratic principle of separation of the judiciary from the executive is not adhered to and the judiciary becomes subject to the influence and control of the latter.

66. The bourgeoisie and its landlord allies are a small minority in the whole country compared to the working class,

the peasantry and the middle classes, over whom they rule and whom they exploit by virtue of their ownership of land and capital and all means of livelihood. Capitalist state power and its government even when elected by a majority vote in the parliamentary system of democracy, represents in its political and economic essence the power of the minority.

67. When this power and its class interests begin to come into open conflict with the interests of the exploited masses, the government tends to rely more and more on the armed forces and the police to preserve its order. Hence the bourgeoisie keeps the hundreds and thousands of rank and file of these forces away from the people, away from all political consciousness and all democratic rights. Even when they are allowed the right to vote as citizens in elections, they are not allowed to be approached by any political party through any literature and the servicemen are denied the right to contact even their parliamentary representatives for any reason whatsoever.

68. This, however, does not apply to the generals and top officials who in the main, are drawn from the bourgeois-landlord classes and get their education in exclusive institutions. They carry on their politics in their own way behind the curtains.

69. The constitution of the Republic of India provides for a parliament elected on the basis of adult franchise and confers certain fundamental rights on the people. But the people can exercise them only to a very limited extent. Many of these rights are misinterpreted, distorted and even violated by the authorities of the state. When it comes to the struggles of the workers, peasants and other sections of the democratic masses, the fundamental rights cease to apply to them. Freedom of assembly is denied to whole areas and regions embracing lakhs of people, by putting them under section 144 even for months and years under the plea of preserving law and order, which means preventing the workers and peasants from assembling to defend their interests. The violence of the state organs becomes particularly savage against the workers, the peasants and other

democratic masses when they act in defence of their political and economic rights and demands. The hated Preventive Detention Act has become a part and parcel of the statute book and has remained in force in all these eighteen years of the post-independence period—a law which even the former British rulers dared not perpetuate except during the war period. Similarly, the provisions of national emergency provided for in the constitution are misused and ordinances promulgated to suppress the just and democratic struggles of the workers, peasants and middle classes.

70. Freedom of the press, assembly and propaganda is a reality only to the exploiting classes, who can own the daily press, the halls and theatres, the radio network and the huge financial resources required. The working people cannot compete with their vast resources and are thus disabled in the exercise of these rights formally given to everyone. Bourgeois democracy always remains a democracy for the exploiting rich and a wordy formality, a shadow for the toiling poor.

71. However, universal adult franchise and parliament and state legislatures can serve as instruments of the people in their struggle for democracy, for defence of their interests. Although a form of class rule of the bourgeoisie, India's present parliamentary system also embodies an advance for the people. It affords certain opportunities to them to defend their interests, intervene in the affairs of the state to a certain extent, and mobilise them to carry forward the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

72. The threat to the parliamentary system and to democracy comes not from the working people and the parties which represent their interests. The threat comes from the exploiting classes. It is they who undermine the parliamentary system both from within and without by making it an instrument to advance their narrow interests and repress the toiling masses. When the people begin to use parliamentary institutions for advancing their cause and they fall away from the influence of the reactionary bourgeoisie and landlords, these classes do not hesitate to trample underfoot parliamentary democracy as was

done in Kerala in 1959. When their interest demands they do not hesitate to replace parliamentary democracy by military dictatorship. It will be a serious error and a dangerous illusion to imagine that our country is free from all such threats. It is of utmost importance that parliamentary and democratic institutions are defended in the interest of the people against such threats and that such institutions are skilfully utilised in combination with extra-parliamentary activities.

VI. Conditions of People

73. The democracy that the bourgeois-landlord state and government have been practising all these years is, in reality, denied to the people and only the top exploiting classes are flourishing under it at the expense of the toiling millions of the country.

74. The condition of the people, in spite of growth in production has not improved materially, as most of the increasing wealth is concentrating in the hands of the exploiting classes. The working class, the peasantry, the middle classes and even the small and medium entrepreneurs and businessmen resent the policies of the Government and the growing domination of the monopolies. The discontent of the toiling people finds expression in various forms of struggle.

75. Increasingly heavy burdens are being imposed on the working class and it constantly faces ferocious attacks from the employers and the government. Not only total production but even productivity of the workers has increased. Yet their share in the increasing wealth has fallen while that of their employers has risen. Real wages of the workers have not registered any rise and even when they fight and succeed in getting a wage-rise; ever-spiralling prices have nullified all their wage-gains. In a large number of industries the wage-level has gone even below the pre-second world war level. Though employment has risen with the establishment of new factories unemployment has grown still faster further depressing the living standards of the families of the working people.

76. The workers through determined and bitter struggles in the last few years have forced the employers and the government

to establish some machinery like wage boards, minimum wages committees, tribunals, etc. for wage settlement. Though some standardisation has taken place in certain organised industries, wage anarchy which is characteristic of the capitalist system, still continues and though certain norms for minimum wages have been laid down, they still remain unfulfilled, the government itself refusing to give its employees wages based on these norms. The right of recognition of trade unions and collective bargaining are still denied or made a mockery of by the employer at his will. Any number of legislations have been enacted but they are brazenly violated by the employers and the industrial relations machinery set up by the government is mainly directed against the strikes and struggles of workers. A section of the workers have won their right to social security but its implementation by the bureaucracy has been more a cause of irritation than of help to them, while the so-called housing schemes of the employers and the government have not liberated the workers and their families from the appalling slums to which they are condemned. The conditions of employees in the state sector undertakings are particularly bad with the government itself showing scant respect for its own laws and established practices. Not only is the wage level lower in these undertakings, even trade union rights are virtually non-existent. Police verification of employees in government factories and establishments is among the worst features in the state sector used to intimidate workers and suppress the trade union movement.

77. Millions of our peasants live in abject poverty and backwardness. Three-fourths of the peasantry have practically no land of their own and many millions live as paupers. The plunder of the peasantry through exorbitant rents and interests, through high taxes and manipulations of the capitalist market continues. Agricultural labourers and poor peasants have to work without any subsistence wage for the family. Want of employment, hunger, indebtedness and destitution—in short the ruination of our peasantry is what we see in the countryside today.

78. The communal partition of the country into Indian Union and Pakistan had brought in its wake the huge problem of refugees whose number rose to several millions. Further the continued tension and conflict between the two newly-created states is periodically resulting in reinforcing their number. This problem is far from satisfactorily settled. The government has gone back on many of its promises and no adequate provision is made for their rehabilitation. Their condition is extremely miserable. This problem is still acutely affecting the life of the people in several parts of India and particularly the state of West Bengal. The schemes of rehabilitation and their practical implementation by the government belie all the hopes entertained on this score.

79. The capitalist path of development that our ruling classes have embarked upon without effecting radical agrarian reforms and the elimination of foreign capital from our economy, is hitting hard the life of millions of artisans such as handloom weavers and other handicraftsmen. They are either being summarily thrown into the ranks of the army of paupers and unemployed or squeezed dry under the impact of extremely low incomes, high prices of food and raw materials and varied burdensome taxes. The meagere subsidies provided in the state and central budgets fail to bring any real relief to the vast masses of tormented artisans and their families. The anti-people policies of the government offer no solution to this problem and discontent is rapidly growing amongst the artisans.

80. The middle classes in the towns are faring hardly any better. High cost of living, low salaries and declining standards are their lot too. In recent years, middle class unemployment has grown phenomenally. Middle class wage-earners in government services, private offices, banks, commercial concerns, schools, colleges and the like are facing the same problems of life as the working class. Our middle classes play an important role in the fields of art, literature, science and culture. But for most of them these fields are closed and we see the educated middle class youth queuing up before the employment exchanges.

81. Even many industrialists, manufacturers, businessmen and traders are hit by the policies of the present government and by the operation of the foreign and Indian monopolies and financiers. Allocation of capital issues, raw materials, transport facilities, import and export licences is carried out by the government and bureaucrats in such a way that almost all except big business suffer. Those engaged in small and cottage industries face a permanent crisis.

82. As a result of the anti-people policies pursued by the government, the vast masses of the people are fleeced by soaring prices, rising taxes and reckless inflation. At one end, while a microscopic few of the top exploiting classes and their hangers-on with their newly earned riches are rolling in luxury, at the other end, millions are groaning under squalor and poverty. The conflicts and contradictions between the people on the one hand and the bourgeois-landlord government led by the big bourgeoisie on the other are steadily getting intensified.

VII. Programme of People's Democracy

83. Disillusionment and discontent with the policies and the attempts at building a capitalist economy grows rapidly among our people. Life itself teaches them that there is no hope of emancipation from backwardness, poverty, hunger and exploitation under the present bourgeois-landlord rule. This awakening is seen in the growing attraction to ideas of socialism among the masses. Capitalism as a system is getting increasingly discredited in the eyes of the people. It is precisely because of this, that even our bourgeois rulers seek to mask their attempts at capitalist development under the signboard of socialism.

84. In the historical conditions we are in, with the existence and rapid growth of the powerful world socialist system and with the fast disintegration of the world capitalist order, new big opportunities have arisen for several economically backward and under-developed countries, on achieving independence for the establishment of a state of national democracy. The developing working class can, by gradually establishing hegemony in that state, take the country along the path of

non-capitalist development and go over to socialism by skipping over the state of capitalism.

85. Such a door, however, is barred to us in India. Our country, even while it was under the colonial rule of the British was one of the capitalistically developed colonies and semi-colonies. The big bourgeoisie which headed the national liberation movement and the new independent state after 1947 has been continuously in state power for nearly two decades and has been utilising that state power to immensely strengthen its class position at the expense of mass of people on the one hand and compromising and bargaining with imperialism and big landlordism on the other. Thus they have embarked on the path of capitalist development. During the last two decades there has been an enormous growth of Indian monopoly and strengthening of capitalism in India. Such being the case, to talk of a national democratic state to achieve this aim in India is unreal. Even the basic democratic tasks of uprooting imperialist monopoly capital and the smashing up of the feudal and semi-feudal fetters on our agriculture cannot be completed without dislodging the bourgeois landlord government headed by the big bourgeoisie from power.

86. Capitalist development in India, however, is not of the type which took place in Western Europe and other advanced capitalist countries. Even though developing in the capitalist way Indian society still contains within itself strong elements of pre-capitalist society. Unlike in the advanced capitalist countries where capitalism grew on the ashes of pre-capitalist society, destroyed by the rising bourgeoisie, capitalism in India was superimposed on pre-capitalist society. Neither the British colonialists whose rule continued for over a century; nor the Indian bourgeoisie into whose hands power passed in 1947, delivered those smashing blows against pre-capitalist society which are necessary for the free development of capitalist society and its replacement by socialist society. The present Indian society, therefore, is a peculiar combination of monopoly capitalist domination with caste, communal and tribal institutions. It has thus fallen to the lot of the working class and its Party

to unite all the progressive forces interested in destroying the pre-capitalist society and to so consolidate the revolutionary forces within it as to facilitate the most rapid completion of the democratic revolution and preparation of the ground for transition to socialism.

87. Faced with these tasks the Communist Party of India (M) feels it its duty to place before our people these practical tasks and the political programme as the only correct way out of the deadlock into which they have been forced by the present government.

The Communist Party of India (M) firmly adheres to its aim of building socialism and Communism. It is not deceived by the false claims of the big bourgeois leaders of the present ruling party and its Government that they are intent on building socialism in India. It is elementary knowledge that real and genuine socialism can be built only when all principal means of production in society are owned by the state, where the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work" prevails as a step to building Communism where the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" will come to prevail. This, it is evident, cannot be achieved under the present state and bourgeois-landlord government led by the representatives of the big bourgeoisie. The establishment of genuine socialist society is only possible under proletarian statehood.

While adhering to the aim of building a socialist society, the Communist Party of India (M), taking into consideration the degree of economic development, the degree of the political-ideological maturity of the working class and its organisation, places before the people as the immediate objective the establishment of people's democracy based on the coalition of all genuine anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces headed by the working class. This demands first and foremost the replacement of the present bourgeois-landlord state and government by a state of people's democracy and a government led by the working class on the basis of a firm worker-peasant alliance. This alone can quickly and thoroughly complete the unfinished

basic democratic tasks of the Indian revolution and pave the way to putting the country on the road of socialism. The tasks and the programme which the people's democratic government will carry out as pre-requisite to the building of socialism are :

88. In the sphere of state structure :

The People's Democratic India will be a voluntary union of the peoples of various nationalities of India.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is opposed to the drive of the ruling classes for centralisation denying autonomy and is also opposed to all disruptionist, secessionist movements.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) works for the preservation and promotion of the unity of the Indian Union on the basis of real equality and autonomy for the different nationalities that inhabit the country, and to develop a democratic state structure as outlined below :

1. The Indian Union shall be a Federation based on democratic centralism.
2. The people are sovereign. All organs of state power shall be answerable to the people. The supreme authority in exercising state power shall be the people's representatives elected on the basis of adult franchise and the principle of proportional representation, and subject to recall. Universal, equal and direct suffrage for all citizens who have attained the age of 18 to be implemented in all elections to Parliament, State Legislatures and local self-government bodies. Secret ballot and the right of any voter to be elected to any representative institution to be ensured.
3. At the all-India Centre, there shall be two Houses, the House of the People and the House of the States. Both shall have equal powers and equal numbers. The House of States shall have also equal representation from all the States in the Indian Union. The President shall act in accordance with the decisions of both the Houses and shall have no other powers.

4. All states in the Indian Union shall have real autonomy and equal powers.

The tribal areas or the areas where population is specific in ethnic composition and is distinguished by specific social and cultural conditions will have regional autonomy with regional Government within the State concerned and shall receive full assistance for their development

5. There shall not be upper Houses at the States level. Nor shall there be Governors for the States appointed from above. All administrative services shall be under the direct control of the respective States or local authorities. States shall treat all Indian citizens alike, and there shall not be any discrimination on the ground of caste, community and nationality.

6. Equality of all national languages in Parliament and Central administration shall be recognised. Members of Parliament will have the right to speak in any national language and simultaneous translation will have to be provided in all other national languages. All Acts, Government orders and resolutions shall be made available in all national languages. The use of Hindi as the official language shall not be made obligatory. In the course of growing economic, social and intellectual intercourse, the people of different States of India will develop in practice the language of intercommunications most suitable to their needs. The use of English, in the fields of administration, legislation, judiciary and as the medium of instruction in education shall be discarded, replacing it with the national languages. Right of people to receive instruction in their mother-tongue in educational institutions, the use of the national language of the particular linguistic state as the language of administration in all its public and State institutions, as well as its use as the medium of education in the State up to the highest standard, provision for the use of the language of a minority or minorities or of a region where necessary in

addition to the language of the State shall be implemented. The Urdu language and its script shall be protected.

7. The People's Democratic Government will take measure to consolidate the unity of India by fostering and promoting mutual co-operation between the constituent states and between the peoples of different states in the economic, political and cultural spheres. It will pay special attention and render financial and other assistance to economically backward and weaker states, regions and areas with a view to helping them rapidly overcome their backwardness.
8. The People's Democratic State, in the field of local administration, shall ensure a wide network of local bodies from village upward, directly elected by the people and vested with power and responsibility and provided with adequate finance.
9. The People's Democratic State shall strive to infuse in all our social and political institutions the spirit of democracy. It extends democratic forms of initiative and control over every aspect of national life. A key role in this will be played by the trade unions, and peasant and agricultural workers' associations, and other class and mass organisations of the working people. The Government will take steps to make the legislative and executive machinery of the country continuously responsive to the democratic wishes of the people, and will ensure that the masses and their organisations are drawn into active participation in the administration and work of the State. It works for the elimination of bureaucracy and bureaucratic practices in the state and administration.
10. Democratic changes will be introduced in the matter of administering justice. Prompt and fair justice shall be ensured. The appointment of judges will be subject to approval of Parliament, Legislatures and other people's organs at different levels.

Free legal aid and consultation will be provided for the people in order to make legal redress easily available to all citizens.

Right of persons to sue any official before a court of law shall be ensured.

11. The People's Democratic Government will infuse the members of the armed forces with the spirit of patriotism, democracy and service of the people. It will ensure them good living standard and conditions of service, and provide them with maximum possible opportunities for cultural life, as well as the education and well-being of their children. It encourages all able-bodied persons to undergo military training and be imbued with the spirit of national independence and its defence.
12. Full civil liberties shall be guaranteed. Inviolability of person and domicile, and no detention of persons without trial, unhampered freedom of conscience, religious belief and worship, speech, Press assembly, strike and combination, freedom of movement and occupation.
13. Right to work as a fundamental right of every citizen shall be guaranteed; equal right for all citizens and equal pay for equal work irrespective of religion, caste, sex, race and nationality shall be ensured.
14. Wide disparities in salaries and incomes will be abolished.
15. Abolition of social oppression of one caste by another and untouchability to be punished by law.
Special facilities for scheduled castes, tribes and other backward communities shall be provided in the matter of services and other special and educational amenities.
16. Removal of social inequalities and disabilities from which women suffer, equal rights with men in such matters as inheritance of property, enforcement of marriage and divorce laws, admission of professions and services.
17. Secular character of the State shall be guaranteed. Interference by religious institutions in the affairs of the State and political life of the country shall be prohibited. Religious minorities shall be given protection and any discrimination against them will be forbidden.

18. The State shall take over education and its secular character shall be ensured.
Free and compulsory education up to secondary state shall be guaranteed.
19. A wide network of health, medical and maternity services shall be established, free of cost, and rest homes and recreation centres for working people and old-age pension shall be guaranteed
20. The People's Democratic State and Government will undertake the important task of unleashing the creative talents of our people for developing and extending the new progressive people's culture which is anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and democratic in character. It shall take the following necessary measures to foster, encourage and develop such literature, art and culture as well—
 - help the people in their struggle to improve their living conditions and enrich their material and cultural life.
 - help the people to get rid of caste and communal hatred and prejudices and ideas of subservience and superstitions.
 - help each nationality including the tribal people to develop their distinct language, culture and way of life in unison with the common aspirations of the democratic masses of the country as a whole.
 - help all our people to develop feelings of brotherhood with all peace-loving peoples and countries of the world, and to discard ideas of racial and national hatred.
89. In the field of agriculture and the peasant problem :
 1. Abolish landlordism without compensation and give land gratis to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants;
 2. Cancel debts of peasants, agricultural labourers and small artisans to moneylenders and landlords;
 3. Ensure long-term and cheap credit for the peasants and artisans and fair prices for agricultural produce, assist the peasants to improve methods of farming by the use of improved seeds and modern implements and technique;
 4. Provide guaranteed irrigation facilities;
 5. Ensure adequate wages and living conditions to agricultural labourers;

6. Encourage co-operatives of peasants and artisans on a voluntary basis for farming and for agricultural services and other purposes.

90. In the field of industry and labour :

Our industry suffers not only from an extremely low purchasing power of the peasants but also from the depredations of foreign capital. We cannot be a strong and prosperous country unless we are industrialised on a wide scale; but industrialised to such an extent we shall never be so long as British, U. S. and other foreign capital exists in India and is given further opportunities of penetration, for the profits of their invested capital are taken out of the country and we are unable to use them.

In the field of industry, therefore, the People's Democratic Government will :

1. Take over all foreign capital-in plantations, mines, oil refineries, and factories, shipping and trade. It will nationalise all banks and credit institutions and other monopolistic industries. Foreign trade will be nationalised.
2. Develop the state sector with the utmost rapidity so as to quickly overcome economic dependence and expand continuously the industries of the country. This together with the setting up of new state-owned industries will make the state sector dominant and decisive.
3. Assist the small and medium industries by providing them with credit, raw materials at reasonable prices and by helping them in regard to marketing facilities.
4. Regulate and co-ordinate the various sectors of the economy in order to achieve balanced and planned economic development of the country in the interest of the people.
5. Democratise the management of the state sector by removing persons connected with big business from the management and by ensuring the creative participation of the workers and technicians in the management and running of industries.
6. Improve radically the living standards and working conditions of workers by (a) fixing a living wage,

(b) progressive reduction of hours of work, (c) social insurance at the expense of the state and capitalists against every kind of disability and unemployment, (d) provision on decent housing for workers, (e) recognition of trade unions and their right of collective bargaining as well as the right to strike.

7. Effectively implement a price policy in the interest of the common people.

8. Maximum relief from taxation to workers, peasants and artisans shall be given while graded tax in agriculture, industry and trade will be introduced and profits will be controlled.

9. In the sphere of foreign policy :

In order to ensure that India plays its rightful role for the preservation of world peace, for peaceful co-existence and in the struggle against colonialism, the People's Democratic Government will :

1. Strengthen Afro-Asian solidarity in every possible way, further develop friendly relations and co-operation with the socialist countries and all peace-loving states in the interests of peace and freedom, support to all colonial peoples, struggles against imperialism.
2. Strive for peaceful co-existence among countries with different social systems based on the panchsheel.
3. Do everything in its power in co-operation with all peace-loving forces to deliver mankind from the threat of a nuclear-missile war, demand the immediate prohibition of the testing, manufacture and use of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass annihilation and work for the destruction of all nuclear and atomic stock piles ; work for the agreements for nuclear-free zones.
4. Work for preventing war, for preserving peace and making it secure; work for the conclusion of a treaty on general and controlled disarmament; demand the abolition of all military pacts and all foreign military bases as well as withdrawal of all foreign troops from other countries;

exercise the greatest vigilance against the imperialist warmongers and their intrigues and manoeuvres and inspire the masses in the spirit of such vigilance.

5. Withdraw India from the British Commonwealth, renounce all agreements and commitments with Britain and the USA which are against the interests of the nation or not in keeping with national dignity.
6. Always make special and concerted efforts of peacefully settle the existing differences and disputes and establish friendly relations with India's neighbours—Pakistan, Nepal, Ceylon, Burma and China on the basis of the Panchsheel.

VIII. Building of People's Democratic Front

92. It is obvious that for the complete and thoroughgoing fulfilment of the basic tasks of the Indian revolution, in the present stage it is absolutely essential to replace the present bourgeois landlord state headed by the big bourgeoisie by a state of people's democracy led by the working class.

93. It is evident that without dislodging the present big bourgeois leadership which has allied with landlordism from the leading position of state power and in its place establishing the hegemony of the working class over the state, no radical agrarian reforms in the genuine interests of the peasantry can be carried out, which alone can ensure enough food for our starving people, adequate raw material and expanding market for our industrial goods and surplus capital formation for the country's development.

94. It is equally clear that our economy cannot get rid of foreign monopoly capital and its predatory exploitation as long as the present government with its policy of compromise and collaboration with foreign imperialist capital continues to rule. To uproot and summarily expel the foreign monopoly capital from our country and place our independence on firm and secure foundations, there can be no other guarantee than that of firmly establishing a government of the people's democratic front led by the working class.

95. Above all, it becomes increasingly evident to one and all that until and unless the present government with its anti-people policies is rejected and decisively defeated and is replaced by an alternative government with alternative democratic policies it is neither possible for our people to escape the tortuous path of capitalist development which is historically outmoded, nor liberate our people from the clutches of growing monopoly capitalism, a phenomenon that inevitably arises out of such a path of development.

96. The stage of our revolution and the basic tasks facing it not only determine the nature of the revolution but also the role of the different classes in the struggle to achieve it. The nature of our revolution in the present stage of its development is essentially anti-feudal, anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly and democratic. Of course, it cannot be democratic in the traditional sense of the term when the bourgeoisie was heading the democratic revolution in different countries. Ours is a democratic revolution in an entirely new epoch of world history, where the proletariat and its political party is destined to assume its leadership and not leave it to the bourgeois class to betray it in the middle. In the present era, the proletariat will have to lead the democratic revolution as a necessary step in its forward march to the achievement of socialism. Hence it is not the old type bourgeois-led democratic revolution, but a new type of people's democratic revolution organised and led under the hegemony of the working class.

97. The anti-feudal and anti-imperialist people's democratic revolution will have to take upon itself, first and foremost, the task of carrying out radical agrarian reforms in the interest of the peasantry; so as to sweep away the remnants of feudal and semi-feudal fetters on our production forces of agriculture as well as industry. This will have to be supplemented by sweeping measures of reforming the social system through which such remnants of pre-capitalist society as the caste and other social systems keep the villages tied to age-old backwardness. The task of making such sweeping reforms in the social system, however, is inextricably bound up with the completion of the

agrarian revolution which in fact is the axis of the democratic revolution. Any failure to grasp its full significance and import is to miss the very essence of the democratic revolution. The second urgent task of our democratic revolution is the total eradication and summary expulsion of the foreign monopoly capital from our national economy and thus free the economic political and social life of our people from all its disastrous influences. Thus these two fundamental tasks face the democratic revolution to be fulfilled. With these is also related the task of breaking the power of monopoly capital.

98. However, these basic and fundamental tasks of the revolution in today's context cannot be carried out except in determined opposition to and struggle against the big bourgeoisie and its political representatives who occupy the leading position in the state. They resist and oppose the carrying out of radical and genuine agrarian reforms and embarked upon the path of reforming feudal and semi-feudal landlordism to serve their narrow class interests, of allying with them in order to buttress their class domination. They also are utilising their state power to protect foreign monopoly capital and facilitate its further penetration unhindered. Further, with their policies of compromise and collaboration with foreign monopolists and alliance with big Indian landlordism, they are vigorously pursuing the path of capitalist development which in turn is immensely facilitating the growth of monopoly capital in our country. Hence the people's democratic revolution is not only in irreconcilable opposition to feudal landlordism and foreign monopoly capitalism but together with them it is opposed to the big bourgeoisie which is leading the state and is pursuing the policies of compromise and collaboration with foreign finance capital and alliance with native landlordism.

99. Naturally, under these circumstances, the people's democratic revolution inevitably comes into clash with the state power of the big bourgeoisie of India. Such being the case the people's democratic front that is to be forged to achieve the revolution cannot be the old overall general national united front, as in the days of the first stage of our national liberation

struggle when the edge of the revolution was chiefly directed against the alien rule of British imperialism. The democratic agrarian stage of the revolution and the new correlation of class forces obtaining in this stage of development demand a new content for the democratic front to be forged.

100. The people's democratic front cannot successfully be built and the revolution cannot attain victory except under the leadership of the working class of India and its political party, the Communist Party of India (M). Historically no other class in modern society except the working class is destined to play this role and the entire experience of our time amply demonstrates this truth.

101. The core and the basis of the people's democratic front is the firm alliance of the working class and the peasantry. It is this alliance that constitutes the most important force in defending national independence, accomplishing far-reaching democratic transformation and ensuring all-round social progress. Further, it should be noted that the extent to which the different sections of the national bourgeoisie participate in carrying out the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks also depends to no small degree on the strength and stability of the workers' and peasants' alliance. In short the success or otherwise of building the broad people's democratic front to lead the revolution to victory hinges upon forging the unshakable worker-peasant alliance.

102. It is common knowledge that our peasantry is not a homogeneous mass, that capitalism has made decisive inroads in it and brought about definite classification among them. The different sections of the peasantry play different roles in the revolution. The agricultural labourers and poor peasants who constitute 70 per cent of the rural households and are subjected to ruthless exploitation by landlords, by their very class position in present day society, will be basic allies of the working class. The middle peasantry, too, are the victims of the depredations of usurious capital, of feudal and capitalist landlords in the countryside and of the capitalist market, and landlord domination

in rural life so affects their social position in innumerable ways as to make them reliable allies in the democratic front.

103. The rich peasants are another influential section among the peasantry. The Congress agrarian reforms have undoubtedly benefited certain sections of them and to some extent they have gained under the rule of the new post-independence regime. They aspire to join the ranks of capitalist landlords and by virtue of their engaging agricultural labour on hire for work in their farms, they entertain hostility to them. Nonetheless, heavy taxation, high prices for industrial goods and inflation constantly harass them so as to make their future uncertain. Subjected to the ravages of the market under the grip of the monopolist traders, both foreign and Indian, they come up often against the oppressive policies pursued by the bourgeois-landlord government. By and large, they can also, therefore, be brought into the democratic front and retained as allies in the people's democratic revolution.

104. The urban as well as other middle classes with inadequate salaries and other meagre incomes suffer heavily under the capitalist-landlord rule and its pursuit of the capitalist path of development by compromising with foreign monopoly capital and allying with landlordism. The ever-rising prices of food, clothing and other necessities of life, the high house-rents they are compelled to pay, the increasing cost of education for their children and the impact of daily-mounting direct and indirect taxes imposed by the state are hitting them hard. Unemployment is another scourge that constantly plagues them. This class can and will be an ally in the democratic front and every effort should be made to win them for the revolution.

105. The Indian bourgeoisie as a class, coming as it is from an underdeveloped and newly liberated country as ours, had its conflicts and contradictions with imperialism and also with the feudal and semi-feudal agrarian order. But the bigger and monopoly section, after attainment of independence, seeks to utilise its hold over the state power to resolve these conflicts and contradictions by compromise, pressure and bargain. In that process it is developing strong links with foreign monopolists

and sharing power with landlords. This section while not hesitating to utilise the aid of the socialist world to bargain with the imperialists on the one hand and build themselves up on the other is anti-people and anti-Communist in character and is firmly opposed to the people's democratic front and its revolutionary objectives.

106. The other broader sections of the national bourgeoisie which are either having no links altogether with foreign monopolists or having no durable links, which are not by themselves monopolistic and suffer at their hands in a number of ways, are objectively interested in the accomplishment of the principal tasks of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution. As the general crisis of the world capitalist system deepens, as the contradiction between foreign monopolists and them grows in all its intensity and as the big bourgeoisie using its economic power and leading position in the state attempts to solve its crisis at the expense of its weak class-brethren in the country, this stratum of the bourgeoisie will be compelled to come into opposition with the state power and can find a place in the people's democratic front. But it should be borne in mind that they are still sharing state power along with the big bourgeoisie and entertain high hopes of advancing further under the same regime. Notwithstanding its objectively progressive character, by virtue of its weak class position vis-a-vis Indian big monopolists and foreign imperialists, it is unstable and exhibits extreme vacillation between the imperialists and their Indian big bourgeois accomplices on the one hand and the people's democratic front on the other. Owing to its dual nature, its participation in the revolution depends on a number of concrete conditions, on changes in the correlation of class forces, on the sharpness of the contradictions between imperialism, feudalism and the people and on the depth of the contradictions between the bourgeois-landlord state led by the big bourgeoisie and the remaining sections of the national bourgeois class.

107. Every effort must be made to win them to the democratic front and by a diligent and concrete study of their problems no opportunity should be lost by the working class to

render them support in all their struggles against both the Indian monopolists and foreign imperialist competitors.

108. The working class and the Communist Party, while not for a moment losing sight of its basic aim of building the people's democratic front to achieve the people's democratic revolution and the fact that this has to inevitably come into clash with the present Indian state led by the big bourgeoisie, does take cognizance of the contradictions and conflicts that do exist between the Indian bourgeoisie, including the big bourgeoisie, and foreign imperialists. They express themselves on the issues of war and peace, on the economic and political relations with socialist countries, on the terms of aid from foreign monopolists, on the question of finding adequate markets for our exports, and on the question of foreign policy and defence of our national independence. In the background of the daily intensifying general crisis of world capitalism, the different contradictions obtaining in the national and international spheres are bound to get intensified. The Communist Party, while carefully studying this phenomenon, shall strive to utilise every such difference, fissure, conflict and contradiction with the foreign imperialists to isolate the imperialists and strengthen the people's struggle for democratic advance. Entertaining no illusions of any strategic unity or united front with the ruling Congress party, the working class will not hesitate to lend its unstinted support to the Government on all issues of world peace and anti-colonialism which are in the genuine interests of the nation, on all economic and political issues of conflict with imperialism, and on all issues which involve questions of strengthening our sovereignty and independent foreign policy.

109. Reactionary and counter-revolutionary trends in the country have found concrete manifestation in the programme of the Swatantra Party which is trying to unite all reactionary forces under its banner. Also it is forging links with communal parties like the Jan Sangh. These people carry on vicious attacks against the public sector and demand still greater concessions to monopolists both Indian and foreign. They are openly advocating an almost open door policy for penetration

of foreign capital, particularly from the USA while striving to sabotage trade with the socialist countries. They seek to sabotage all agrarian reforms. After the military conflict with China on the border dispute, they have been emboldened to demand military alliance with the USA. The Communist party will firmly combat the reactionary ideology and programme of the Swatantra Party.

110. Basing itself on all these factors, the Communist Party keeps before itself the task of uniting with all the patriotic forces of the nation, i.e., those who are interested in sweeping away all the remnants of pre-capitalist society; in carrying out the agrarian revolution in a thorough manner and in the interests of the peasantry; in eliminating all traces of foreign capital; and in removing all obstacles in the path of a radical reconstruction of India's economy, social life and culture.

111. The struggle to realise the aims of the people's democratic revolution through the revolutionary unity of all patriotic and democratic forces with the workers-peasant alliance as its core is a complicated and protracted one. It is to be waged in varying conditions in varying phases. Different classes, different strata within the same class, are bound to take different positions in these distinct phases of the development of the revolutionary movement. The complexities arising out of these shifts in the positions taken by different classes and strata in the same class underline the need and importance of developing the Communist Party functioning as the vanguard of the revolutionary working class and bringing into its fold the most sincere and self-sacrificing revolutionaries. Only such a party which constantly educates and re-educates its ranks in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism will be able to master all forms of action appropriate to the moment in accordance with changing correlation of class forces. Such a party alone would be able to lead the mass of the people through the various twists and turns that are bound to take place in the course of the revolutionary movement.

112. The Party will obviously have to work out various interim slogans in order to meet the requirements of a rapidly

changing political situation. Even while keeping before the people the task of dislodging the present ruling classes and establishing a new democratic state and government based on the firm alliance of the working class and peasantry, the party will utilise all the opportunities that present themselves of bringing into existence governments pledged to carry out a modest programme of giving immediate relief to the people. The formation of such governments will give great fillip to the revolutionary movement of the working people and thus help the process of building the democratic front. It, however, would not solve the economic and political problems of the nation in any fundamental manner. The party, therefore, will continue to educate the mass of the people on the need for replacing the present bourgeois-landlord state and government headed by the big bourgeoisie even while utilising all opportunities for forming such governments of a transitional character which give immediate relief to the people and thus strengthen the mass movement.

113. The Communist Party of India strives to achieve the establishment of people's democracy and socialist transformation through peaceful means. By developing a powerful mass revolutionary movement by combining parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms of struggle, the working class and its allies will try their utmost to overcome the resistance of the forces of reaction and to bring about these transformations through peaceful means.

However, it needs always to be borne in mind that the ruling classes never relinquish their power voluntarily. They seek to defy the will of the people and seek to reverse it by lawlessness and violence. It is, therefore, necessary for the revolutionary forces to be vigilant and so orientate their work that they can face up to all contingencies, to any twist and turn in the political life of the country.

IX. Building of the Communist Party

114. Vigorous struggles on the ideological front are essential to free the masses from the influence of bourgeois ideology,

heighten their political consciousness and draw them to the positions of scientific socialism. Anti-Communism, which is indicative of a deep ideological crisis in an extreme decline of bourgeois ideology constitutes the principal ideological weapon of the ruling class. With this weapon they try to carry out the ideological sabotage of the democratic movement, isolate the Communists from the rest of the democratic forces. Anti-Communism resorts to monstrous distortions of the Marxist doctrine and crude slanders against the socialist system, presents Communist policies and objective in a false light and carries on a witch-hunt against the democratic, peaceful forces and organisations. Anti-Communism is contrary to national interests as well as the interests of the democratic movement. The Communists expose and fight anti-Communism with the utmost energy.

Religious obscurantism, communalism and casteism as well as bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism are all exploited by the reactionary vested interests to disrupt and retard the growth of the democratic movement of our people. Hindi chauvinism has already raised its head and in resistance to it other linguistic groups are raising separatist demands. Both to them are harmful to the united working¹⁶ class and revolutionary movement and as such the Communist Party will fight against them.

Many bourgeois leaders including the leadership of the ruling party demagogically use socialist phraseology for deceiving the masses. While declaring for socialism, these bourgeois leaders actually try to keep the people away from the struggle for a genuine socialist path. They use socialist slogans as a cover for their attack on Marxist-Leninist theory and the Communist Party. The Communist Party explains to the masses that the measures of the Congress government are not in the least socialist, that there is not an iota of scientific socialism in the theories of bourgeois leaders.

For the unity and consolidation of the democratic forces in our country it is imperative to wage unrelenting ideological and political struggles against the disruptive anti-Communist position of the right-wing socialists and revisionists.

115. The establishment of a people's democratic government, the successful carrying out of these tasks, and the leadership of the working class in the people's democratic state will ensure that the Indian revolution will not stop at the democratic stage but will quickly pass over to the stage of effecting socialist transformation.

116. The Communist Party of India (M) places this programme before the people and sets forth the principle urgent tasks of the day in order that our people have a clear picture of the objective they are fighting for as of the course of a democratic national advance.

Our Party calls upon the toiling millions, the working class, the peasantry, the toiling intelligentsia, the middle classes as well as the national bourgeoisie interested in a truly democratic development and in creating a prosperous life to unite in a single people's democratic front for the fulfilment of these immediate tasks and for attainment of the objective.

117. Carrying forward the fighting traditions of our people, the Communist Party of India (M) combines patriotism with proletarian internationalism and in all its activities and struggles the Party is guided by the philosophy and principles of Marxism-Leninism which alone show to the toiling masses the correct way to the ending of exploitation of man by man, to their complete emancipation. The Party unites in its ranks the most advanced, the most active and most selfless sons and daughters of the working people and ceaselessly strives to develop them as staunch Marxist-Leninists and proletarian internationalists. The Party devotes all its energies and resources to the task of uniting all patriotic and democratic forces in the struggle for a democratic course of development—to the great task of building a mighty people's democratic front for the realisation of the programme.

118. Fighting thus for democratic advance of our country the Communist Party of India (M) takes its place in the worldwide struggle for national independence, democracy, socialism, and peace. Our Party firmly upholds the Statement

of representatives of 81 Marxist-Leninist Parties held in Moscow in November 1960, as also the earlier Declaration of 1957 which embody the revolutionary analysis of the present world situation. These two great Marxist-Leninist documents are an invaluable guide for all Communists, the working class and all progressive forces the world over. The Communist Party of India (M) upholds the revolutionary principles of these two documents and defends the purity of Marxism-Leninism, guarding itself against the danger of all revisionist and dogmatist deviations. The Party, while pledging to fight the menace of modern revisionism which has presently engulfed the world Communist movement and has become the main danger, simultaneously warns against dogmatic errors. Our Party strives for strengthening the unity of the international communist movement which alone is the reliable guarantee for transforming into a reality in each country and the world over the possibilities opened up by this new epoch

119. The principles of Marxism-Leninism and the leadership of the Communist Parties have already led more than one-third of humanity to socialism, to freedom, to real democracy, to universal happiness. With more than 90 Communist Parties and a total membership of over 43 million, the world Communist movement marches triumphantly to its goal as the noblest and the mightiest progressive movement of mankind in all history. The complete triumph of socialism in the world is inevitable.

120. The Communist Party of India is confident that the people of our country, led by the working class and its revolutionary vanguard, guided by the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, will achieve this programme. Our party is confident that our great country, India, too, will emerge as a victorious people's democracy and advance on the road to socialism.

Statement of Policy of CPI(M)

[Note : The Statement of Policy which is being printed here was adopted by the Communist Party of India at the All-India Party Conference in October 1951. It accompanied a programme for the Party which was also adopted by the same conference. The Statement of Policy was later endorsed by the Third Party Congress at Madurai.

The Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has reiterated this Statement of Policy.

But the Statement of Policy, based as it is on the old programme contains some formulations regarding the stage, strategy and class alliance of the Indian Revolution which have since been corrected by the Party in its new programme adopted at the Seventh Congress.

The old programme describing the stage of the revolution as anti-imperialist and anti-feudal had advocated a General United Front in which the big bourgeoisie was also to be a participant. The present Party programme, correctly characterising the present stage of the Indian revolution as the second—agrarian—stage of the revolution which is directed not only against the landlords and imperialists but also against the Indian big bourgeoisie, has laid down that the big bourgeoisie has no place in the People's Democratic Front.

It is necessary to keep this in mind while studying this Statement of Policy which essentially deals with the path of Indian revolution]

Our Objective

The experience of the last four years has taught the people of our country that the present Government and the present system cannot solve their main problems of life. It cannot give them land and bread, work and wages, peace and freedom. They are coming to realise the necessity of changing the present Government, which mainly serves the interests of feudal landlords and big monopoly financiers and the hidden power behind them all, the vested interests of British imperialism.

The Communist Party of India, therefore, has adopted a programme, in which it says that it “regards as quite mature the tasks of replacing the present anti-democratic and anti-people Government by a new Government of People’s Democracy ”

Who should form such a Government ? The programme says that it will be created “on the basis of a coalition of all democratic, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country.”

And this Government and the forces who form it, must be “capable of effectively guaranteeing the rights of the people, of giving land to the peasants gratis, of protecting our national industries against competition of foreign goods and of ensuring the industrialisation of the country, of securing a higher standard of living to the working class, of ridding the people of unemployment and thus placing the country on the wide road of progress, cultural advancement and independence.” Thus, the programme outlines the practical tasks which have to be carried out by the People’s Democratic Government

The immediate main objective being defined, the question then asked is, how is it to be achieved, with what methods, what forces ?

Our Past Policies

There are a large number of people who think that this Government can be replaced by a People’s Democratic Government by utilising the parliament ushered in by the new Constitution. Such feelings are encouraged and fed not only by

this Government and the vested interests but even by the rightwing socialists, who preach that the very fact of a strong opposition party on the parliamentary floor will shake the Government and make it topple down.

But hardly had the people started to believe in the efficacy of the new Constitution, which they thought was the outcome of their anti-imperialist struggles of the past, than even the fiction of the fundamental rights and guarantees is thrown out of that very Constitution and the freedom of person, the press, speech and assembly, which the masses wanted to use to shake up this anti-democratic Government, are subjected to the rule of the police baton and the bureaucrats. Even a liberal would now feel ashamed to maintain, let alone the Communist Party and other democrats and revolutionaries, that this Government and the classes that keep it in power will ever allow us to carry out a fundamental democratic transformation in the country by parliamentary methods alone. Hence, the road that will lead us to freedom and peace, land and bread, as outlined in the programme of the Party, has to be found elsewhere.

History, enlightened for us by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin places before us its vast experience arising out of struggles which have led nearly half of humanity to socialism, freedom and real democracy, at the head of which stands the Soviet Union and in which the great Chinese and People's Democracies join hands.

Thus, our main road is already charted out for us. Even then each country has to seek its own path also. What is the path for us ?

The communists in India have been working with the people for the last thirty years first as communist groups and later as a party. During these years, they built a mighty movement of the working class, fought their struggles and won their demands. They built a kisan movement and in vast areas, as for example in Telangana, led them out of landlessness to land and from forced labour to freedom. They have fought for the rights of the people, and in these struggles hundreds and thousands have been killed, hanged, imprisoned, tortured and ruined. Naturally,

while leading the working masses, many a time, at crucial points in our history, we were confronted with the question : which path to follow, what tactics would best secure the interests of the country and the people ?

We do not refer here to the path that we traversed all these years, except in recent times, so that we can be clear as to what the path would be henceforth to lead us to achieve the programme.

After the Second Party Congress, differences and controversies arose inside the Party about the path that the Indian revolutionary movement must adopt. For a time, it was advocated that the main weapon in our struggle would be the weapon of general strike of industrial workers followed by countrywide insurrection as in Russia. Later, on the basis of a wrong understanding of the lessons of the Chinese revolution, the thesis was put forward that since ours is a semi-colonial country like China, our revolution would develop in the same way as in China, with partisan war of the peasantry, as its main weapon.

Among comrades who at different periods accepted the correctness of the one or the other of these views, there were differences on the estimate of the situation in the country, on the degree of isolation of the present Government from the people and on many other vital issues. It was clear that these differences had to be resolved in order that the Party could lead the people to victory.

After long discussion, running for several months, the Party has now arrived at a new understanding of the correct path for attaining the freedom of the country and the happiness of the people, a path which we do not and cannot name as either Russian or Chinese. It should be, and is, one that conforms to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and that utilises the lessons given by all the struggles of history, especially the Russian and Chinese, the Russian because it was the first socialist revolution in the world carried out by the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party, of Lenin and Stalin in a capitalist and imperialist country ; and the Chinese because it was the first people's democratic revolution in a semi-colonial, dependent country, under the leadership of

the Communist Party, in which even the national bourgeoisie took part. At the same time, one has to remember that every country has its own peculiarities, natural and social, which cannot fail to govern its path to liberation

In what way then shall our path be different from the Chinese path ?

CHINA AND INDIA : SIMILARITY AND DIFFERENCE

Our Perspective

First, let us see whether we are the same as the Chinese. It is in the character of our revolution. The thing of primary importance for the life of our country, same as the Chinese, is agriculture and the peasant problem. We are essentially a colonial country, with a vast majority of our people living on agriculture. Most of our workers also are directly connected with the peasantry and interested in the problem of land.

Our real freedom today means taking the land from the feudal landlords and handing it over without payment to the peasant. This anti-feudal task, when fulfilled, alone will mean real liberation for our country because the main props of imperialist interests in our country, as they were in China, are the feudal. So, like the Chinese, we have to fight feudalism. Our revolution is anti-feudal, anti-imperialist.

That makes the struggles of the peasantry of prime importance. Drawing upon the fact that in China, the liberation war was fought mainly on the basis of the partisan struggles of the peasantry, during which the peasants took land from the feudal landlords, and in the process, created the liberation army, it was asserted that in India, too, the path will be the same, the path of partisan struggles of the peasantry would almost alone lead us to liberation.

The Central Committee finds that drawing upon the Chinese experience in this way and to come to such a conclusion would mean neglecting to look to other factors of the Chinese revolution

and also neglecting to look into our own specific conditions. For example :

We cannot fail to take note of the fact that when the Chinese Party began to lead the peasantry in the liberation struggle, it had already an army which it inherited from the split in the revolution of 1925.

We cannot fail to note that China had no unified and good communication system, which prevented the enemy from carrying out concentrated and swift attacks on the liberation forces. India is different in this respect from China in that it has a comparatively more unified, well-organised and far-flung system of communications.

India has a far bigger working class than China had during her march to freedom.

Further, we cannot fail to note the fact that the Chinese Red Army was surrounded and threatened with annihilation again and again until it reached Manchuria. There, with the industrial base in hand, and the great friendly Soviet Union in the rear, the Chinese liberation army, free from the possibility of any attack in the rear, rebuilt itself and launched the final offensive which led it to victory. The geographical situation in India in this respect is altogether different.

This does not mean that there is nothing in common between us and China excepting the stage of our revolution and its main tasks. On the contrary, like China, India is of vast expanse. Like China, India has a vast peasant population. Our revolution, therefore, will have many features in common with the Chinese revolution. But peasant struggles along the Chinese path alone cannot lead to victory in India.

Moreover, we must bear in mind that the Chinese Party stuck to the peasant partisan war alone, not out of a principle, but out of sheer necessity. In their long drawn struggles the Party and peasant bases got more and more separated from the towns and the working class therein, which prevented the Party and the liberation army from calling into action the working class in factories, shipping and transport to help it against the enemy.

Because it happened so with the Chinese, why make their necessity into a binding principle for us and fail to bring the working class into practical leadership and action in our liberation struggle ?

Such an outlook ignores the fact that we have a big working class and that it has a role to play, which can be decisive in our struggle for freedom. The grand alliance of the working class and the peasantry, acting in unison, the combination of workers' and peasants' struggles, under the leadership of the Communist Party, and utilising all lessons of history, for the conduct of the struggles, is to be the path for us.

It can thus be seen that while the previous line of reliance on the general strike in the cities neglected the role of the peasantry, subsequent one of partisan struggle minimised the role of the working class, which in practice meant depriving the peasantry of its greatest friend and leader. The working class remained leader only "in theory", only through the party, because the party is defined as the party of the working class.

Both the lines in practice meant ignoring the task of building the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, as the basis of the united national front, ignoring the task of building the united national front, ignoring the task of putting the working class at the head of this front in the liberation struggle.

This, it has to be realised, was a wrong approach. The leadership of the working class is not realised only through the party and its leadership of the peasant struggle but actually, in deeds, through the working class boldly championing the demands of the peasantry and coming to the assistance of that peasant struggles through its own action. The alliance must function in deed and fact and not only in theory. The working class is the friend in action, that must help the fighting peasants and must ensure victory over the common enemy.

The working class, relying on agricultural workers and poor peasants, in firm alliance with the peasantry, together with the whole people, leads, the battle in towns and rural areas to liberation, to land and bread, to work and peace.

The Central Committee wishes to convey to comrades this great lesson of history, a lesson which is neither only the Russian path nor the Chinese path, but a path of Leninism applied to Indian conditions.

Such an understanding of our perspective gives us a new outlook on how to build our mass movement, our trade unions, kisan sabhas and also a new way to build the Party.

The understanding will also show to comrades that the main question is not whether there is to be armed struggle or not, the main question is not whether to be non-violent or not. It is the reactionary ruling classes who resort to force and violence against the people and who pose for us the question whether our creed is violence or non-violence. Such a poser is a poser of Gandhian ideology, which in practice, misleads the masses and is a poser of which we must steer clear. Marxism and history have once for all decided the question for the Party and the people of every country in the world long ago. All action of the masses in defence of their interests to achieve their liberation is sacrosanct. History sanctions all that the people decide to do to clear the lumber-load of decadence and reaction in their path to progress and freedom.

This should also tell us that all our previous understandings have to be discarded as being one-sided and defective.

Combat Individual Terrorism

But one action history does not sanction and that is individual terrorism.

Individual terrorism is directed out by individuals of a class or system and is carried out by individuals or groups and squads. The individuals who act may be heroic and selfless and applauded or even invited by the people to act and the individuals against whom they act the most hated. Still such actions are not permissible in Marxism. And why? For the simple reason that therein the masses are not in action. Therein the belief is fostered that the heroes will do the job for the people. Therein, it fosters the belief that many more such actions will mean in sum total the annihilation of the classes or the system. Ultimately

it leads to passivity and inertia of the masses, stops their own action and development towards revolution and in the end results in defeat. Hence Marxism warns against individual terrorism and bans it.

Immediate Situation and Tasks

The question that now remains, and an important one, is, we have got the path and the perspective but what now ? The question of the immediate, while certainly influenced by the perspective, is not solely determined by it. It is also governed by the assessment, of the present situation. How far is the Government isolated, how far are the people disillusioned, how far are they ready to struggle, are some of the questions that determine tasks and slogans for them.

Some say that the Government is thoroughly discredited and isolated, the people are ready to rise in revolt and in places are clashing with the Government, which with the blatant rule of police firing, has already created conditions of civil war in the country. Hence, all our work must be guided by such an understanding of the situation. We do not think it necessary to argue the question in detail.

No doubt, the crisis of the Government is deep, but it is not yet thoroughly isolated. As the programme of the Party puts it, "the masses have lost faith in the present Government, they are becoming deeply distrustful of it and start to consider it their enemy, who is protecting the landlords, moneylenders and other exploiters against the people". Hence, "the masses are slowly rising in struggle, no longer able to withstand this state of slow starvation and death". But it would be a gross exaggeration, to say that the country is already on the eve of armed insurrection or revolution, or that civil war is already raging in the country. If we were to read the situation so wrongly, it would lead us into adventurism and giving slogans to the masses out of keeping with the degree of their understanding and consciousness and their preparedness and the Government's isolation. Such slogans would isolate us from the people and hand over the masses to reformist disruptors.

Equally wrong are they who see only the disunity of the popular forces, only the offensive of reaction and advocate a policy of retreat in the name of regrouping of forces, of eschewing all militant actions on the plea that this will invite repression. Tactics based on such an understanding of the situation will lead to betrayal of the masses and surrender before the enemy.

We have to lead the struggle of the people in the context of sober evaluation of the situation, while it should not lead us into adventurism, we must also not forget that the crisis is not being solved but is growing. Hence, we cannot take the leisurely attitude and behave as if no deep crisis is moving the people and furious struggles are not looming ahead. Because insurrection and civil war do not exist, some would like to move and work as if they are living in a democracy with rights and liberties and nothing need be done to protect the Party and the leadership of mass organisations from onslaughts of the law run mad. With such an outlook, we shall get smashed and will be able to build nothing

But because the crisis is growing, and even a simple food procession like the one in Cooch-Bihar leads to firing and brings thousands on the streets, some would like to do away with the daily humdrum of running mass organisations. Taking fascism to be inevitable or already in power, they would scoff at parliamentary elections or fighting for civil liberties for which broad sections of the people can and should be mobilised.

We have to realise that although the masses are getting fast radicalised and moving into action in many parts of the country the growth of the mass movement has not kept pace with the growth of discontent against the present Government and its policies and methods. To ascribe this to repression alone would be wrong. This weakness of the mass movement is due, above all, to the weakness of our Party and the division in the camp of progressive forces. The Party must strive to overcome this division and must stress the supreme need for unity of all progressive forces, build this unity in action and itself grow into a mass party by drawing into its fold the best elements from the fighting masses.

We must fight the parliamentary elections and elections in every sphere where the broad strata of the people can be mobilised and their interests defended. We must be where-ever the masses are and would like us to be.

Role of Working Class Unity and the Party

The Party has to build the unity of the working class and make it conscious of its tasks in relation to our entire people. The existing split in the working class movement which hampers the development of working class struggles must be overcome at all cost in the shortest possible time and united mass organisations of the working class built.

The class has also to be made politically conscious. Only a united and politically conscious working class can fulfil the role of the leadership of the people.

We have to rouse all sections of the peasantry including rich peasants, for the struggle for agrarian reforms and in the course of this struggle, rebuild the mass peasant organisations, basing ourselves firmly on the agricultural workers and poor peasants who together constitute the majority of our agrarian population.

It must be understood that because of the vast expanse of our country, because of the uneven development of the agrarian crisis and of the working class and peasant movement, and the uneven state organisation and consciousness of the peasant masses and the influence of the Party, the peasant movement will not develop at the same tempo everywhere and different forms of organisation and struggle will have to be adopted depending on the maturity of the crisis, the degree of unification of the peasant masses and their mood, the strength and influence of the Party and other factors,

All these tasks call for the most intense, patient and daily work among the masses, continuous agitation on our basic programme and immediate, simple demands of the people, a concrete working out of such demands for every section of the people according to general and local conditions, practical leadership of mass struggles, a combination of various forms of struggles, and systematic building up of a network of mass organisations.

Above all, it is necessary to build up through patient struggle a Communist Party equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, a Party mastering strategy and tactics, a Party practising self-criticism and strict discipline and which is closely linked with the masses.

The mass organisations and the Party that are built up must be able to withstand the fire of repression to which the Government continually subjects them and the people's movement.

Struggle for Peace

One of the key tasks that faces us in defence of the people is the building of the peace movement. The struggle for peace must become an integral part of our work in all mass organisations, on all platforms. We have to bring it to the active consciousness of the masses that the ruling classes, in order to preserve their power, will ever be ready to embroil us, the people, in a war, so that we may give up our war against them. We must bring to the consciousness of the people the immense danger of the outbreak of a third world war and the possibilities of averting that danger, if the people will it. We must bring into the consciousness of the people that while we support any move of any class or group including this Government for preserving peace, yet we must not forget that this Government under the influence of imperialist warmongers, landlords and profiteers follows, not a consistent and honest policy of peace but plays between America and England to gain from their rivalries and also plays between the peace-loving countries and warmongers. Such inconsistency must be overcome by the action of the masses. We must fight for a pact of peace between Pakistan, India and Ceylon for banning of the atom bomb and reduction of armaments and military budget. We must, above all, fight for the conclusion of a pact of peace between the five great powers. The peace movement must be made real to the masses in terms of their own problems of land and bread, work and wages and prosperity for all.

The peace movement must mobilise widest opposition to the colonial wars waged by British, French, Dutch and American

imperialists in South-East Asia and prevent all direct and indirect support to these imperialists given by the present Indian Government.

The programme that the Communist Party has placed before the people is a programme which conforms to the interests of all progressive forces and classes in the country, of all sections who desire India to be free, happy and strong. We shall therefore strive to unite our entire people for the realisation of this programme and build their unity in action on all issues facing them. We shall strive to develop the struggles of all sections of our people and merge them into the common movement for freedom, democracy and peace.

While carrying out these tasks, we must learn skilfully to combine the struggles of workers, peasants and other classes and sections in each province and district, and in the country as a whole. From all these struggles the heroic fighters that will come forth must be transformed into the makers and builders of the Party which then alone will become a real mass Party and yet a well-knit Party of tested and tried revolutionaries. With the perspective and path clear, and immediate tasks outlined we shall surely succeed in our liberation struggle against our feudal and imperialist enslavers and replace this anti-democratic Government by a Government of People's Democracy.

Work Report (Political) of The Central Committee of CPI(M) Adopted by the Ninth Congress Held In Madurai On June 27 - July 2, 1972

Organizational Position of the CPI(M) in Tables

The present report on the activities of the Central Committee deals only with the main political decisions on the important questions of the line followed by our Party. It does not propose to deal with all other activities.

The three and half years that have passed since the Eighth Congress of our Party have witnessed important changes in the political field leading to a change in the correlation of political forces. They have shown the manoeuvres and counter-manoevres of the ruling classes and their parties to retain their domination over the masses, their manoeuvres against the working class and our Party and their internal squabbles and conflicts which influenced the course of the democratic movement.

They have also witnessed the rising attacks of the ruling classes against the people and our Party leading to the martyrdom of 656 of our comrades in West Bengal and the rise of semi-fascist terror there.

The Central Committee of our Party, fully aware of the developing situation, took cognizance of these rapid moves and changes in the political situation and developed its political line and tactics to meet them.

The present report deals with its assessment of the developing situation and the tactical line pursued by it and the success or failure scored by our Party in pursuing them in accordance with the assessment made.

It also deals with the deviations and differences that arose in our ranks on the ideological attacks from outside made against our Party.

What are the most outstanding developments of the last three and a half years and how did our Central Committee assess them ?

These constitute the following : the rise and fall of U.F Governments led by our Party, the split in the ruling party, the disruption of Left unity, the victory of the Indira Congress in the parliamentary elections, the Indo-Pak war over the Bangladesh struggle and the victory of the Bangladesh people, the victory of the ruling party in the Assembly elections of 1972 and the falsification of the West Bengal Assembly elections, the rising role of terror in West Bengal before, during and after the elections.

These developments had to be assessed in the background of the deepening economic crisis and the rising wave of mass struggles and the resistance to the effects of the economic crisis.

The Eighth Congress of our Party stressed the fact that the economic crisis was deepening and the intervening years have witnessed unprecedented misery, starvation and unemployment in our country.

Simultaneously, as the Political Resolution of our Eighth Congress forecast, they witnessed an unprecedented mass activity in economic and political struggles in the recent period. Accompanying the usual spontaneous or organized economic struggles of all sections was the conscious political activity of lakhs of people led by our Party with its allies—political activity in repeated election battles in some States.

The 1971 Election Manifesto of our Party stressed the rising mass struggles in the following words :

“The misery, destitution and suffering caused by this monstrous device, this systematic and open robbery of the people, has evoked strong protests from all sections of the people.”

“No wonder then India has seen in the last few years great mass struggles of all sections of the people.”

“The fighting peasantry of our country has started its fight for land occupation and in Kerala, the agricultural workers showed exemplary heroism in meeting the police terror of the Achutha Menon Government.”

“The fighting peasantry of West Bengal, earlier helped by the U.F. Government led by our Party, succeeded in occupying land, and reaping crops on the basis of their organized strength.”

“In Rajasthan, Bihar, Maharashtra, Punjab—the mass of peasants waged heroic struggles for land and the Congress Governments tried to crush them in cold blood.”

“The heroic working class of our country, led by the fighting workers of West Bengal, waged prolonged battles in defence of their rights and demands and in the States ruled by the Indira Congress they were often met with lathis, jails and bullets.”

“The bank employees, school teachers, Central and State Government employees, university professors all had to fight for days against the monstrous policies, go to jail and brave lathi-charges.”

It is not possible to deal at length with the extent and intensity of these struggles. The rise in strike struggles gives an idea of what was happening on the industrial front.

But this also does not reveal the full story. These were the years in which in State after State the electorate was being repeatedly churned in the elections with the Congress facing sometimes a United Left front or mainly our Party. And the elections in West Bengal were fought in the midst of bombs, terror and murder.

All over India the class struggle was intensifying. And in West Bengal, it was often rising to unprecedented proportions.

It is in this background that we have to understand the C.C. guidance and practice.

I. The Mid-Term Elections and U.F. Governments

The Political Resolution of the Eighth Congress put in a nutshell, “The essence of the political history of our country during the last eighteen months since the Fourth General Elections is nothing but a nationwide class struggle between the reactionary forces headed by the Congress party and the democratic forces among whom the Communist Party of India (Marxist) stands in the forefront. The former has been striving

its utmost to resolve the economic-political crisis in its favour and against the people, while the latter has been engaged in advancing the democratic revolutionary movement in the background of the crisis of the ruling classes.”

The essence of this understanding remains in spite of several changes and it is on the basis of this understanding that the C.C. has been acting.

In the political field, this class struggle mainly centred round the formation, continuance and functioning of the U.F. Ministries led by us in West Bengal and in Kerala and sometimes round the question of restoration of Congress monopoly of power.

The mid-term elections of 1969 were a part of this struggle to prevent the re-election of the U.F. to Government in West Bengal and to restore the Congress monopoly of power in the States.

The U.F. won a smashing victory in West Bengal. In other States the various parties opposed to the Congress could not secure a majority, nor could they hold on to their former strength. The Congress also could not secure a complete majority.

The Central Committee viewed these results in the context of the class struggle and made a correct assessment which was valuable for the democratic movement.

How did the Central Committee understand the divergences in the results in West Bengal and other States ? How did it understand them in terms of the class struggle that was raging ?

After stressing the importance of the victory won in West Bengal, the Committee analyses the causes of reverses in other States and says :

“In Punjab, in U.P. and in Bihar, the democratic movement and mass organizations of the working people are at a low level. On top of it, some of the democratic parties like the SSP, PSP and the Right Communists entered into non-Congress Coalition Ministries with reactionary landlord-bourgeois parties, Jana Sangh and Swatantra. These reactionary parties were able to sabotage implementation of many progressive steps that had

been promised. The image of these non-Congress Ministries in U.P. and Bihar fell among the people and when the Congress was able to topple them, the masses could not be mobilised into widespread mass action, as was the case in West Bengal.

“The result has been that neither could democratic united fronts be forged nor the Congress, the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, the parties of the landlords and of the big bourgeoisie, be defeated

“If in these States, the Socialists and Communists have also been weakened, it is due largely to the opportunist policies pursued by parties like the SSP, PSP and Right Communists. Additionally in Punjab the Right Communists knowingly pursued a policy of helping the Congress—refusing to make adjustments with the non-Congress forces and setting up candidates indiscriminately in many places where they knew they had no chances of winning or even polling a sizable vote thus making a gift of a number of seats to the Congress.

“It is evident that the general mass of the people did not have confidence in these democratic parties and did not surge forward in support of them as in the case in West Bengal.” (P.B. Statement on Mid-Term Elections, February 13, 1969).

The Central Committee was warning that in spite of the rising mass discontent and struggles, opportunism on the part of Left and democratic parties would divert the discontent into wrong channels. The first signs were already visible in 1969 itself. The only force that could create confidence among the people was a broad democratic front which could be built only by a principled movement.

“The election results have once again demonstrated that a strong Communist movement, adhering strictly to the basic principles of Marxism-leninism and correctly applying them to the concrete situation, and by developing mass movements and organizations alone can guarantee the successful formation and continuation of a broad democratic united front : it was so in Kerala, and is so now in West Bengal where the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has been able to become the leading partner of the U.F.” (Ibid)

Regarding the victory in West Bengal as an episode in the class struggle, it considered that only a big mass movement could keep the United Front Ministry in being. The P B warned :

“The P.B. appeals to all democratic parties and forces, especially in West Bengal, not to become complacent. The Congress Government at the Centre will not take this defeat inflicted upon it lying down. They would start once again their conspiracies to hamstring the functioning of the U.F. Ministry through their bureaucracy, to rouse the masses against the U.F. Ministry by refusing them necessary food and financial resources as they are doing in Kerala even now. It is the development of the united mass movement throughout the country by the democratic forces that can defeat these conspiracies” (Ibid)

The Central Committee in its resolution on the elections noted that the rebuff to the democratic parties in other States was because of the opportunist lines pursued by them :

“The results of the mid-term elections have also revealed that the opportunist anti-Congress alliances and fronts forged by some democratic parties like the PSP, SSP and the Right Communists during the course of the 1967 General Election and following it, have ended in serious setbacks to the democratic movement, as evidenced in the States of U.P., Bihar and Punjab where the anti-Congress mass discontent was allowed to be freely exploited by several casteist, communalist and obscurantist parties and groups for their selfish ends. The bankruptcy of the opportunist political line, based on the worst parliamentary illusions and cheap electoral strategems, and divorced from leading the class and mass struggles of the people, is thoroughly exposed, and the urgency of the need for boldly organizing and leading united class and mass economic-political struggles of the people is sharply emphasised.” (C.C. Statement on Political Developments, April 16, 1969)

The Central Committee noted that the defeats suffered by the Congress, its failure to secure the monopoly of power in States, the rebuff given to the Jana Sangh had aggravated the political

crisis, intensifying the contradictions between the reactionary ruling classes on the one hand and the democratic classes and masses on the other.

Studying the concrete manoeuvres of the ruling classes, almost anticipating further developments, the Central Committee took note of the inner conflicts in the ruling party, warned against the policy-colouring being given to them and against the danger of reactionary alliances that were in the offing. Within a few months these alliances were to be a reality of the Indian political scene.

“Coming as they are in the wake of the deepening economic political crisis and the growing mass discontent and struggles against Congress policies, the different factions and groups in the Congress are feverishly attempting to give a policy-colouring to their inner-party conflicts, while in reality none of them squarely stand for the reversal of the pro-landlord, pro-big-bourgeois and pro-foreign-monopoly policies of the Congress party and for the adoption of alternative democratic policies. The new alliances and coalitions that are being advocated—either the Right reactionary alliance of the Congress, Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the like or the so-called democratic alliance of the Congress, PSP, SSP and the Right Communists—are conceived of only to defend the tottering Congress monopoly rule and to confront the challenge posed by the West Bengal and Kerala UFs, their State Governments and the genuine alternative democratic policies they pledge to fight for, and against the revolutionary role played by the CPI(M) in these two States. No amount of demagogy can hide this ugly truth, such is the class essence of these alternatives that are being bandied about by Congress factions to cheat the gullible.” (Ibid)

Here was the basic understanding of the post-mini-general election situation.

The rising discontent against Congress rule was being diverted because of the opportunist policies and alliances of a number of Left parties like the Right C.P., SSP, PSP, etc.

There was already the danger of a reactionary alliance of the Jana Sangh, etc., and a split of the Left force with a section allying with the Congress. The victory in West Bengal was scored because of mass struggles, of a united front with our Party in the forefront. It could be kept in existence only on the basis of continuing mass mobilisation and struggles.

The reverses of the Congress were leading to accentuation of the political crisis and inner struggles for new postures to control the masses.

The Struggle Round The Two U.F. Ministries

The formation of the two United Front Ministries in Kerala and West Bengal, in the midst of an unprecedented economic crisis and the loss of Congress monopoly of power in a number of States was a qualitatively new feature in the political situation. It was here that the real democratic challenge, the alternative force, was coming to the forefront—a force led by the proletarian party.

Howsoever anxious the ruling party was to regain its lost power in other States, it treated the two Ministries led by our Party with special hostility, for it realised that an alternative class line opposed to its class interests was being evolved here. It, therefore, used every means from slander, bribery, disruption, violation of parliamentary norms, to use of violence to topple the Ministries. It constantly directed its attention towards our allies in the U.F. to detach them from us, to take advantage of their fickleness, their fright of class struggle, their weakness for pure parliamentary wranglings, manoeuvres and counter-manoevres.

It was no surprise that the issue got concentrated round the question of “law and order” as the big bourgeoisie and their spokesmen put it. For, the bone of contention did become whether the United Front Ministries should use the law and order, the police, to suppress the common man to pass on the burdens of the crisis to him or refuse to repress him and help him to advance his economic gains at the expense of the exploiting classes, in the midst of an economic crisis. The

ruling party wanted to control the State precisely to suppress the people and saddle them with the burdens of the crisis. This was denied to them in the two States.

Our Party was trying to run these two United Front Ministries as “instruments of struggle” in the hands of the common people and it was precisely for this reason that the Congress was trying to topple them. The Central Committee had no illusion that the Ministries represented any real seats of power. These U.F. Governments were “to be treated and understood as instruments of struggle in the hands of our people” more than as Governments that actually possess real political power and “Our Party’s participation in such Governments as one specific form of class struggle to win more and more people in the struggle for People’s Democracy and Socialism.”

It was with this understanding that the Central Committee tried to run the Ministries and it was inevitable that they should confront with the ruling party.

At the same time, this could not be the understanding of our allies, many of whom expected a fully parliamentary run for their Ministries and were unwilling to offend the vested interests.

The Ministries in the two States became the focus of class struggle.

We need not go into the details of the achievements of our two Ministries here. There were many successes registered in giving relief to the people. There were many weaknesses also, some complacency towards the attacks of the Congress. But the outstanding fact is that the Ministries led by our party endeared themselves to large sections of the masses, were considered by them as their representatives and defenders of their interests and that they succeeded in rousing the masses to action, raising their consciousness and consolidating the rising mass discontent directed against Congress rule. The Party’s links with the masses were strengthened and consolidated. This was the biggest achievement.

As the line of restraining the use of police against the democratic struggles of the people, of the workers, peasants and other sections came into operation, as the Ministries

themselves began to give encouragement to the fighting people in their struggle, people's initiative began to be unleashed on a mass scale, and the ruling classes got frightened. The inevitable consequence of this, they knew, would be the rallying of people in other States round the Left forces, with initiative passing into our hands. The inevitable consequence would be the permanent loss of majority in these two States.

There was the unusual spectacle of the Chief Minister of Kerala refusing to carry out the detention orders of the Central Government against striking Central employees. There was the instance of the entire West Bengal Ministry closing all Government offices in solidarity with the workers of Cossipore who were fired upon by the Central authorities. There was the instance of the West Bengal Home Minister propagating and supporting the jute workers' strike.

This was new history being made.

The rising initiative of the people not only frightened the ruling party, it frightened some of our allies also. Essentially parliamentary in their outlook, and using talk of revolutionary action only as a demagogic appeal, the leaders of these parties also got unnerved in the face of the impending class struggle.

The ruling party lost no time in launching conspiracies to bring about the downfall of the Ministries.

The Overthrowing of Kerala and West Bengal U.F. Ministries

The first U.F. Ministry in West Bengal was toppled in November 1967 within nine months of its installation. The Kerala Ministry was toppled in October 1969, after 31 months of its existence. The second U.F. Ministry of West Bengal was dissolved after 12 months, in March 1970.

The Central Committee resolution of October 1969 on the fall of the Kerala Ministry not only pilloried the Congress but sharply nailed down the treachery of the Right Communist Party and some other parties.

"People in Kerala have been how the U.F. Government has been serving them within the limits set by the bourgeois landlord Constitution and the Central Congress regime. The

Government has been acting as the tribune of the common people voicing their demands on the Central Government and as their champion and protector as against the vested interests within the State. It was with this objective that the police administration was given a new orientation of non-interference in the struggles of the working people for their legitimate demands. While this invited the wrath of the vested interests as well as the Congress-Kerala Congress opposition on the U.F. Government it inspired the working people to organize themselves and struggle against their oppressors. The high watermark of this policy was reached when Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad refused to take action against the Central Government employees under the Central Ordinance. It was against this background that all sections of the working people including Government employees—above all and most important, the industrial, plantation and agricultural workers—launched struggles in order to secure their immediate demands. Combined as this was with a democratic labour policy and agrarian policy, it helped the working people to secure some of the immediate demands—25 per cent average increase in all wages ; Rs. four to six for agricultural labourers ; Rs. 18.5 crores. of additional annual benefits to Government employees and teachers. The Agrarian Bill reducing the land ceiling for a family to a maximum of 12 standard acres (20 ordinary acres), conferring the right to the homesteads on the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, conferring property rights on small tenants and reducing rent to one-fourth of the produce, has been passed and the peasants are on the move to enforce it. While there were undoubtedly weakness in the implementation of the policies and while the gains secured through these struggles were relatively modest, the very fact that such a policy was enunciated and to a very large extent implemented gave hope to the working people that much more could be achieved if the democratic unity of the working people was further strengthened and the bourgeois-landlord regime at the Centre is replaced by a democratic regime.” (*Right Communist Betrayal of Kerala U.F. and Government*, pages 21-22)

Stressing the necessity of anti-Congress democratic fronts and the role of the Right C.P., it stated, "The Communist Party of India (Marxist) which has been fighting for years for the forging of anti-Congress democratic fronts in States wherever such possibilities exist, is quite conscious that this political line was coming up not only against the furious opposition of the Congress party and reaction allied to it but was facing a determined resistance by the Right Communist Party.

"The unleashing of great mass struggles of workers, peasants and other oppressed middle classes in West Bengal and Kerala and their rapid radicalisation are alarming not only the monopolists and the landlords but also some of the U.F. constituents who have not yet shed their anti-Communist prejudices and anti-working-class proclivities. The revisionists who have particularly become panicky at the prospect of their complete isolation from the working people as a result of following their class-collaborationist political line join the anti-CPI(M) chorus of the extreme reaction in fighting for a so-called line of united front excluding the CPI(M). It is this that is at the back of their shameless alliance with the Congress and Kerala Congress to topple the United Front Ministry in Kerala, and behind their hectic attempts to repeat it in West Bengal."

The hopes raised in Congress circles by the fall of the Kerala Ministry, the hope that its slander campaign, the treachery of the united front allies and the deprivation of power will isolate our Party from the people, proved illusory. The 1970 Assembly elections in Kerala showed that our Party had advanced its roots among the masses who were supporting it in larger numbers. In the elections of 1965 and 1967 our Party could not secure more than 23 per cent of the votes polled. But in the 1970 elections, almost standing alone against the united anti-Communist opposition including the Right Communist Party we secured on our own 30 per cent of the votes. We and our allies could secure 30 lakh votes against just over 40 lakhs secured by the Congress and all its allies, the Right C.P., Muslim League, RSP, etc.

If the conspiracy against the Kerala Ministry, with the disruption of the united front of Left and democratic forces, did not succeed in isolating us from the masses, it succeeded still less in this objective in West Bengal.

True, in Kerala, the ruling Congress could now rule with the aid of the mini-front and later on directly join the Ministry and regain its freedom for suppressing the masses.

But in West Bengal it was denied this privilege also for some time.

The toppling of the first U.F. Ministry in November 1967 led to a prolonged and united struggle to dethrone the puppet Ministry of P.C. Ghosh and force a mid-term poll in 1969.

The united struggle which was supported by all the parties of the front led to complete consolidation of the votes of the U.F. parties. The Congress unable to resist the demand for another poll was routed in the mini-election with the U.F. securing 218 seats and the Congress only 55. The Congress vote however, did not fall very much. Our Party increased its seats from 44 to 83.

Superficially, nothing more was now required to push through popular advance. But the very outstanding victories of the people and the success of our Party as the biggest and leading party in the united front led to panic, squabbles and dissensions in the front. The class affiliations of these parties, their fear of the party nearest to the masses, of losing company with the ruling party—all combined to create disunity on the morrow of one of the biggest demonstrations of popular unity.

The wrangle over the post of the Chief Minister of Home Minister over distribution of portfolios started by the Bangla Congress was fully supported by the Right C.P. and some other opposition parties. Here was now an attempt to checkmate us from within the front, to wrest the initiative from us so that the Ministry could be paralysed before it could be thrown out.

Once again, the class struggle in West Bengal centred round the Ministry and its actions.

But not all the sabotage of the reformist and revisionist parties could prevent, for some time, the inexorable march of

events, the mass upsurge on the basis of the electoral victory which put key portfolios in the hands of our Party. In January 1970, the P.B. stated :

“The inspiring march of the awakened agricultural labourers, sharecroppers and the toiling peasantry, in their struggle for land and for a new life their disciplined conscious behaviour to overcome all the conflicts and fissiparous tendencies, sought to be fanned by jotdars and their supporters, their organization of a 100,000-strong corps of volunteers to defend themselves, their crops and homes against the raids of jotdars stand as a proud and glorious record of the West Bengal peasantry. The building of the million-member mass organization of the Kisan Sabha had inspired the toiling peasantry and the democratic forces throughout the country to follow in the footsteps of their West Bengal kisan brethren.

“This great victory of the toiling peasants has been preceded by the valiant and victorious struggles of the working class—the jute, the tea garden, the textile and the coalmine workers, the engineering workers and others, more than a million in number, who through their demonstrations, gheraos and strikes, frustrated the employers’ plans of disruption, lock-outs and closures and won annual increment of nearly Rs. 50 crores in emoluments, with the active support and assistance of the U.F. Ministry.” (P.B. Resolution on West Bengal, January 5, 1970)

This was the final danger signal for the disruptors.

They were already mouthing slanderous charges of murder and violence against our Party ; of manipulation through committees ; they were demanding dissolution of democratically elected committees ; they were the main circulators of all the slanders invented by the Congress.

The ministry was toppled in March 1970 after which unprecedented repression was let loose on the people. The partners in this crime were the Right C.P., the Bangla Congress and a number of other parties.

Once again the objective of isolating our Party through the break of the U.F. and then of attacking with widespread repression, totally failed. The radicalised mood of the masses

could understand the situation, gauge the extent of treachery of the Right C.P. and Bangla Congress and see through the Congress game. In the ensuing 1971 elections, it gave a thumping victory to our Party in the parliamentary election. We captured 20 seats, seven more than the Congress. We came out as the biggest single party in the legislature—115 from 83 in 1969—and doubled our vote. The Bangla Congress and some other parties were virtually exterminated, getting only a miserable number of seats. The representation of the Right C.P. shrivelled to only 13 from its earlier 30, the Congress gaining at the expense of all of them.

This was the reply of the working class, the peasant masses and the middle classes to the Congress conspiracies and the treachery of the leaders of some of the Left parties. The mass initiative displayed in strike struggles and peasant movements now asserted itself in the electoral battle. It should be remembered that it was precisely in this period of constant electoral battles and struggles and trials of the United Front Ministries that the masses not only developed huge direct actions but growingly rallied round class and mass organizations led by our Party. The rise and consolidation of the CITU as a powerful central organization, the strengthening of the Kisan Sabha with a million membership in West Bengal, the strengthening and consolidation of student, youth and women's organizations belong to this period and gave the requisite political direction to the mounting initiative and action of the masses.

The class struggle did not abate. It intensified. The crisis could not be solved in favour of the ruling classes.

The Significance of Election Results of Kerala and West Bengal

It is necessary at this stage to recapitulate the results of the 1971 elections both in Kerala and West Bengal. In the midst of a sweeping victory for the Indira Congress all over India, in West Bengal, the people voting in the midst of CRP terror, murders and arson gave a big victory to our Party and its allies.

In Kerala, our Party had to face a united front of all other parties in alliance with the Congress and we could secure 40 per cent of the total votes though we could get only a couple of seats.

This was the result of the dividends of our Party's line of conducting the Ministries as instruments of struggle in the hands of our people, of basing ministerial and legislative activity on the widening mass actions, of refusing to use the police to suppress the class struggle, of combining "administration and agitation", which the revisionists ridiculed and opposed, of using Ministries to solve the crisis in favour of the people. Can anyone describe this as opportunism creating faith in the Constitution, nurturing parliamentary illusions? The alliances and parties which nurtured parliamentary illusions, which sought to confine themselves within the parliamentary framework—all got disrupted, their strength shrivelled, they themselves becoming the sycophantic dependents of the ruling party, like the Right C.P.

The reason why our Party alone stood out in the States where we operated, why neither the radical pose of 1971 nor the Bangladesh advantage of 1972 could bring down its influence is because we looked upon the struggle round the Ministries as a part of the class struggle in India between the Congress and the advanced democratic forces led by us.

This was a revolutionary use of the electoral battle, of the repeated elections for mobilising the vast masses, for raising their consciousness of the legislative and ministerial forum for auxiliary use for the developing mass struggle—a vital step in the interest of tying the party with the masses. Not to have used it in this form would have become sectarian insanity.

The Naxalites, the Left-adventurists, ideologically supported by the documents of the Communist Party of China lodged the charges of opportunism against our Party for (1) participating in the elections instead of boycotting them, (2) for undertaking to form Ministries.

The repeated elections, failure to understand our precise objective in the parliamentary struggle and see its link with the

class struggle made some of our comrades sometimes question whether we were on the correct path.

The Left-adventurists ideologically supported from abroad confused the question of participation in the recent elections with the general question of a proletarian attitude towards bourgeois democracy.

Marx and Lenin taught all their lives that bourgeois democracy was a sham democracy and concealed the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. But they did not teach that it was, therefore, necessary for the proletariat not to participate in elections or parliament. The boycott as a principle is the opportunist amendment introduced by the modern Left-adventurists. In this also they are not original. The anarchists in Marx's days advocated the same tactics and Marx ridiculed them.

The question of participation in elections is decided by reference to the concrete situation—whether it attracts masses of the people, whether people have already chosen a higher form, whether election means diversion from the mass struggle or an auxiliary to it. No to participate under certain conditions means refusal to expose bourgeois democracy in the concrete, refusal to use an auxiliary form of struggle to help the main struggle forward.

The following from Lenin has great relevance to our situation :
“You say that parliament is an instrument with the aid of which the bourgeoisie deceive the masses. But this argument should be turned against you, and it does turn against your theses. How will you reveal the true character of parliament to the really backward masses, who are deceived by the bourgeoisie? How will you expose the various parliamentary manoeuvres, or the positions of the various parties, if you are not in parliament, if you remain outside parliament? If you are Marxists, you must admit that, in capitalist society, there is a close link between the relations of classes and the relations of parties. How, I repeat, will you show all this, if you are not members of parliament, and if you renounce parliamentary action? The history of the Russian Revolution has clearly

shown that the masses of the working class, the peasantry, and petty office employees could not have been convinced by any arguments, unless their own experience had convinced them.” (*On Left Deviation*, pages 5-6)

To have followed the Left-adventurists, to have given up the electoral battle as well as the use of Ministries would have meant surrendering an arena of struggle to the opportunists and the Congress and lose all opportunities of defeating the Congress in the two States, of advancing mass struggles and the Party’s base among the masses. The debacle of the Naxalites patronised by the CPC is there for all to see. Starting with “principle of boycott of legislatures,” mouthing war cries of armed agrarian struggle against “compradore bourgeois” puppet Government—they ended in a murder campaign against the proletarian party killing 206 of our Party members and supporters during this period.

Taking into consideration the existing consciousness, the Party used the forum of bourgeois elections to raise it. Under its guidance the electoral struggle did not remain confined to a placid battle for ballot ; the masses had to meet bullets and troops to assert their right to defeat the big bourgeois landlord combine. Six hundred and fiftysix Party members, cadres, leaders of mass organizations were murdered in the process of the great class struggle and thousands were uprooted from their homes. The truth about bourgeois democracy was being realised in the grim battle for election under police terror. The semi-fascist terror under the Congress regime in West Bengal and the repression in Kerala contrasted with the freedom from police repression under the U.F. rule.

But simultaneously there was another attack against us, from the Right C.P. and some other parties in the U.F. Charging us in the beginning with bossism, big-party dictatorship, the attack was developed into a full-fledged political one. All the opportunists picked up the political phrase supplied by the Right C.P.—the charge of sectarianism—of accusing us of advancing party interests at the cost of the movement, of using the Home portfolio in West Bengal for strengthening our Party, etc.

This was really the conflict between the Right-opportunist line of running the Ministries as ordinary bourgeois Ministers under the Constitution, without reliance on mass struggles, without a police policy of abjuring repression of the people, and our line. This was a conflict inside the U.F. between opportunist and revolutionary lines—the former being supported by the ruling party and the ruling classes, the opportunist way in which these parties wanted to function the Ministries in the States where they had a United Front Ministry without our participation as in Bihar, U.P., etc.

The Right Communists described the Ministries as transitional Governments to their long-cherished objective of “National Democratic Government”—a State and Government conceived under the dual hegemony of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Firmly committed through this outlook to the parliamentary path, and with a special allergy towards our Party, and looking upon the Congress as representative of the national (non-big) bourgeoisie, the Right C.P. politics, under the patronage of their leaders from abroad, was rapidly veering towards open collaboration with the Congress. They had done their best to prevent a U.F. with us in West Bengal in 1967. In Kerala, they were compelled to join us after their debacle in 1965.

Their opportunist line in essence amounted to a break-up of the Left unity, and formation of united front with the Congress and other parties against us. They have been acting as the fifth column of the Congress.

It is they who conspired in Kerala to slander us and bring down our Ministry and then formed an open alliance with the Congress to form a Ministry. In West Bengal they were all along behind Ajoy Mukherjee in his conspiracies against the first and second U.F. Ministries voicing all the slanders against us.

This was a class struggle inside the united front centering round policies. It was masked under charges of bossism, sectarianism, vilence, etc. The intensity of the struggle was determined by the intensity of the mass struggle outside, by the mass initiative developed after the electoral victory. This

frightened the vested interests and the leaders of most of the Left parties who were ideologically connected with them. They saw in the mass struggles only the rise of dangerous tendencies, anarchy, violence and above all, the advance of the CPI(M) at their expense. The charge of bossism, violence was made because both in Kerala and West Bengal we refused to curb the mass initiative and confine it within the constitutional framework. Opportunist leaders of almost all the Left parties combined against us because of this fear of the mass struggle and this was presented as our "isolation", our "sectarianism."

11. The Polit Bureau's statement of November 29, 1969, stated in relation to West Bengal

15 "Behind the thinly veiled excuse of law and order, and the charge of partisan use of police, stand the same vested interests, the class forces that wrecked the Kerala Ministry. As a matter of fact, for the first time since Independence, a beginning has been made to use the law and order machinery in defence of the interests of the people. The great gains of the working class, of the peasantry occupying land and harvesting paddy, stand as witness to the fact that the people are being protected. The clashes that take place in many places are often a part of the class conflicts and not inter-party clashes.

16 "Just when the popular forces are advancing and scoring new triumphs, the popular movement is showing an irresistible advance, the Dange revisionists, Bangla Congress and a number of other parties are raising the question of law and order to malign the U.F. and obstruct further victories. The Bangla Congress in its resolution had openly expressed its opposition to strikes, hartals and gheraos, withdrawal of cases arising out of popular and democratic movements. In fact, what it demands is a change in the police policy—it demands that the police be used to suppress the people. And the Right Communists support the Bangla Congress, instead of denouncing its anti-working class outlook." (P.B. Statement on Recent Political Developments, November 29, 1969)

And again in its resolution on West Bengal dated February 9, 1970, the P.B. stated :

"The Bangla Congress has joined the chorus, initiated by the Dangeites against our Party and particularly, attacking the Home Ministry, slavishly echoing the Congress cry of breakdown of law and order under Communist rule. Once again, what has panicked these parties is the accentuation of the class struggle, the great initiative of the West Bengal peasants fighting for the land under the illegal occupation of the landlords, and the mighty strike struggles of the workers which have compelled many a concession from the employees. Revealing its real class affiliations, the Bangla Congress demands suppression of gheraos and peasant struggles. It is the unmistakable voice of the jotdars that speaks through the virulent attack of the Bangla Congress on the United Front Government and our Party.

"The enemies of the U.F., the Congress, leaders and some parties in the U.F. are exploiting the so-called inter-party clashes to give a bad name to our Party, to the U.F. and the Home Ministry. Let it be clearly understood that these clashes are in the main not so much conflicts between our Party and other parties, but principally they are attacks of the jotdars and other vested interests on the peasants and the people. Some of the parties in the U.F. which have close links with these vested interests are using the goonda elements to attack the peasantry and our Party leading to and describing them as inter-party clashes." (C.C. Resolution on West Bengal, February 9, 1970)

It should be thus clear that the very success of the Party's line in rousing the masses frightened the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties and led to their defection. This is necessary to remember because under the impact of bourgeois propaganda, sometimes comrades ask whether it was because of our mistakes that almost all the important Left parties left us in Kerala and in West Bengal. It is the constant propaganda of these opportunists that the CPI(M) is responsible for the disruption and that it is isolated. The election results have shown who stands with the people and who lives on the refuse thrown by the ruling classes. And the facts regarding the way disruption was brought about, the demands made show that the break-up was deliberately organized after failure to emasculate the

militancy of the Ministry and its loyalty to the people, and ensure the liquidation of the mass movement.

It should be remembered that our Party went the farthest in making concessions to the other parties so far as they did not lead to compromise on principles. The distribution of portfolios in the Kerala Ministry was generous. In West Bengal, with the second U.F. Ministry, we agreed to have Ajoy Mukherjee as the Chief Minister. All complaints that were made, we agreed to discuss with them and set at rest. Neither in Kerala nor in West Bengal, the initiative for criticism of other parties in public came from us.

On the contrary, in Kerala, the Right C.P. with the help of the bourgeois Press circulated slanderous charges of corruption against us. They adopted the same line in West Bengal and echoed all the slanders circulated by the Bangla Congress. The Chief Minister went on a hunger-strike, denounced the Ministry as barbarous and finally betrayed by resigning.

Such is the truth regarding the break-up of the U.F. It was engineered in collaboration with the Congress and for fighting the developing class struggle and the increasing influence of our Party in Kerala and in West Bengal.

Is The Slogan of U.F. of Left and Democratic Forces Correct ?

Despite the break-up, our Party had been consistently advancing the slogan of a united front of Left and Democratic forces. Some comrades may ask : was it correct to have joined hands with the opportunist leaders in the U.F.? And why are we again giving the slogan today ?

The tactic of uniting all the democratic and Left forces against Congress rules are dictated by the course of the democratic movement. The democratic forces which are opposed to the Congress are represented by several parties, individuals and groups and unless the Party as the leading force is able to combine them growingly, no effective resistance to the Congress can be put up. The Party's own strength represents only a part, though the most important part of these forces.

The need for united front does not depend on the behaviour of the leaders of these parties. It arises from the necessity of uniting the masses, including the masses behind these parties. Hence, the constant appeal to these parties to give up their betraying role, an appeal which is in effect addressed to the masses commanded by these parties.

The Congress party on its part is constantly endeavouring to disunite the Left forces, undermine their unity so that no real challenge can emerge to its rule. It, therefore, endeavours to isolate our Party from the other sections of Left and democratic masses.

As the resolution before the Congress states :

“94. It will be realised that the central point in the tactics of the ruling party is to divide the Left and democratic forces and isolate our Party, to disrupt the democratic movement, and then to attack it. It was clear that the democratic movement would advance rapidly or slowly or get bogged down in so far as it was able or unable to counter this move of the ruling party and consistently work for the unity of the Left and democratic forces, which should be the only answer against the Indira Congress.

“95. It was because of this our Party was equally consistent in defending the U.F. and the unity of the Left and democratic forces in spite of all provocations from our erstwhile allies. It was the historic task assigned to us by the developing democratic movement, the correlation of class forces and the correlation of the various parties inside the classes. That is why our Party persistently tried to defend and work the United Front Governments without surrendering their role as the mobilisers of popular struggles and movement.”

The defection of some of the parties from the U.F. therefore does not mean it was incorrect to have formed a front with them. It does not mean that there is no need now of pursuing united front tactics. Nor does it mean that the leaders of these parties, these same parties, will not come back into the united front again. As the Political Resolution before the Party Congress puts it :

04 The collapse of these parties did not mean the collapse of the urge and need for democratic unity among the masses.

The need for the U.F. grows out of the very needs of the democratic struggle and the more the masses move into action the greater will be the pressure on all parties working among the masses to forge a joint front.

"This was strikingly demonstrated by the West Bengal developments. In 1971 many of the major Left parties had seceded from the front and there were intense clashes between them and the Left Front led by us. In 1972 the front was virtually restored under stress of the developing realities with greater feelings of solidarity and friendship than before in the ranks of all parties and with stronger sense for unity and common action."

"The struggle for Left and democratic unity must continue despite the fact that the leaders of some parties have deserted the common front and misled their ranks to break away from it. When unmasking the policies of these leaders the Party must seize the initiative for common action and constantly appeal to their ranks for joint struggle and unity."

Such is the line of our Party which is not based on the defection of reformist leaders but on the long-term needs of the movement as determined by the existing correlation of political forces.

It should be realised that despite the defection of Right CP and other leaders and the disruption of the U.F. (the U.F. and Militaries played a vital role during their existence in mobilising the masses and consolidating the anti-Congress discontent. The proof was given in the subsequent elections when despite the treachery of a number of our allies, large sections of the masses stood firmly against the Congress and behind our Party. The U.F. heightened the consciousness of the people and enabled our Party to emerge as the leader of the Left-oriented masses.)

Often doubts arise in the minds of our comrades because they fail to assess the role of a specific united front in the context of a given situation and argue as if it was meant to last in a

stages of political struggle. They argue as if such a front was a revolutionary front to achieve all the objectives of the revolution. And in terms of this formal objective they declare such a front to be opportunist.

This is an erroneous way of judging the efficiency of a united front. They must be judged in terms of their specific role, character and context and objectives and should not be confused with the People's Democratic Front.

As the C.C. Resolution on Present Political Situation of February 9, 1970 correctly summed up:

The united fronts that came to be formed either for the Fourth General Election or following it, such as in Kerala and West Bengal though they reflect a higher stage compared to the UFs of 1952-55 because of their class composition and political objectives are in no way to be confused and treated on a par with the People's Democratic Front of our concept. Their nature, class content or even as its embryonic form. They are essentially united fronts within the framework of parliamentary forms of struggle within the framework of the present bourgeois-landlord constitution. The actual correlation of forces both in the legislatures and among the people outside is such that these Fronts and Front Governments are unable to stand the pressure of the growing class struggle even at its present stage of development which by no means can be described as having a high revolutionary character. This is the basic political weakness behind the disunity and disruption of these fronts. (Appendix to the C.C. and P.B. Resolution and Statements from February 1969 to April 1971, pages 36-37)

Discussing the People's Democratic Front from such fronts for specific purposes, the report states:

"In this connection it requires to be remembered that the concept of unity of the democratic forces and the building of a united front is basically a revolutionary class concept of forging a front of different democratic classes and strata i.e. workers, peasants, middle classes and the bourgeois other than Big Business. Before a revolutionary People's Democratic Front materialises under the firm hegemony of the working class, the revolutionary working class party will have to go

through a painful process of forging united fronts and organizing united actions, of a very elementary form and on a very low key as was the case, for example, after 1952, when such fronts were formed and they went out of existence after exhausting their positive role in that particular stage of political development." (*Ibid*, p. 36)

The Party's tactic of uniting the Left and democratic forces, the tactic of unity with a number of vacillating parties for specific purposes is a part of the process of building the People's Democratic Front. They are the initial steps and must be judged by how far they achieve the immediate objective of uniting the people for a given purpose.

II. The Split in the Ruling Party

One of the outstanding events of the period we are discussing was the formal split inside the ruling party, the united Congress. Our Party took note of the split, made a certain valid distinction between the two Congresses and followed certain tactics in the context of the split. It openly announced its decision to prevent the Syndicate from seizing control of the administrative machine, frustrate its attempts at a parliamentary coup and supported V.V. Giri, the Indira wing's candidate in the presidential election in opposition to the Syndicate nominee, Sanjeeva Reddy.

Some comrades question the validity of the entire line, even the validity of our support to Giri.

In the first place, it should be remembered that Marxism imposes on us a duty to study the changes in the ruling classes and the ruling party, assess their inner differences which produce a direct impact on the class struggle they wage against the proletariat and the people. To miss these will mean refusal to respond to the manoeuvres of the ruling classes, the division among them, which often weakens them in their fight against the proletariat, if it is taken advantage of.

Besides, these differences do not arise out of a vacuum. They are the product of the rising class struggle and relate to the question of dealing with it. They are often the echo of the

practical activity of the proletariat, and the proletarian party is bound to assess and meet this response of the ruling class to the activities of its class.

Failure to take note of this leads to loss of tactical initiative and its surrender to the opposing class. The proletariat while pursuing its independent line therefore takes note of these differences, makes tactical adjustments so that the progress of its own line is accelerated.

The question therefore is, were these differences of sufficient importance to be taken not of by the Party ; were the tactics and concrete steps taken such as were needed to advance the cause of the democratic movement and the working class ; or did they create any illusions, lead to a slackening of our fight anywhere ?

The Central Committee wants to state that the tactics adopted by the Party, its basic understanding about the role of the two contending wings were correct and have saved the Party from the chaos and confusion, the collapse and ridicule to which other Left parties were exposed. This is not to say that there were no weaknesses in formulations and no mistakes made.

The Growing Disintegration of the Congress

From the beginning, since the 1967 general elections our Party has been focussing attention on the growing disintegration of the Congress and stressing that this is due to the growth of the mass struggle and the loss of Congress influence over the masses.

In its April 1969 Statement the C.C. warned, "coming as they are in the wake of the deepening economic crisis and the growing mass discontent.....the different factions and groups in the Congress are feverishly attempting to give a policy colouring to their inner-party conflicts, while in reality none of them squarely stand for the reversal of the pro-landlord, pro-big-bourgeois and pro-foreign-monopoly policies of the Congress party and the adoption of alternative democratic policies." Having laid bare the fact that both the factions represent the same pro-landlord, pro-monopolist interests, it warns against the two alliances in the offing—Congress, Swatantra, Jana

Sangh and Congress, PSP, SSP, Right C.P. as concerned only to defend the tottering Congress monopoly rule and confront the challenge posed by the West Bengal and Kerala UFs.

By July 1969, further developments had taken place and it was not sufficient to be content with describing the ultimate class role of the two developing combinations.

One group was openly coming out with proposals for direct attacks on the masses and demanding immediate dispersal of the Kerala and West Bengal Ministries and a ban on our Party.

“The rising tide of popular indignation, and the growing isolation of the Congress party, the main pillar of the capitalists and landlords, were leading to proposals for drastic counter-measures against the people, for further curbs on the democratic liberties, and above all, for a frontal assault on the United Front Ministries in Kerala and West Bengal and an attack on our Party.

“This in fact is the direct programme of the Syndicate clique, the aggressive advocates of monopolists in the Congress leadership. In the past few months, they have left nothing unsaid. Nijalingappa in his address to the AICC openly demanded action against our Party, he was supported by S. K. Patil and others ; Morarji Desai threatened action against the West Bengal U.F. Ministry ; the Congress President long ago gave the slogan of bringing down democratic Ministries especially the U.F. Ministries of Kerala and West Bengal. The opposition of this section to any control over the private sector has been openly voiced ; their blatant support to free entry of private foreign capital is equally well-known. Besides, they are strong advocates of a drastic pro-American shift in our foreign policy. They are thus the outspoken representatives of the monopolists for whom growing attacks on the liberties of the peoples is a direct and immediate necessity. These people are advocates of a unitary State, curtailment of the rights of States, suppression of democratic opposition parties. That is why the people cannot remain indifferent to the attempts of this group to get exclusive hold of the administrative machinery.” (C.C. Statement on Immediate Political Situation, July 15-20, 1969).

It should be remembered that at this time Nijalingappa led a demonstration in Karnataka whose slogan was "Hang EMS."

The Syndicate-Jana Sangh alliance was coming out with a blatant attack against our Party. In fact, it was recommending itself to the vested interests. On this count, was it not correct to have denounced this combination and demanded its defeat? Not to do so would have been an act of treachery.

If some comrades today choose to forget all this, do not wish to remember that open slogans, for the suppression of our Party and Ministries were part of the immediate programme of this combination, and criticise the Party, what can we do about them? They also wish to forget that the Jana Sangh has got behind it a ready-made fascist-type organization, the RSS, steeped and nurtured in anti-Communism.

The Central Committee statement at the same time said.

"Neither entertaining any undue illusions about the group led by Indira Gandhi nor placing any reliance on it, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is vitally interested in inflicting a defeat on the Syndicate which represents the aggressive, outspoken and organized wing of the extreme reaction in the ruling party, which is also deriving whole-hearted support from the avowedly counter-revolutionary forces represented by the Swatantra Party and the Jana Sangh." (*Ibid*)

It therefore called for support to Giri in the presidential elections and for the defeat of the nominee of the reactionary combination.

"It is in the interest of the democratic forces that they combine at every stage to foil the attempts of extreme reaction to secure strategic positions. It is necessary in this background that the official Congress nominee for Presidentship be defeated so that the clique is weakened. It is of advantage to the masses and the further progress of people's movement that the offensive of the extreme big monopoly is opposed at each stage so that the nefarious game of launching attacks on the U.F. Ministries

and on the people, by taking charge of the Central Government is foiled.” (*Ibid*)

Any other tactics including the tactics of neutrality would have meant handing over the keys of power, to those whose first attack was to be on the U.F. Ministries and the Party, apart from its all-round programme for strengthening its reaction, which includes the shift towards American imperialism. It would have discredited the Party, regarded by the people as an act of betrayal and an act of treachery towards the Party.

Comrades often forget that the Syndicate-Jana Sangh alliance openly carried favour with the American imperialists, demanded a shift in foreign policy towards imperialism and anti-Communism. Have they forgotten that Balraj Madhok described the Seventh Fleet’s entry into the Bay of Bengal as just an ordinary voyage and nothing more ?

The Central Committee again emphasised in its resolution that the Syndicate-Jana Sangh alliance was reactionary one directly proposing to unleash an offensive against the democratic forces—an alliance of all the reactionary forces.

It took note of the fact that the Indira Gandhi Congress was opposed to the line of alliance because “such a course would result in the alienation of the sympathy and support of the Muslim minority and other oppressed sections like the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, besides tarnishing the image of the Congress before the people.....”

It further made the significant comment that both groups were thinking in terms of the strategy for the next general elections, which were due in a couple of years. And it again warned against overestimation of the character of the conflict.

“One or two measures such as bank nationalisation and the opposition to ally with the Swatantra-Jana Sangh alone will not transform the political physiognomy of the present Congress Government led by the big bourgeoisie into one of a democratic Government led by the non-big bourgeoisie. Nothing can be politically more naive and opportunist than to exaggerate the initial differences that have just cropped up among the central

Congress leaders and characterise them as a decisive division between the pro-monopolists and progressive non-monopolists.” (P.B. Statement on Giri’s Victory, August 22, 1969)

Again in its resolution of January 5, 1970, the P.B. stated :
“.....It is also true that it has expressed its opposition to the proposal of the Syndicate for a shift of the internal and external policies of the Government to further Right. Similarly, the resolutions of the Bombay Congress aim at alleviating the apprehensions of the middle and small industrialists in the urban areas as well as the capitalist farmers in the rural side by promising them certain concessions, of course, without seriously prejudicing the interests of Big Business. But the economic policies enunciated in the final resolutions go to clearly show that they offer nothing fundamentally new and radical than what the Congress Government was pursuing so far.” (P.B. Statement on Current Political Developments, January 5, 1970)

These extracts should show what distinction was made between the two wings and two alliances. It was a valid and realistic distinction. First, the revisionist understanding that it was conflict between the monopolists and non-monopolists (or national bourgeoisie) was rejected.

Simultaneously, the Left-sectarian understanding that it was a meaningless difference, which really gave an alibi to the reactionary alliance to exploit the discontent and conspire against the people was rejected.

The urgency to fight the danger of take-over by the reactionary combination pledged to attack our Party and the movement was recognised, Giri was supported, and the line was taken to frustrate all attempts of this alliance to steal into power and to support any genuine measures taken by the Government to beat down its offensive.

But no reliance was placed on the Indira wing and its policy. It was realised that this wing also represented the interests of the monopolists, though opposed to the alliance.

Therefore democratic forces were asked to strengthen the alliance of the Left and democratic forces, an alliance independent of both. It was further stated that while fighting the advance of the reactionary alliance, the democratic forces must continue to fight the anti-people policies of the Indira Congress, especially its tactics of disrupting the unity of the democratic forces.

From the beginning it was stated that in the name of fighting the reactionary alliance, Indira Gandhi and her allies were bent on disrupting the unity of the democratic forces and building a front directed against our Party also.

But for this realistic policy based on a correct appreciation of the forces involved, the Party's plight would have been miserable and its bases in the two States also might have been corroded. The fact that large sections of the masses in Kerala and West Bengal failed to be cheated by the Indira spell, by her radical pose, is because we correctly placed both the reactionary alliance as well as the Indira alliance and put our alternative before the people.

The ridicule to which parties like the Right C.P. or the SSP have been exposed in the recent quick-changing days is the result of their un-Marxist approach to the question of the inner conflicts in the Congress. The Right C.P. overestimated the character of the conflict, trailed behind Indira Gandhi, became an appendage of the ruling Congress and is living on its charity, taking a prominent hand to disorganize the democratic forces. It gave up an independent line and virtually merged with the ruling party in the name of fighting reaction.

The SSP, divorced from class outlook, unable to apply a Marxist approach towards the split, saw in it only an opportunity to beat down the Indira Congress in the parliamentary arena, fell victim to crude anti-Congressism and fell behind the ordinary masses in judging the dangerous character of the grand alliance. The people taught it an unforgettable lesson, shattering the party to pieces.

Both in Kerala and West Bengal, where we have our strong bases, we withstood the radical pose of the Congress, increased

our influence fighting both. It would not have been possible for us to secure twenty parliamentary seats in West Bengal in 1971, 115 seats in the Assembly, if the advanced and conscious electorate of West Bengal had thought that we had shown indifference towards the struggle against the reactionary alliance or if we had been found guilty of a soft attitude towards it in the name of fighting the Indira Congress. The one or two instances of deviations in Kerala elections raised questions from many.

Mistakes and Weaknesses

While there is no doubt that the Party line and tactics on this vital question have been correct, this does not mean that there have been no weaknesses or that everything that the C.C. did was without a blemish or fault.

Some comrades have criticised the P.B. and the C.C. for failing to see the changing situation and arguing as if the danger from the reactionary forces was as serious as in the beginning. They say that the P.B. and C.C. failed to see the growing weakness of the grand alliance that was in evidence within a few months of the presidential election and continued to argue till July 1970 as if the challenge was as severe as before. The February 1970 Statement and Report of the C.C. which contain a detailed exposition of the split and our tactics based itself on this understanding.

The Central Committee thinks that this criticism is correct and based on objective facts. Having listened to this criticism from the Central Committee members, the P.B. submitted a statement to the Committee at its Bangalore session in August 1971. After stressing that our line has been correct, the Statement says :

“Comrades, however, have while accepting the line as generally correct, said that we continued to exaggerate the danger from the Syndicate even when it had passed. They have further said that we overestimated the strength of the Syndicate and some have alleged that it led to the weakening of our struggle against the Indira Congress.

“A study of the various resolutions passed by the P.B. and the C.C. will reveal that there is sufficient warning against the Indira Congress and people are repeatedly told that the Indira Congress does not represent the non-big-bourgeoisie. But taking the various passages quoted by some of the comrades into consideration, the P.B. also thinks that while stressing the danger of the Syndicate....., formulations have been made which tend to depict the danger in such a way as to lead to one-sided conclusions. 575 1 511

“The P.B. also thinks that we should have noted the change in the situation following the Bombay and Ahmedabad sessions of the two wings of the Congress and correspondingly changed our emphasis. After the Bombay and Ahmedabad sessions it was becoming clear that the danger was somewhat receding and that Indira Gandhi was exploiting it as a stick to advance her own party interests. Not that the danger had completely disappeared and we should have ignored the Syndicate. Naturally, in this background, there has been an overestimation of the strength of the Syndicate and some corresponding formulations.”

“The P.B. therefore thinks that while our line has been basically correct, there has been some overestimation and exaggeration of the strength of the Syndicate while we are carrying on our fight against it.

“However by July 1970, nearly eight months before election, our resolution directed the Party to concentrate its fire against the Indira Congress while not ignoring the danger from the Syndicate and in the Election Manifesto, we warned against both the combinations.” (On the Indicate and Syndicate Congresses, August 29, 1971)

It is thus clear that the central leadership was slow in realising that the danger of a Rightist coup had ceased to be real. While it was perfectly correct for us to have supported Giri in the presidential elections and the Government on the bank nationalisation and Morarji Desai ouster issue and on the

question of non-confidence around the Rabat issue, since the danger of a Rightist parliamentary coup appeared to be real on these occasions, the situation had changed since then. The Indira Gandhi wing, meanwhile, had consolidated itself. The series of developments which culminated in the formation of the two Congresses, the mobilisation round the ruling Congress of the bulk of landlords and monopolists, the rout of the Syndicate, etc., in the by-elections underlined the fact that the Rightist danger had receded to a great extent.

Apart from the failures there were some failures in practice also. The leadership of our parliamentary group, for instance, did not always take a position warranted by our line. A forthright stand opposing the Government was not taken sometimes out of a mistaken exaggeration of the danger from the Right.

Again, our Party unit in Kerala on one or two occasions adopted tactics which helped our enemies to bracket us with the opportunist line of the SSP, a line of alliance with the Syndicate—for instance, our tactics on the issue of a no confidence motion against the Mini-Front Government in March 1970, and again, on the limited understanding in a few seats at the time of the mid-term elections of September 1970.

III. The Elections

The sweeping victory of the ruling Congress in the parliamentary elections was another outstanding event of the recent period. How is this victory to be explained in the context of the increased misery since 1968 under the impact of the economic crisis? Why this return of faith in the Congress—this collapse of the Left and democratic forces in all the States except where we are strong? What line did the C.C. adopt in the election?

The Election Manifesto of the Party stated referring to the Syndicate grand alliance and the Indira Gandhi Congress.

“It is these two combinations equally hostile to the masses, equally determined to maintain the rule of the monopolists and the landlords that are claiming the votes in the present election. Our Party...denounces both combinations as reactionary

instruments of the rule of the capitalists and the landlords in the country.

“Our Party calls upon the electors to cast their votes against both these combinations because both are the enemies of the people.

“Our Party calls upon the people to cast their votes for all those who like our Party stand against both these combinations and are determined to save the democratic movement against onslaughts from both these sides.”

In the resolution, The Electoral Strategy of the Party the C.C. stated :

“Some comrades raised objections to the election strategy suggested by the Polit Bureau—that the Indicate combine joined by the Right Communists and the PSP, DMK, etc., on the one hand and the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine joined by the SSP are confronting each other in the general elections. We consider both to be reactionary combines, out to perpetuate the rule of Big Business and the landlords and mount offensives on the toiling masses of India. Our Party will have no alliance or adjustment with either of the combinations or their constituent parties.

“We tried our best to preserve and develop united democratic fronts of all democratic parties, groups and individuals against the bourgeois-landlord rule of the Congress comprising the CPI (Marxist), Right Communists, SSP, PSP, RSP, FB, and other “Socialist” groups, DMK, Bangla Congress and other breakaway parties, against the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi and the Congress (O), Swatantra, Jana Sangh.

“In spite of our best efforts, today these democratic united fronts have been betrayed with the growing class struggles of the masses by these parties, preventing an electoral confrontation taking place.”

What did the elections reveal ?

The Indira Congress has won a big victory, securing more than two-thirds of the total number of seats in the House of the

People, thus restoring it to the position it occupied in the first three general elections and rescuing it from the precarious position it was occupying following the split.

The parties of extreme Right reaction were virtually routed at the polls ; the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and the Swatantra which altogether commanded a strength of 135 seats in the dissolved House are now drastically cut down to a bare 46.

The results demonstrated that there was a serious set-back to the parties of the Left and democratic opposition. If the Right C.P., PSP, SSP and RSP had a combined strength of 62 in the dissolved Lok Sabha, it is now reduced to 32 in the present House, and the percentage of votes these parties have secured now is reduced to eight from 14 which they mustered in the 1967 elections. Not merely that. The fact to be noted is that out of the 32 total number of seats secured by these parties, 24 of them were got by the Right C.P. in alliance with the ruling Congress party.

The CPI(M) alone emerged unscathed. Despite tremendous odds against which it had to fight, it came out as the largest opposition group in the Lok Sabha, increasing its strength from 19 to 25. It alone had the political stamina and moral courage to stand up and fight against both the Syndicate and Indicate alliances, denouncing them as alliances led by the bourgeois-landlord classes. It alone succeeded in emerging as a viable alternative before the people of West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura.

How is it that a party which was responsible for the misery of the masses should secure such a thumping victory in the midst of the economic crisis ? This should be really explained by those who did not want the Party to notice the Congress split and carry on as nothing had happened, as if the split and the inner-conflicts of the ruling party did not have any effect on the people. The C.C. had already warned that the confrontation between the two wings, their respective claims and programmes and posture were also a preparation for the Fifth General Elections. It had already warned that these were two tactics of the same class in its dealing with the masses—each claiming

that it will be more successful than the other.

The Indira Congress could secure this unprecedented^d excepting in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura following reasons :

1. Because of the weakness of our Party and the democratic movement, the main confrontation in the election, as was shown in our Election Manifesto, was between the two bourgeois combinations.

2. Because of the planned disruption of Left and democratic unity by the Indira Congress with the aid of the Right C.P., there was no united front of Left forces as a viable force to confront the other two combines. The SSP helped in this process by joining with the Syndicate grand alliance. In the overwhelming majority of seats, the democratic masses had to choose between Indira Gandhi and the grand alliance.

3. Indira Gandhi succeeded in presenting the grand alliance as the danger, concentrating on its crude reactionary platform. She succeeded in exposing the communal and casteist outlook of the Jana Sangh and winning over a big part of the electorate. Besides, by taking such measures as nationalisation of banks, privy purses and exploiting the opposition to these of the alliances, she succeeded in burnishing the Congress image before the people. She succeeded in diverting the attention from the basic policy issues which were the cause of people's misery and made it appear as if the real fight was between her programme and the alliance programme. In all those States she had not to face the platform and programme of our Party or of the united front, both the Party and the democratic movement being weak.

It should be remembered that in her campaign for votes Indira Gandhi cleverly appealed to the casteist sentiments of backward communities through her promises of concessions to them in order to disrupt the class unity of the working class in many States.

4. And lastly, the Party and the democratic movement in these States were extremely weak. It was further weakened by the crossing over of the Left parties to the two alliances

... even a common focal point for the expression of ... unity. In 1967, even in these States, there was some kind of an ... which at least ensured substantial voting.

“In the absence of such a united front our Party in the weaker areas suffered reverses. In Tamil Nadu, especially, opposing both the reactionary combinations, our Party failed to secure a single seat either in Parliament or the Assembly. The fight appeared to be only between the Syndicate and the Indira-DMK combination with the result that polarisation took place on this basis and we lost in our constituencies.” (P.B. Statement on Lok Sabha Election Results, March 18, 1971)

It is clear that during the last four years in these States, our Party's activity among the masses has been inadequate, considering the needs of the situation and too often overlaid with economism.

“The four seats from Tamil Nadu were won with the support of the DMK ; we on our own could not have won them in 1967. The Varanasi seat was won with the support of the U.F. with Left parties. In Kerala, too, we won nine seats and other partners of U.F. nine more seats, and Congress could get only one seat in 1967.

“The question was, was any change brought about in this situation ? Did we succeed in changing the correlation of forces even slightly in favour of us ? Do the election results in these States show some change in our favour ? We may not get the seats. But have we improved our standing with the electorate ? Unfortunately, we have to answer no to all these questions. Instead of improving, there is a sad and tragic deterioration in these States.

“The reason is mainly insufficient mass activity or hardly any mass activity in some States ; at best mass activity on an economic plane which does not change political consciousness or affect political loyalties. Besides, there is hardened economism which despite repeated criticism continues to operate on the basis of daily demands only, underestimating the political consciousness of our own followers or sequestering them from the other sections of the masses. There is a tendency to tail

behind local parties of the vested interests in the name of fighting the Congress ; and in all the weak States, a failure to seek new avenues of united fronts for mass activity despite opposition from the other parties.” (Election Review, May 20, 1971)

The political resolution of the Eighth Congress had already noted the fact that the anti-Congress discontent when exploited by opportunist parties gets distorted and the mass political enthusiasm for the removal of the hated Congress Government dissipated. Now when the Congress itself could successfully pose as a radical force in the absence of a strong Left and democratic movement and in confrontation with this reactionary alliance, it was no wonder that it should rally the electorate behind it.

The situation was qualitatively different in the three States of Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura where our Party was the leading force in the Left and democratic combination and a powerful democratic movement confronted the Congress as a viable alternative.

Kerala Results

The figures of the Kerala elections show that despite the general swing towards the ruling Congress party in several other States, our Party continues to have the loyalty of as big as 41 per cent of the electorate, even though all the other parties have combined and fought against us.

The significant point in the March 1971 general election results is that our Party has shown its steady advance, compared to the Septemehr 1970 mid-term poll. In 1970, our Party and Party's Independents secured 30 per cent of the votes while our Front secured 40 per cent of the total votes. It was even then clear that a greater part of the vote secured by our allies was the vote of our Party's following. This fact has been proved in the present election. Despite defection of the SSP, ISP and others, our Party's vote alone, along with some of our close Independents, is now 41 per cent.

It is true that only two of our Party candidates and one Independent supported by us have won, losing the rest 16 seats to different parties. But the winning of more seats by our opponents does not obliterate the immense political significance of our Party's independent voting strength.

Notwithstanding the loss of seats, the Kerala achievement, once again by securing 40 per cent of the total votes and that too exclusively by ourselves and Independents supported by us is one of which our all-India and Kerala Party must be justly proud. Our Party in Kerala withstood the combination of all parties against us and was successful in retaining and extending our mass base against the blandishments as well as promises of the Indira Congress. Naturally, this success is directly connected with the big mass struggles we conducted in this period. The strikes of industrial workers, the prolonged strike of coir workers, the protest strikes, the agricultural workers' struggles, the students' agitation, and finally, the strike of State employees including teachers and others put our Party in the forefront of the mass movements and helped us to fight the illusions which the governmental parties wanted to create.

The measure of our strength in Kerala can be gauged from the fact that in West Bengal where we have secured our biggest victories, we have not yet secured 41 per cent of the total votes cast. It reflects the fact that the down-trodden classes are increasingly rallying around our Party—the same classes that are destined to go on fighting till the present system is ended. The Kerala election review stated, "Further, the masses of the voters who are today behind the CPI(M) and the democratic front headed by it, come from the agricultural labour, the rural poor, the workers, and urban poor, far more steeled in class battles and far more conscious than at any earlier period."

West Bengal Results

Our Party in West Bengal scored the biggest triumph in the Parliamentary and the Assembly elections.

Out of the 40 parliamentary seats, we captured 20 seats with the Congress getting 13, the Right C.P. with the support of the

Congress getting three, the PSP, the RSP, the Bangla Congress and the Muslim League getting one seat each. In 1967, we could get only five seats.

The Congress with all the advantages of division of democratic votes and Indira's image could secure only 105 Assembly seats as against 127 in 1967. Because of this division it won about 60 seats ; the Right Communists and its Eight-party Combination alone were responsible for this victory of the Congress and for the defeat of the CPI(M) candidates in 40 seats.

The Right Communists got 13 seats, four of them with direct Congress support.

In 1967, when the anti-Congress democratic forces were divided into two UFs our Party got 44 seats. In 1969, when there was only one U.F. opposing the Congress, our Party got 83 seats ; in 1971, when the revisionists and reformists split the U.F., and clandestinely joined hands with the Congress to defeat us, we got 115 seats on our own, and 125 for our alliance, and came out as the largest single party.

We polled absolute majority in 61 constituencies ; 40.1 per cent and more in about 125 and in 20 constituencies 25 per cent and more.

Our vote increased from 18 per cent in 1967 to nearly 35 per cent in 1971.

Such has been the spectacular march of the success of our Party in the last four years.

But these figures do not reveal half as much as the real story of success, sufferings and class battle behind the electoral victory.

The West Bengal election this time was no ordinary election. Months before the soil was being prepared for it by organized murders of our people, by systematic terrorisation with the help of goondas, Naxalites and the police acting in league with them. CIA agents were also taking a prominent part in organizing the hunt of the Communists. Long before the second United Front was blown up certain circles in New Delhi were talking about enacting Indonesia in West Bengal. A special officer of the Intelligence Bureau from Delhi visited Calcutta instructing

the police agents to organize murderous assaults on our members, and pass on the responsibility to the Naxalites. The Naxalites were openly encouraged by the police, the Government, the Right C.P., the Bangla Congress, the Forward Bloc, all of whom praised them as brilliant youngmen when they were organizing our murders. And finally, goonda elements were mobilised to attack us and our resistance was dubbed as violence and we were attacked by the police.

Hundreds of our active workers and comrades fell victim to the murders by hooligans or outright shooting by the police. The goondas with the help of the police saw to it that we could not enter many localities for propaganda. Daily battles were raging in some localities for sheer right to remain there. Meetings were being bombed. Our organizers were being kidnapped and attacked.

And, above all, the entire Press, all the parties including the Right C.P., Forward Bloc, Bangla Congress, joined the slanderous campaign against us, saying that we were organizing violence and demanding that the police should take action against us. Not one of these protested against the murder of more than 250 comrades. On the contrary they employed and encouraged the goondas to attack us. So unscrupulous were the parties like the F.B., the Right C.P., the Congress and others, that they shamelessly charged our Party with complicity in the murder of Hemanta Kumar Bose. Following in the footsteps of Goebbels they tried to work up frenzy against us ; but our Party lost on time in approaching the people and the latter with faith in our Party just treated the slander with contempt.

The ever-obliging police continued to arrest our people, our election organizers, till the last day. The CRP brutally attacked our people, our localities. In the last days, the military was called and combing operations were started to terrorise the people. The military was acting under the instructions of the police which was working hand in glove with the gangsters, the Naxalites, according to the instructions of the Central Home Department to paralyse our election struggle and terrorise the people.

Our Party, our cadre and the people of West Bengal have won their victory against this background, against this terrorism and slanderous propaganda to sway the people. The fact that our Party has succeeded in countering it, has increased its vote by 100 per cent and emerged as the biggest single party in face of these difficulties, speaks of the mettle of our cadre and the extent of defeat inflicted on the reactionaries.

The election results both for Parliament and the Assembly show that we have made big advance in our own class, in all toiling sections. No doubt, there have been some reverses in some sure constituencies, there has been some complacency, and failure to estimate properly the effect of adverse propaganda vilifying our Party as indulging in violence and murders against political opponents. But our expectations about a majority were not wide off the mark.

These great achievements have been brought about by our correct Party line, by the achievements of our Ministry, by the relentless struggle against police repression, by ceaseless efforts to lead united mass struggles and by a brave and courageous resistance to terrorist attacks coupled with the political counter-offensive of our Party.

Such has been the achievement in West Bengal.

Tripura Results

Our Party was always having a strong mass base in Tripura and this was repeatedly demonstrated in successive general elections since 1952. We won the two parliamentary seats in 1952 and 1957. In 1962 we won one seat while in 1967 we lost both. But in 1971 we again won both the seats, securing 45 per cent of the total vote in Tripura West, and 42 per cent in Tripura East, in round figures. The ruling Congress had got 41.4 per cent in the West seat and 32.1 per cent only in the East seat.

These results in our strong bases stood out in sharp contrast with the collapse of the Left and democratic parties in other States. They were unable to retain their seats and bases and had to pay the price of their parliamentary opportunism. Deeply

concerned with this development, the P.B. in its March 18, 1971, statement on Lok Sabha elections made an earnest appeal for the restoration of the U.F. :

“The rank and file of the democratic parties, the SSP, the PSP, the Right C.P., etc., must see for themselves the disastrous results of the policies pursued by their leaders. They must ask themselves the question, must all their sacrifices, their fight, their struggles lead them into the camp of the Congress, are they destined to act as the drummer-boys of the Congress ? They must repudiate the path. What is needed once more is the restoration of a united front of the democratic parties and forces which will be considered by the people as an alternative to Congress rule. Had the Right C.P. and others not undermined that alternative, not discredited the idea of the U.F., the election results all over India would have been radically different.”

The 1972 Elections

The most outstanding development following the last parliamentary elections and the successful conclusion of the Bangladesh freedom struggle was the victory of the Indira Congress, by fair or foul means, at the poll. By winning huge majorities in almost all the States, in the wake of a similar victory in the parliamentary elections, the ruling Congress has virtually secured a monopoly of power for the Congress as it had before 1967.

How is it that once again the success trick was repeated by the Congress in the midst of a serious economic crisis and mounting unemployment and misery ?

The Political Resolution before the Congress says in this connection :

“The grim economic reality, however, could not be wished away and discontent and disillusionment were daily growing and would have registered a big impact on the elections, but for the advantageous factor of the Bangladesh struggle. Nonetheless, voting figures show a decline in Congress voters as compared with 1971 in major States. However, in spite of this decline the

Congress got unprecedentedly big majorities in the Assemblies, partly because of the Indian electoral system.

“The Indira Congress has another electoral victory within one year because it was once more in conformation with the extreme Right forces, except in West Bengal. It was, at the same time, able to utilise the Bangladesh struggle for its electoral advance.

“The struggle of the Bangladesh people, the atrocities perpetrated by Yahya’s army, the final victory—all constituted one of the most outstanding events in the history of the Indian sub-continent since Independence and it was no wonder that large sections should be swayed by them. The Congress made full use of its strategic position as the ruling party to claim all credit for itself for the liberation of the Bangladesh people. The outright defeat of the Pakistani forces in Bangladesh added to sentiments of national pride. The constant appeal to feeling of national danger, the appeal to anti-imperialist sentiments in connection with the threat of the Seventh Fleet, the slogan of self-reliance in reply to the stopping of U.S. aid, coupled with the watchword of Socialism enabled the ruling party to ride the wave of national sentiment and sidetrack attention from economic realities.”

Dispersal of Left unity, absence of a viable democratic challenge from the Left coupled with the advantages of the successful Indo-Pak war and the appeal to national and anti-imperialist sentiment helped the ruling Congress to secure big majorities in the States except in West Bengal and Tripura.

The C.C. tried to meet this challenge by once more making the appeal for a united front and putting forward a platform of genuine action against American imperialism and economic advance for the people :

“The CPI(M) appeals to all the radical and Left and democratic parties, mass organizations, groups and individuals who are interested in carrying forward the struggle against American imperialism and in making the country self-reliant to come together in a determined struggle against the anti-people policies of the ruling Congress and its allies. It calls on them to join

their forces on the basis of the democratic programme of opposition to imperialism, landlords, rapidly growing Indian Big Business and to develop the democratic forces of the common people, their movement and struggles. The CPI(M) places before them the following programme.” (C.C. Statement of January 15, 1972)

The statement gave prominence to moratorium on American debts, taking over of American firms, stoppage of U.S. aid and reiterated the other democratic demands.

Both in West Bengal and elsewhere, our Party made strenuous efforts to secure a united front of Left and democratic forces. However, our Party took the stand that there should be no opportunism in the name of an electoral front.

The Central Committee decided that :

- In West Bengal and Tripura, we should go to the polls for a Left and Democratic Government to replace the Congress rule and in other States, a strong democratic opposition.
- Try to forge united democratic fronts with all the democratic forces as in 1967-69, provided they agree to break away from the ruling Congress headed by Indira Gandhi. But no alliance or agreement with the Jana Sangh, Syndicate, Swatantra or Muslim League.
- With regard to the Right C.P., even though in their Ninth Congress at Cochin, they decided to forge alliance and electoral adjustments with the ruling Congress, if in any State, that party was prepared to fight the Congress in the election on a Statewide basis, we could enter into electoral adjustments and agreements while preserving our right to criticise their all-India line of aligning with the Congress. Of course, in no State, they had agreed to such Statewide adjustments. They wanted seat by seat adjustments and the right to support the Congress in other seats. As such, in no State, any electoral adjustments took place. In all States, they worked to defeat us and see that the Congress won !

— In Punjab, we decided not to seek electoral adjustments or agreements with any group or section of Akalis, because of their discredited anti-people role, while they were in the Ministry and as no group was prepared to give up communal Akali politics.

However, except in West Bengal, our efforts at united front did not succeed. In West Bengal, in 1971, with the treacherous Right Communist Party leading the disruption in the United Front, a number of important parties seceded from the Front and formed a rival front which only helped the Congress.

By 1972 with the growing and urgent desire of the masses for unity, the rise in their common struggles, the experience of semi-fascist terror, and the election debacle of 1971 in their minds, there was favourable response to our efforts for united front. A strong Left Front comprising the Communist Party of India (M), Revolutionary Socialist Party, Socialist Unity Centre of India, Revolutionary Communist Party of India, Forward Bloc (Marxist), Workers' Party and the Biplabi Bangla Congress emerged to challenge the Congress. Only the Right Communist traitors kept away and openly joined the Congress to form a rival alliance. The resurrection of a powerful Left and Democratic front was a big political victory of the democratic forces in West Bengal and the line of our Party.

The Election results in The Various States

The Congress came out with a big victory and our Party and the democratic forces lost heavily. Analysing the voting for the Congress in the background of the rising discontent of the people, the P.B. statement made the following observations :

“In the strong Congress States of Maharashtra, Andhra, Mysore, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, the percentage of Congress votes has fallen considerably. In Andhra, it has fallen from 55 to 52 per cent ; in Maharashtra, from 63.8 per cent in 1971 to 56.3 in 1972 : in Haryana from 53.6 to 46.9 per cent ; in Mysore, from 71 per cent to 53.6 per cent ; in Delhi from 64.4 per cent to 48.6 per cent ; in Bihar, from 40 per cent to 34 per cent and in Assam from 57 per cent to 53 per cent. Even where

there is a marginal increase or five per cent increase as in Gujarat, if we take into consideration the large-scale trooping of Congress (O), Swatantra and Telangana Praja Samiti MLAs and MPs into the Indira Congress in Gujarat, Mysore, Andhra Pradesh and other States, this marginal increase and fall in percentage of voting takes an added significance.

“As against this fall in the strong Congress States, we get the rise from 28.3 per cent to 49.4 per cent in West Bengal, where a viable democratic Left alternative was there, and where the powerful democratic Left movement had inflicted successive defeats on the Congress. It should be further remembered that West Bengal was the State worst affected by the economic crisis ; that between 1971 and 1972, unemployment had mounted rapidly and economic misery was more widespread than anywhere else.

“It is obvious that in other States during the course of the last year much of the “Indira Wave” of 1971 was wearing out under the stress of the economic realities. It is true that the shift was not getting crystallised round Left forces in the absence of a powerful democratic movement. The Bangladesh developments provided the Congress with a weapon to arrest what would have been a precipitous decline in popular vote and influence. Even then the decline could not be eliminated. But then in West Bengal alone they seem to have performed a miracle that led to a nearly hundred per cent addition in Congress voting. These statistics alone are sufficient to expose the thoroughly mendacious claims of the Congress and the manipulations of voting figures in West Bengal.” (P.B. Statement on the Elections and Immediate Tasks, March 1972)

The Grim Experience of West Bengal

The story of elections in West Bengal forms a chapter by itself revealing the hideous face of the Congress rulers and confirming the Marxist truth about the cruel class dictatorship hiding behind a bourgeois parliamentary facade.

In its January resolution the Central Committee had already denounced the semi-facist terror in West Bengal to influence

the election results. It had further exposed the ruling party's conspiracy to have a "summary revision" of voters' lists to falsify the results.

But it must be stated that we were not prepared for what actually happened in the election.

The people of West Bengal had to face terrific assaults and combing-out raids by the Congress goondas, fully backed by the police, the CRP and the entire administrative machinery.

"Because of these murderous attacks, nearly 40,000 supporters and cadres of the Party including their family members were forced to evacuate their homes and seek shelter and safety elsewhere, both before and after the elections. Nearly 650 cadres had so far fallen victim to the assassin's knife and pipe-gun or to police firing—24 of them since March 11. Thousands are behind prison bars, and warrants are pending against about one hundred thousand peasants and workers.

"Yet, facing the brutal terror, the people gave a massive vote, officially registered as 45 lakhs, to the candidates of the Left Front. This does not include thousands of votes invalidated. Many more lakhs were prevented from exercising their franchise in favour of the Left Front in more than 50 constituencies.

"Occupation of polling booths by Congress and Right Communist-organized bands ; driving away the agents of opposition parties from the booths and the voters in the queues ; forcing Presiding and Polling Officers at gun-point to initial the ballot papers and stamping on the Congress and Right C.P. symbols ; filling the ballot boxes with 90 to 95 per cent ballots of the voters on the list by 1 p.m. was the normal pattern in these constituencies. Even in the night of March 10, armed gangs went from door to door in certain constituencies warning the people against going to the polling booths, and threatening dire consequences if anybody dared to defy.

"In about another 150 constituencies, innumerable other kinds of malpractices have been resorted to. Duplicate ballot papers are printed ; ballot boxes are replaced by new ones ; ballot papers of one constituency are found in boxes of some other constituencies ; seals have been tampered with ; ballot papers

are found dumped in a heap inside the boxes as well as outside near Congress and Right C.P. offices ; counting agents were driven out where allowed, their protests were not recorded ; ballot papers of candidates of Left parties were invalidated by counting officers then and there putting on them a second stamp ; counting the votes polled by the Left parties as polled for the Congress alliance ; and during the process of counting when they found candidates of Left parties leading, allowing pre-stamped double ballot papers in thousands to be mixed up; and even declaring the defeated Congress candidates as having won.

“The whole election machinery was overhauled and geared to the needs of the ruling party and even temporary jobs were provided to hundreds of Congress party people in Government departments and elsewhere to employ them for election work. Returning Officers, Presiding Officers and Counting Officers were mostly hand-picked men who would do the dirty job of the ruling Congress. When they suspected certain police officers were not likely to do their bidding and if they could not be transferred yet, on the very night previous to the polling day the areas were brought under the jurisdiction of another police station.

“Further, it is a revealing fact that it is in the strongest constituencies of the CPI(M) and Left parties which they have been winning by large majorities in the past that they lost heavily by huge margins of tens of thousands to the Congress candidates, thus clearly disclosing the character of naked terror and rigging of elections. On the other hand, in constituencies where the Congress alliance candidates had absolute and clear majority and therefore they had no need to resort to terror tactics or rigging the elections, the Congress alliance votes decreased considerably while the candidates of Left parties increased their votes significantly and in some cases even won them. This proves that the real trend in West Bengal was in favour of the Left Front.

“Because of all these facts, the CPI(M) has come to the definite conclusion that the elections in West Bengal are rigged

according to a definite plan from Central Government authorities.” (P.B. Statement On the Elections and Immediate Tasks, March 1972)

It must be admitted that we were not prepared for these rigged results engineered by our class enemy. On the contrary, almost till the end of the day of the elections, complacent opinions were held that in spite of the terror, we would be able to secure a majority for our alliance.

This is the direct result of the days of legality and of parliamentary politics and a complacent outlook generated by them.

Why did the Congress resort to this combination of gangsterism with falsification ?

“The ruling Congress, in the midst of the deepening economic crisis, and with its anti-people policies of transferring the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of the toiling masses in order to protect the vested interests, could not afford a Left Front Ministry headed by the CPI(M). For, experience had shown the such a Ministry, even in one State, would be an instrument in the hands of the toiling people against the attacks of the vested interests and would galvanise the democratic movement of the toiling people throughout the country in the struggle for alternative policies. The ruling Congress could not even tolerate a powerful democratic opposition in the important State of West Bengal to function and utilise the forum of the legislature in defence of the toiling masses. On the other hand, in found itself faced with a powerful democratic and mass movement in West Bengal, whose strength was demonstrated during the Parliamentary election of 1971. The Congress could not fool the democratic forces and people of West Bengal and got a severe beating in the Parliamentary elections. Moreover, all its attempts to perpetuate the division in the Left parties had failed and a front of Left parties had emerged, signifying the certain defeat of the Congress, if fair elections were held. Hence, it resorted to rigging the elections on a massive scale.”
(*Ibid*)

Thanks to this, the Congress and its allies captured 216 seats, and our Party was declared elected only in 14 seats with our allies getting six more seats.

In spite of this gangsterism, 3,700,000 voted for the Party and 800,000 more for our allies in the midst of murder, arson and thousands of wholesale raids and bomb attacks on voters' queues. This was the great devotion shown by the mass of the peoples towards our Party and its line.

The Right C.P. leaders who formed a formal alliance with the Congress this time not only voted and worked for the Congress to defeat the Left candidates. They participated in the gangster attacks of the Congress against us and our allies, joined in the falsification of elections, and organized rigging in their constituencies, with the help of the Congress and administration. Such was the degeneration of the revisionist crowd.

What is the net political conclusion of these developments ?

“Today, the position is that the ruling party and the classes behind it are better consolidated in the administration and the legislature to face the people. The huge majority in Parliament gives them a lot of freedom to deal with the rising discontent. Similar huge majorities in the State legislatures with hardly any Left Opposition, except in Kerala and Tripura, places the democratic forces in an unenviable position.

“The inability to appease large sections of masses through significant concessions, the dire need to thrust further burdens and use of weapons of repression combined with the weakness of the Left Opposition, the weakening of the other bourgeois parties, the impatience and intolerance of the ruling party towards all opposition, foreshadows a likely trend towards one-party dictatorship. The vantage point gained by the ruling party, now representing the united will of the ruling classes, is not likely to be surrendered easily.

“This also portends a further attack and erosion on the rights and powers of the States and further concentration of powers in the hands of the Centre. The last few years have already witnessed this trend with the growing power of the bureaucracy and the financial dependence of the State on the Centre.

“Today, with the virtual monopoly of power in the hands of one party, and the authoritarian trend in the Congress organization, this trend will be strengthened.

“For the working class and its party, the CPI(M), it will be suicidal to neglect this emerging aspect of the bourgeois-landlord rule in West Bengal and forget that it is the shape of things to come whenever the masses seriously challenge the ruling classes. The happenings in West Bengal constitute the most significant development from the point of view of the revolutionary movement in India. Our Programme has correctly warned that it is the reactionaries that try their hand at suppressing the liberties of the people and abrogating parliamentary democracy when it ceases to serve their purpose. While the phenomenon is confined to West Bengal, it constitutes a warning to our class movement and shows the ferocious face of the exploiting ruling class in our country behind the talk of ‘garibi hatao’.

These two sides constitute the reality of the Indian situation. On the one hand, faced by the desperate economic situation, and the challenge of the united Left forces in West Bengal, the ruling party, undermining all democratic norms, uses fraudulent means and unleashes semi-fascist terror on the people. On the other hand, the same ruling party gets big majorities in other State legislatures on the basis of popular vote. Unaware of the grim happenings in West Bengal, kept in ignorance by the Press in the absence of a Left and democratic movement led by our Party, the people in these States have voted for the Indira Congress placing the ruling party in a virtually unassailable position in the State legislatures.

“The battle against this danger is to be carried on taking into consideration the consolidated hold of the ruling party in most of the States and its following in West Bengal and Kerala. Its new tactics and approach to the masses and their demands as well as its new methods of intimidating the masses also should be taken into account.

“These contradictory developments followed not only from the general weakness of the Left and democratic movement,

from the weakness of our Party in States other than Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. They are also the result of the ruling party's tactics of dividing and disrupting the unity of the Left and democratic forces and the downright treachery of the Right C.P. leadership who acted as its fifth column." (Draft Political Resolution, page 35, para 74).

IV. Bangladesh

The Central Committee considered the Bangladesh struggle to be a struggle for national freedom and democracy, a struggle which at the same time fought the military junta which was acting as the tool of American imperialism in the sub-continent. It called on the Party and the people to support the struggle in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

How the C.C. addressed itself to the needs of the changing situation, how it opposed the stand of the communalists, or the chauvinism of others, how it criticised Government's vacillations and demanded firm measures to support the fight, how it asked the Government to give arms to the people but opposed intervention at one stage, how it called upon the Government to face the consequences if war was imposed upon us by Pakistan's rulers is given in the Political Resolution.

The dangers that face the Bangladesh people after liberation—the American imperialist conspiracies, the internal reaction etc., are also stressed in the resolution and our international responsibility towards the people of Bangladesh as well as the people of Pakistan emphasised.

Here our Party must take note of certain developments taking place in Bangladesh. There selfish interests are asserting themselves, curbs are being imposed on the democratic movement, strikes banned, freedom-fighters disarmed, speculators from inside and outside are exploiting the people while anti-freedom conspirators are openly plotting against the people. The working class movement in India must express its utmost solidarity and sympathy with the fighting working class and people of Bangladesh. It cannot act as if the issue has been satisfactorily settled.

Though the Bangladesh struggle and the defeat of Pakistan's military junta was one of the most outstanding events of the sub-continent since Independence, yet its significance was not properly seen by our Party when the struggle was going on except in West Bengal and Tripura.

In some other States like Andhra Pradesh our Party Committees succeeded in organizing mass mobilisations to bring the issue and our Party's stand before the people. In some other States, there were propaganda meetings and demonstrations. Obviously much more was needed to make the people understand the importance of the issue and our Party's correct approach towards it.

The Central Committee had warned, "The national chauvinistic element, behind this sense of victory enhances the influence of Indira Gandhi's Congress and facilitates its manoeuvres in the present situation. The immediate result is bound to be a greater accession of strength to it in the coming elections, and a more successful screen for concealing its semi-fascist repression in West Bengal."

Though there is hardly any one who questions the Party's support to the Bangladesh struggle, still there are some who raise the question—was it correct on the part of the Party to call on the Congress Government to intervene ?

What was our Party asking the Government to do ? To recognise the Bangladesh Government so that it can directly help the movement with arms. The question was no longer of only ideological and moral help. Arms were required for the guerrillas and the Government was unwilling to give them. The Government alone had the requisite stock and the democratic movement had a right to compel it to deliver arms. The Government later on did put arms in the hands of the guerrillas.

What about the war ?

"That is why when war was declared we could not forget that it arose out of the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people and it must be carried out to its successful conclusion. This was not a question of identifying with alien class interests but of taking note of favourable situation in which one ruling class was prepared to render help to the democratic movement

against a military junta. In our various statements, we sharply underlined what the aims and objects of this war should be. We stated that our Party was interested in it only in so far as it secured the freedom of Bangladesh while protecting our own sovereignty. We demanded vigilance to see that every step taken during the course of the war, and after, is strictly confined to these objectives. We protested against despatch of Indian officials, demanded expansion of democratic freedoms for the toiling masses and other measures to see that selfish interests did not exploit the situation. It is clear that we demarcated our aims from the narrow class interests which the Government had in mind.” (The Party and the Struggle of the Bangladesh People, pp. 22-23)

The second question that is asked is how can we support a war between two bourgeois Governments ? Should not Marxist-Leninists oppose bourgeois wars ? Such questions do violence to Marxist-Leninist understanding as they obliterate all differences between imperialist wars, progressive wars, etc. This is what Lenin taught : “These were therefore progressive wars ; during such wars all honest and revolutionary democrats, as well as all Socialists, always wished success to that country (i.e. that bourgeoisie) which had helped to overthrow or undermine the most baneful foundation of feudalism, absolutism and the oppression of other nations.”

The Central Committee noted certain special factors of the Bangladesh struggle. It was threatening to upset the power equation that hitherto existed in the sub-continent—an equation which enabled the American imperialists to intervene any time in the sub-continent through Indo-Pakistani conflict. Because it had this impact, it revealed almost all the contradictions of the present period. The imperialist camp got divided. The sharpness of the conflict for world markets, trade and exports already seen in the currency upsets was revealed on the issue of Bangladesh.

American imperialism and the Soviet Union sharply clashed with each other in the sub-continent. It almost led to the confrontation of the two navies in the Bay of Bengal.

The Central Committee also emphasised the intensity of the conflict of interests that developed between the Indian bourgeoisie and American imperialism on this issue. Never before perhaps had such a sharp conflict come to the forefront and was witnessed by the ordinary man.

“This is a significant development which our Party must take note of because here the main enemy of the world working class is getting exposed as an enemy of the Indian people. This is a consummation for which our Party has been working and it could take just pride in telling the people that while the Congress Government often sang the virtues of American democracy for the loans and credits that it got, our Party understood the real character of American imperialism and warned the people against it.

“It is for our Party to unite the people against American conspiracies, create a strong public opinion against its blackmail so that the Government dares not again compromise with the U.S. imperialists. The breach that has arisen must be widened by us and our Party has already demanded moratorium on all debt payments to the USA, confiscation of American concerns beginning with the oil concerns and stoppage of all aid from the USA.” (*Ibid*, p. 30)

The Central Committee also assessed the positions taken by People’s China and the Soviet Union on this issue.

“In the context of the struggle of the Bangladesh people the position taken by People’s China can only be described as grossly opportunist and one which openly helped the Yahya Khan military regime. Whether they were due to intense suspicion of India’s ruling classes or intense hatred of the leadership of the Soviet Union, China’s policies ended in supporting the butchery organized by the Yahya Khan regime and betraying the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people. In its broadcasts Peking Radio never mentioned the butchery, the uprooting of millions of refugees, never mentioned the elections and the rout of Yahya Khan’s party, but only depicted the whole struggle as an invasion by India. This is the logical conclusion of a dogmatic outlook which does not consider any

country to be Socialist except People's China and which equates the Soviet Union with the USA." (*Ibid*, p. 33)

"In contrast, on this issue, after some hesitation, the Soviet Union took a stand of supporting the Bangladesh struggle and endorsing the steps taken by the Government of India in support of it. It entered into a treaty with the Government of India which made it clear that the Soviet Union was interested in a political and democratic solution of the problem. Till the last, however, it continued to talk of a political solution based on the wishes of elected members, but within the framework of a united Pakistan. In the end, however, it supported the idea of a free Bangladesh.

"It warning to other Powers not to complicate matters by intervention, the help it gave in arms and other materials to the Government of India and the valuable role it played in frustrating the American conspiracies in the Security Council and, above all, the despatch of its fleet to counter the blackmail of the U.S. Seventh Fleet—all these have been of tremendous help of the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people and have enabled the Government of India to take a firm line in relation to it.

"It is true at the same time that the CPSU and the Right Communist Party are busy building up the image of Indira Gandhi in India which actually helps the latter to screen its semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and especially against our Party." (*Ibid*, pp. 33-34)

Party's Fight against Revisionism— Debacle of Right Revisionism

By the debacle of revisionism is meant its growing self-exposure, as a servile instrument of the bourgeoisie, its growing incapacity to present itself as an independent ideology and its increasing merger, easily seen by the people, with the bourgeois ideology and practice.

In specific relation to the Right Communist Party, it means its growing collapse as an independent Left oppositional party and its growing alliance with the ruling party.

While making every effort to have the Right C.P. as a partner in the democratic front, our Party had to fight it all along, against its disruptionist role in U.F. Governments, in the U.F. and mass organizations and ideologically reply to its deceptive formulations like the Indira Congress representing the national bourgeoisie, etc.

Our main attack has been against its role as the disruptor of the democratic front, as the fifth column of the ruling Congress.

It should be realised that the main aim of the revisionists was always to isolate us from the democratic movement. Everything else including the fight against the ruling class occupied a secondary place. Like typical Social-Democrats, the revisionists made the Communist movement their main target of attack.

The theoretical and ideological contortions of the group have followed the path of international revisionism. It is worthwhile recapitulating them to see how their present degeneration was inevitable. The parliamentary path, rejection of working class leadership which was to be substituted by a joint leadership of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, National Democracy in place of People's Democracy, characterisation of the State (State of national bourgeoisie) which opened the way to a policy of class-collaboration, of compromises and surrender—such were the ideological and theoretical formulations behind Indian revisionism.

In international matters they faithfully, in a sychophantic manner, echo the CPSU standpoint. They pursue a consistent anti-China line, helping the China-baiting of the worst reactionaries in India. They praise every manner of Soviet compromise with American imperialism, praising it as a means to strengthen world peace. They were the loudest to protest when Nixon announced his visit to Peking. But they were full of praise when he visited Moscow. They condemned the Chou En-lai-Nixon communique but praised to the skies the Brezhnev-Nixon statement. Not caring either for unity of the Socialist camp nor for principled unity of the world Communist movement, they do their best to undermine faith in Communism and make it a matter of ridicule. At the same time, by their

praise of Indira Gandhi, by screening the vile misdeeds of her Government they help the international revisionists to conceal their betrayal of the proletarian movement here.

In consonance with their class-collaborating line, the revisionists embellish almost every step of the ruling party and give it the colour suited to the interest of the ruling clique.

It was they who took the lead in formulating that the split in the Congress was one between the monopolists and the national bourgeoisie, the latter deserving the full support of the working class and the democratic movement. To make their class-collaborationist policy acceptable to their ranks and the people, to conceal their crude surrender, they present it as a line of isolating and fighting extreme reaction. They choose a part of the Indian reality, exaggerate it beyond proportion to use it in the service of their class-collaborating policy.

They deliberately exaggerate the danger from extreme reaction, make an analysis suitable for their purpose and to screen the real and actual menace at the hands of the Congress Government and to justify their collusion with and support to the bourgeois-landlord classes. They hitherto talked about Left and democratic unity while in reality they disrupted it and joined hands with the Congress against the CPI(M) and other major constituents of Left unity, like the Socialist Party. They extol every reformist measure of the Congress, even when they help the monopolists directly, as anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist and anti-landlord. They indulge in demagogic talk about unity and struggle with the ruling party while in reality they only subserve the requirements of the latter to fight our Party and disrupt the democratic forces. They utilise the urge for trade union unity to join hands with the INTUC against the CITU and Left trade unions. Their Left postures of "land seizure", "ballot and bullets", anti-monopoly struggle are all intended to cheat the gullible and credulous.

The method in the revisionist madness must be properly understood. They seek to give a Marxist grab to their opportunism and pretend to address themselves to the concrete realities of the Indian situation. This claim has to be ideologically debunked.

The accentuated class struggle of the last three years has revealed the ugly and reactionary practice of the Right C.P. to thousands of people. Since the 1967 election, there has been a persistent trend towards open disruption and walking over to the Congress. The exigencies of their own politics, the need to attack us, the closer relations of appendage developing between them and the ruling party, the need of the ruling party to secure their help in Kerala and West Bengal—all quickened the pace of the surrender and they had to come out with open alliance with the Congress first in Kerala and then in West Bengal and then all over India.

In consonance with this policy the Right C.P. split the AIKS. In 1970 they openly split the AITUC. In 1972 they formed a common council with the INTUC with the help of the Labour Minister to oppose the CITU and other left TU. Centres. In West Bengal, they joined the Congress in the campaign of murder, terror against the CITU trade unions and occupation of T.U. offices.

The Right C.P. betrayal and practice was of course directly connected with the rising mass struggles which were breaking out. Frightened by these, they were opposing our Party, the United Front and finding every excuse to join the Congress.

The Central Committee repeatedly nailed down this treacherous conduct of the Right C.P., asking the revisionists to conduct themselves as honest members of the front.

Commenting on the role played by the Right C.P. in the mid-term elections of 1969, the C.C. statement of April 1969 stated :

“In this connection, our Party cannot but offer its comment on the Right Communist Party and its activities during the mid-term elections. The role that it is playing in the Kerala and West Bengal Governments and some of the policies it is attempting to project in the recent post-mid-term election period in U.P. and Bihar, the belated electoral understanding arrived at between the CPI(M) and the Right Communist Party, after prolonged Right opportunist policy and practice of the latter in these two States and without relying on mass struggles and

radicalisation, could neither repair the damage done to democratic unity nor assist in securing victories in the elections. In Punjab, the Right Communists knowingly pursued a policy of helping the Congress and defeating the candidates of the CPI(M). In Kerala the role of the Right Communists, both in the U.F. Government and among the people outside, has been one of factional and opportunist opposition to the CPI(M) which objectively helps the Congress. Its consistent opposition, on one pretext or another, to the carrying out of united struggle against the reactionary policies of the Central Congress Government, etc., is well-known and needs no elaboration.

“In West Bengal, the Right Communists not only took the shameless stand of opposing the legitimate claim of the CPI(M) for the post of Chief Minister but were also hostile to the allocation to the CPI(M) of the Home portfolio in full. They, like their Kerala counterparts, are not missing one single opportunity to range themselves against the CPI(M) in alliance with one or the other political force in the State, and they openly slander in their Press that the CPI(M) and its policies are class-collaborationist against the workers and peasants of West Bengal. Theirs are the loudest calls for unity of action, while in practice highly disruptive in every move and action of theirs. After the mid-term election reverses in U.P., Bihar and Punjab, under pressure of their rank and file as well as mass following and in face of the fiasco of their policies, they are projecting slogans of ‘Left unity’, ‘Communist unity’, ‘Left and Democratic Front’, etc., much more vociferously.” (C.C. Statement on Political Developments, April 16, 1969)

The C.C. statements and resolutions registered the story of the revisionists, an unwilling partner in the united front degenerating into the conscious instrument of bourgeois-landlord violence against the people—the working class, agricultural labourers, peasants, students, etc.

In its resolution of October 13, 1969, the P.B. said :

“At a time when all the democratic forces must stand united in the struggle against the vested interests and big bourgeois-landlord policies of the Congress, the Kerala United Front Ministry stands paralysed and has virtually collapsed, the partners

being locked in an endless combat. The Muslim League, the revisionists and other parties, in criminal repudiation of their basic duty towards the masses, have joined hands with the Congress and Kerala Congress to charge a U.F. Minister with corruption. Now these parties have come out with an open threat of deserting the U.F.," (P.B. Statement on Kerala and West Bengal Situation, October 13, 1969)

The future all-India land-grabbers got panicky at the agricultural workers' movement.

"The Muslim League and the revisionists have panicked at the rising struggle of the agricultural labourers for land. The League has opposed the land legislation and attempted to sabotage its progress through the Business Advisory Committee of the Legislature. The revisionists while pretending to support it have done the same. Besides, they demanded a frontal assault on the livelihood of the agricultural labourers by helping the landlords at State cost to introduce mechanisation and have denounced the struggles of agricultural workers for land as rowdysim." (Ibid)

The Kerala Ministry was toppled when it was coming to grips with the vested interests and was overcoming one resistance after another. And after this act of betrayal the Right C.P. assumed the charge of organizing the bourgeois-landlord State violence against the people.

"True to this class character, the new Ministry has opened its offensive against the agricultural workers by ordering their mass eviction from lands occupied by them. With the tone in brutality and vandalism set by the landlord leaders of the Kerala Congress, the Special Armed Police have been let loose on the agricultural workers, killing a few, brutally assaulting scores, raiding the quarters of agricultural workers and molesting their women and children. They are helped by the landlords' goondas organised by the Kerala Congress who hitherto dared not attack the agricultural workers. The U.F. led by us protected the poor peasants and agricultural workers against the landlords and their goondas. The new United Front protects the landlords and goondas and represses the agricultural workers." (P.B.

Statement on Recent Political Developments, November 29, 1969)

The advocates of peaceful parliamentary path have become sponsors of an orgy of class violence against the toilers.

The West Bengal revisionists were treading the same path of treachery. Panicked by the rising struggles they through the Bangla Congress demanded a virtual attack on them.

“Just when the popular forces are advancing and scoring new triumphs, the popular movement in showing an irresistible advance, the Dange revisionists, Bangla Congress and a number of other parties are raising the question of law and order to malign the U.F. and obstruct further victories. The Bangla Congress in its resolution had openly expressed its opposition to strikes, hartals and gheraos, withdrawal of cases arising out of popular and democratic movements. In fact, what it demands is a change in the police policy—it demands that the police be used to suppress the people. And the Right Communists support the Bangla Congress instead of denouncing its anti-working class out-look.” (*Ibid*)

The revisionists were again unmasked on the eve of the betrayal of the U.F. Ministry.

“The party is now at the same treacherous game blowing up the only remaining U.F. and its Government in West Bengal and paving the way either to the imposition of President’s rule or the formation of a mini-front Government to act as the stooge of the ruling Congress party at the Centre. It is acting as the unashamed apologist of the Bangla Congress leaders who have chosen to defect from the Front and its Government under the dictates of the vested interests; it is openly coming in support of every tactic of the Bangla Congress leaders to slander the U.F. Government and maliciously malign the Communist Party of India (M) which happens to be the single biggest constituent of the U.F. ; and it has even politically degenerated to the point of openly opposing a call for the general strike of the working class in defence of the U.F. Government and in protest against the defection of the Bangla Congress. This, indeed, is the limit for a party which calls itself

Communist and pretends to fight for the defence of U.F.!” (P.B. Statement on Recent Political Developments, March 16, 1970)

To justify their treacherous conduct in West Bengal, the Right Communists indulged in charges about “sectarianism”, “politics of violence” and supplied slander weapons to the ruling party and some of their other “Left” allies. These charges were made to screen the Congress violence against the masses and our Party, to screen the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and to shepherd their own following into the camp of the Congress. It is also intended to screen the Right C.P. murdering 62 of our cadres during this period.

Following this in West Bengal, renegade Right C.P. leaders went into virtual alliance with the Congress in the 1971 elections. A formal alliance could not materialise because others who had split from us would not agree to it.

“In 1971-72, the Right C.P. leaders tried to sabotage every joint action and attempted to link up some of the Left parties with the Congress and its mass organizations. At the same time, they openly supported the campaign of murder and assaults, and the mass arrests, directly or indirectly, by holding us responsible for the murders committed by Congress goondas or their own hirelings. In this period, their organized bands began to participate growingly in armed attacks against us with the aid of the police. In many places, they joined hands with the Congress gangsters to attack and kill our cadres.

“In 1972, the Right C.P. leaders threw off the mask entirely, broke away with all Left parties and openly formed an alliance with the Congress in the elections. Having become an appendage of the ruling party, incapable of winning seats through their own efforts, they participated in every crime during the election—from occupation of booths, murder, raids to falsification of the results of the election in every possible manner.” (Political Resoultion, para 100)

In West Bengal, the Right Communists began to participate in class violence against the masses without entering the Ministry.

During these months, the Achutha Menon Ministry in Kerala earned praise from the most reactionary circles for its law and order policy, i.e., for suppressing the people. The P.B. in its January 1970 Statement, said :

“Above all, lock-up beatings which have not been heard of since 1957—a practice which could not be restored even under the notorious Congress regime in which the late P.T. Chacko was the Home Minister, has now been revived.

“The most shameful part of the situation today is that, unlike the former CPI(M)-led United Front Government which refused to use the Central Reserve Police though it had been put at the disposal of the State Government by the Union Home Ministry, it is now being freely used. It was the CRP which resorted to the brutal lathi-charges and firings in several places on December 1. It was again the CRP that was used in several places against the fighting students and workers. Chief Minister Achutha Menon whose leader Bhupesh Gupta had vehemently denounced the use of the CRP in the Rajya Sabha is today declaring without hesitation that in the present situation in Kerala the police force is so inadequate that the CRP has to be used.” (P.B. Resolution, January 5, 1970)

The C.C. resolution on Kerala, February 1970, said :

“The extent of the attacks on the working people can be seen from the fact that during the last three months when this Government has been in office, 18 active organizers of the mass struggle were murdered—13 by the goondas and five by the police. There have been instances of molestation of women by the police and by goondas. Hundreds more have been maimed and injured in lathi-charges and lock-up beatings by the police, as well as in goonda attacks. Houses have been damaged and destroyed on a large scale.....” (C.C. Resolution on Kerala, February 9, 1970)

The number of cases registered and the number of accused involved in them would run into thousands and tens of thousands respectively. Never before has Kerala—not even during the worst days of the post-Punnappra-Vayalar and of 1948-51—witnessed such a widespread and brutal regime of police terror combined with goonda attacks.

The degeneration of the Right Communists into organisers of State violence in Kerala and supporters and participants in the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal is the logical conclusion of their revisionist line, blessed and sanctified by their revisionist patrons abroad. It once more demonstrates the truth that those who turn their back on Marxism-Leninism join the camp of class enemies.

At the same time, it should be realised that the revisionists have not lost their capacity to mislead their followers and the people. They have no doubt lost heavily among the masses, but since they base their line on the illusions and confusions shared by the people, their treacherous character is not easily realised. Those who share their illusions are easily caught in that net.

Debacle of Left Adventurism

But it is not only the traditional democratic parties that have collapsed ; the petty-bourgeois Left-adventurist trend which made its open appearance in 1967 has also reached the last stage of its degeneracy. Starting with the advocacy of armed struggle in the rural areas, in the name of organizing revolution, it concentrated its fire mainly on our Party, created disruption in our ranks, and made a desperate attempt to tarnish the revolutionary image of our Party. Treating it first as a genuine expression of petty-bourgeois desperation, our Party, while making no concessions to it, fought it on a political plane. But the Party warned that petty-bourgeois adventurism must degenerate into an anti-bourgeois adventurism must degenerate into an anti-working class, anti-revolutionary line and its inevitable destiny was to serve the interests of the ruling classes. This inevitable development has taken place during the last four years. Step by step, the advocates of armed struggle in rural areas have directed their fire mainly against the cadre of our Party and our trade union and mass leaders in West Bengal. Mousing Left phrases, recruiting anti-social elements and actively helped by the police, these Naxalites themselves have murdered 206 of the 656 CPI(M) cadre and supporters who have been assassinated during the last two years. These Naxalite

groups have now been honeycombed with quite a large number of CIA and police agents, who have penetrated into the ranks of the Naxalite groups taking advantage of their antipathy to our Party—the party of the working class. Our Party, from the beginning, had been warning about the penetration of these agents. Most of these Naxalites have since joined the Congress.

The more their terroristic attacks got directed against our Party, the more they were praised by the ruling party and the Right C.P. as honest but misled people. The advocacy of armed struggle, the boycott of elections, the pretensions to fight revisionism, all divorced from the immediate needs of the class struggle and often in opposition to that struggle have led to the complete debacle of the group which is now riven by dissensions and accusations against each other of being police spies. Notwithstanding the above, our Party has repeatedly de denounced the massacre of Naxalites by the police. The petty-bourgeois adventurist ideology supported by the CPC has done immense harm to sections of militant youth whose genuine desire for ending the present intolerable system was diverted into anti-revolutionary channels and pitted against the working class. The adventurist ideology became a systematic attempt to divert the minds of some sections of the young people from Communism and the revolutionary movement of the masses.

With all the degeneration of the main trend there is still need for a political struggle against it. The desperate economic situation of the petty-bourgeoisie provides fertile ground for the ideology among younger sections. The Party must combat the process of diverting the minds of the young people into anti-revolutionary channels.

It redounds to the credit of our Party that it alone among all the political parties waged an ideological and political battle against these elements and that, too, when it had to defend itself against murderous attacks. Undeterred by the support that their line got from the CPC, our Party fought their challenge in the popular movement, in mass organisations and in the students' movement and succeeded in isolating and checkmating them. The success against the Right-revisionist as well as the Left-

adventurist line follows from the correctness of our own Marxist-Leninist line. The revolutionary movement could have been completely undermined and disrupted had our Party not succeeded in meeting the challenge both from the Left and the Right.

The most shocking aspect is that the CPI(M) and its political and ideological and organizational lines are under attack from the two biggest ruling Communist Parties. Their attacks are not confined to political-ideological criticisms of and polemics against the CPI(M), but assume the shape of direct intervention. The leaders of the CPSU openly acclaim and support the Right C.P. when the latter is unashamedly collaborating with the Congress party and its Central Government in suppressing the workers' and peasants' struggles and murders of hundreds of the cadres and leaders of the CPI(M). The CPC, through the Radio and Press, was hailing and giving every encouragement possible to the so-called Naxalites who not only concentrated their disruptive attacks on the CPI(M) and its mass movements but also indulged in the assassinations of dozens of cadres and leaders belonging to the CPI(M).

VI. International Communist Movement

We are a party whose outlook is based on proletarian internationalism. As such, we are vitally concerned with the victories of our class all over the world and the advance or retreat of the world Communist movement. We consider that the victories hitherto scored by the working class in several countries—over one-third of the world—the victories of working class revolutions are the common heritage of the working class of the whole world, and that it is our common responsibility to defend it. Only those who reject these revolutions can afford to ignore this duty.

Our Party, therefore, has unflinchingly supported the great and mighty struggle of the people of Vietnam, led by our brothers of the Workers' Party and done its little bit in this country in its aid. We all should realise that we should do much more for the heroic class brothers, for the great courageous people of Vietnam.

The division in the international Communist movement and the Socialist camp has tremendously undermined the strength and unity of the world working class movement and the capacity of the Socialist camp to confront the camp of imperialism, its capacity to help the revolutionary movements abroad, and the national liberation struggles. It has robbed the world movement of many a victory and helped imperialism in slowing down the progress of the revolutionary movement. The bizarre happenings in relation to Bangladesh in which People's China supported the butcher regime of Yahya Khan, followed by the equally outrageous happenings in relation to the Ceylonese uprising where both People's China and the USSR vied with each other to offer their services to the Ceylonese Government to butcher the youths are fresh in our minds. The two deviations are sometimes leading to a situation in which we find a Socialist country directly helping the forces of counter-revolution.

Our Party has painfully taken note of these developments and is doing its best to defend Marxism-Leninism against attacks from the Right (Soviet revisionism) and from the Left (Chinese dogmatism).

In doing this, we do not forget either the Socialist camp, the Socialist character of societies in these countries nor the necessity of uniting the Socialist camp and the world Communist movement on the principled basis of adherence to Marxism-Leninism.

We also consider it our responsibility to see that our criticism of these big parties who have the most wonderful rich revolutionary heritage behind them, should not be such as to undermine faith in the Marxist-Leninist doctrine or in Socialism, when all the imperialists are out to capitalise their differences and sap people's faith in the Socialist system.

We, therefore, strongly denounced the Right C.P. leaders who indulge in the worst type of China-baiting out-doing even the Jana Sangh on many occasions. We reject the Chinese concept of revisionist countries, or the description of the USSR as social imperialism, howsoever bitter we might feel about revisionism.

We also reject the Soviet description of People's China as an aggressive nationalist country and all that accompanies it.

Our Party and our class have been the worst sufferer at the hands of Soviet revisionism and Chinese dogmatism.

The CPSU leaders supported the revisionists who split our Party and are today supporting the entire line of class-collaboration which enables the Congress to screen its semi-fascist terror and establish one-party dictatorship. The CPSU by its authority and propaganda does not allow the truth about semi-fascist terror to penetrate the other countries and strengthens the hands of the enemies of the working class of India, by paralysing all international support to it.

By directly supporting Naxalism which has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism, the CPC not only encouraged a split in our Party but created in instrument for the CIA agents and the ruling class of India to be used against our Party. Some of the finest sons of our Party were cold-bloodedly murdered by these Left-adventurists whose action besides gave the necessary provocative excuse to the Government to bear down on the people.

Nonetheless our Party has maintained its restraint and criticised and attacked these Parties whenever it was absolutely necessary to defend our movement or defend the principles of Marxism-Leninism or protest against some internationally important opportunist step of these parties.

The P.B. and the C.C. expressed their opinion on two internationally important documents, the documents of the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the document of the Conference of Communist Parties in Moscow in 1969.

On Ninth Congress of CPC

The Polit Bureau's statement on the documents of the Chinese Congress says :

"In its General Line presented by the Communist Party of China in its June 14 letter, it specifically takes its stand on the analysis made in the two international Communist documents—

the 1957 Declaration and the Statement of 1960 and the revolutionary principles incorporated in them. It speaks of them as documents prepared 'after a full exchange of reaching unanimity through consultations', as documents which 'point out the characteristics of our epoch and the common laws of Socialist construction, and lay down the common line of all the Communist and Workers' Parties', describes these documents as 'the common programme of the international Communist movement', and categorically concludes that 'it has become the urgent and vital task of the international Communist movement to resolutely defend the revolutionary principles of the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement.' In fact, out of the twentyfive points made in the June 14 letter, all the above-quoted sentences occur in the very first point with which it begins. But the Ninth Congress documents of the Communist Party of China, conspicuously enough and perhaps deliberately, do not even make a mention of these two international documents, and put forth an entirely new thesis, negating every principle that these two documents contain." (P.B. Statement on the Ninth National Congress of the CPC, pp. 6-7)

Dealing with some of the major deviations, the statement points out :

"The second point to be sharply pointed out here is the completely novel and absurd class division made of the countries into what is described as 'imperialist and social-imperialist countries' and reducing the contradiction between the Soviet Union and the imperialist countries to one of inter-imperialist contradictions.

"The third innovation is the term 'revisionist countries' which obviously refers to Socialist States where the ruling Communist Party leadership is bogged in Right-reformism and revisionism.....But now curiously enough the social order of States and countries is sought to be defined in terms of and on the basis of ideological errors and deviations of the leadership of the State and its ruling party, divorced from the concrete class relations there. Thereby another conclusion drawn from it is that most of the existing Socialist countries including the

Soviet Union where their leaders happen to follow revisionist policies have ceased to be Socialist States and have become 'revisionist State and countries', and the contradictions between these 'revisionist countries' and imperialist countries have assumed the character of inter-imperialist contradiction." (*Ibid*, pp. 4-5)

On another point, the P.B. states :

"The point the P.B., would like to make regarding this new definition of world contradiction by the Ninth Congress Report is that all the ideological-political differences in the world Communist movement are arbitrarily elevated into and bracketed with social contradictions....If Right-opportunist or Left-adventurist deviations arising in the States of the Socialist camp are to be treated as antagonistic social contradictions which can only be resolved by revolutionary means and methods, then nothing remains of what is known as the world Socialist camp as described and defined in the international documents of 1957 and 1960." (*Ibid*, pp. 5-6).

Commenting on the new Constitution of the CPC, the P.B. criticises the formulation that Mao Tse-tung Thought is Marxism-Leninism of the era in which imperialism is heading for total collapse and Socialism is advancing to worldwide victory. The P.B. statement says : "Nor does it deem correct that all that is being thought by Mao Tse-tung shall necessarily be infallible Marxism-Leninism. Besides, if all that the Political Report of the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China contains is the 'thought of Mao Tse-tung' and every Marxist-Leninist has to accept it as Marxism-Leninism, the P.B. has to sharply differ from it and cannot be a party to it."

The P.B. also criticises the provision in the Constitution, "Comrade Lin Piao is Comrade Mao Tse-tung's close comrade-in-arms and successor."

"Such a course may befit organizations and parties that are to be built on 'faith', but is forbidden for a Communist Party based on the science of Marxism and built on the principle of democratic centralism. Then the democratic principle of election of leaders will be replaced by the principle of succession. This is really strange and monstrous."

Now that Lin Piao has been demoted, it seems that Mao Tse-tung's Thought is not always infallible. The CPC leaders have made themselves a laughing stock by such totally un-Marxian formulations.

The Moscow Document

The 1969 Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties convened in Moscow was another important event in the international movement. Convened after the attack of counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia which could be defeated only with the intervention of the Soviet Red Army, the Conference should have re-examined the postulates and lines of work of these parties and done everything to heal the split in the world Communist movement. Unfortunately, it did nothing of the kind. The Central Committee stated in its resolution :

“Despite a number of correct statements on the balance of world forces, strength of imperialism, etc., the document stands rooted in the old revisionist understanding which sharply divided the world Communist movement. The revisionist distortion of the concept of peaceful coexistence, peaceful economic competition and peaceful transition which split the world Communist movement, continues in the present document, though there are attempts to modify some of the earlier crude formulations. Notwithstanding the vital importance of the struggle for world peace, it leads once more to the erroneous and lop-sided emphasis on the peace struggle, while underplaying the importance of all-sided, direct struggle against imperialism—economic, political, ideological, military—minimising in particular the significant role of the worldwide national liberation struggles, at the present stage. It nourishes illusions about imperialist accepting peaceful coexistence and solving problems in the spirit of peaceful coexistence.

“The same revisionist outlook is shown towards the role of economic competition between the Socialist and imperialist systems. Once more the direct and all-sided aid of the Socialist camp to the people carrying on the militant fight against imperialism, is replaced by the success of the Socialist countries

in economic competition—an opprtunist countries about their duty towards the international revolutionary movement and virtually reduces proletarian internationalism to a fight for a higher standard of life in Socialist countries.

“Again, there is the same reiteration of revisionist outlook on the question of peaceful transition to Socialism from capitalism.....

“As a further concession to this revisionist outlook, the warning clause of the 1960 document which declared : ‘Leninism teaches, and experience confirms, that the ruling classes never relinquish power voluntarily,’ has been deleted.

“The document sustains the illusion that far-reaching social changes can take place in newly-liberated countries, and these countries can even develop a Socialist orientation, without an organized party of the working class based on Marxism-Leninism and without the leading role of the working class. In effect, it means that the democratic anti-feudal anti-imperialist revolution can be completed without the leadership of the working class and its party.

“The lack of common understanding on the struggle against imperialism was revealed in the most striking manner in the vital question of last year’s events in Czechoslovakia.....

“While giving a general call for anti-imperialist unity and action, the conference ignored the vital and important task of healing the rift in the Socialist camp and the world Communist movement, particularly between the two biggest Communist Parties—the CPSU and the CPC.....

“Our criticism of the Communist Party of China has nothing in common with the denunciations made in the conference, denunciations which were only a screen to justify the revisionist policies of the attacking parties.

“It must be mentioned here in this connection that the position taken by some of the parties showed that there was a greater urge now for unity. They protested against this attack, against this polemics in a conference which was supposed to bring about united action among the Communist Parties.....

“The conference, while discussing joint struggle against imperialism, has virtually ignored the mighty anti-imperialist force which People’s China represents. In the document itself, while there is no attack on China, there is hardly any mention of this Socialist State and the continuous American conspiracies against it.....” (C.C. Statement on Moscow Conference)

The Central Committee after rejecting the revisionist conclusions of the Conference at the same time stressed the need for Communist unity in the fight against imperialism :

“Notwithstanding the sharp cleavages in the international Communist movement, our Party stands for joint action of all Communist Parties against imperialism, against the aggressive policies of the American imperialists, for the liberation of people fighting for their freedom, for the final destruction of imperialism, for the defence of the Socialist camp, for peace, democracy and Socialism. The Political Resolution of the Eighth Congress of our Party clearly stated, “It becomes imperative that all Socialist State, despite the existing serious ideological- political differences, devise ways and means of achieving unity in action against imperialist aggressors, which plays a vital part in facilitating the process of ideological-political unity of the camp.”

“While expressing our firm support to all efforts for joint action against imperialism, the Central Committee is of the opinion that consistent struggle against imperialism is not possible unless the Communist Parties overcome revisionist and dogmatic deviations.” (*Ibid*)

Our Party along with the world movement celebrated the Lenin Centenary. The Central Committee produced a document on Lenin paying tribute to the great teacher and outlining his main teachings. In connection with this it strongly countered both the revisionist and Left-dogmatic deviations.

The celebrations were organized on a mass scale in West Bengal. In Calcutta, thousands of people attended the special Lenin Week meetings where lectures were delivered on different aspects of Leninism. Besides, there were cultural shows and other activities in celebration of the day.

Nixon Visit to China and Soviet Union

Basing itself on this objective outlook the Central Committee viewed events and developments with which the two major Socialist State and the two major Communist Parties were connected.

Whereas the revisionist leaders of the CPSU and their Indian sycophants saw in Nixon's visit to China a conspiracy against the USSR, our Party considered it to be a fiasco of the USA's twentytwo-year-long policy of containment and quarantine of China. It at the same time warned that Nixon was attempting to take advantage of the differences in the Socialist camp and sidetrack attention from his aggressive war in Vietnam. It also said the declaration by the U.S. in the Chou-Nixon communique that the United States acknowledged that "Taiwan is a part of China..... etc." was a definite climb-down on the part of the USA.

The Central Committee did not fail to note at the same time that while China, in the communique, reiterated its support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, not a word of condemnation of or protest against the intensified bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was included in it. The solicitude shown by the Chinese Government in the Chou-Nixon communique to the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir is in strange contrast to its attitude to the freedom struggle of Bangladesh.

The division in the Socialist camp and the extreme suspicion bordering on hostility entertained by the USSR and China against each other, have created a situation where instead of the Socialist camp as a whole being in a position to utilise the crisis of imperialism and the inter-imperialist conflicts to deal stunning blows on imperialism, the U.S. imperialists are emboldened to utilise these differences in the Socialist camp to their own advantage.

The disunity and differences between the Soviet Union and China have created a situation, where when armed counter-revolution on a massive scale has been exported into the countries of Indo-China, when U.S. imperialism has mounted

massive attacks of aggression on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, a member of the Socialist camp, the peoples of these countries have to bear the brunt of the attack single-handed. Particularly the Soviet Union and China do not join in a mighty effort to take effective steps immediately to put an end to the naval and aerial aggression but only assist the fighting people by supply of arms.

The failure of the two Socialist States to unite when near-nuclear bombs were raining on Vietnam, the meek retreat before a show of American might when Haiphong was mined, constitutes a disgraceful chapter and reveals the dangers created by differences in the Socialist camp and the pursuit of opportunist policies.

While the C.C. welcomed the Soviet attitude on Bangladesh and the Indo-Soviet Treaty which helped the Indian Government to take a firm stand on the issue, while it appreciated the Soviet warning to other Powers not to interfere in the dispute and its role in the Security Council, it had to criticise sharply, the Brezhnev-Nixon Communique :

“The basic principles of relations together with the earlier agreement on ‘limitations of anti-ballistic missiles system’ and ‘certain agreed measures with regard to strategic offensive arms’ do not really constitute an assurance to the world that it will be free from American blackmail and threats from its genocidal weaponry. If numerical limitations are accepted on certain arms, there is at the same time, complete freedom to improve their destructive capacities. Here is no agreement to reduce the stock of nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination. At best it is an agreement to maintain a balance between the two countries keeping American power of aggression against the rest of the world intact...”

“The leaders of the Soviet Union also cannot escape the charge of extreme cynicism and opportunism in signing a statement on equality of nations with Nixon who is raining bombs on Vietnam and trying to wipe out the freedom-fighters.

“The proviso that ‘both sides should agree not to have unilateral advantage at the expense of the other’ is presented as

a step in the direction of world peace. In reality, it screens the aggressive character of American imperialism and enables Nixon to pose as a champion of peace.

“Millions of people in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are directly or indirectly fighting U.S. imperialism in their struggle for national liberation. The World Communist movement has correctly denounced American imperialism as the gendarme of world reaction. By accepting to recognise its security interests, the Soviet leaders will objectively encourage its aggressive appetite. It should be remembered that the American imperialists claim to be in Vietnam to safeguard the security of the USA.

“It is agreed in the statement of principles that the two side ‘will do their utmost to avoid military confrontation.’ The world proletarian movement welcomes and supports peace between nations. But should this mean that the USA will be permitted to carry on its aggression against others with impunity as it was allowed to do when it recently escalated the war by mining the North Vietnamese seas ?

“Similarly, the provision that ‘the USSR and the USA have a special responsibility as do other permanent members of the Security Council to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would serve to increase international tension’ is likely to mean pressure of both countries to slow down the tempo of anti-imperialist liberation and democratic struggles in the name of avoiding world war. This has been the experience in the past. And an agreement of this type with the imperialists can have no other effect.

“It is quite clear that as in his visit to Peking, in his Moscow negotiations also, Nixon has done his best to exploit the Sino-Soviet differences in the interest of American imperialism, without making any real concessions. He has continued his murderous attacks on Vietnam while talking about peace both in Peking and Moscow and succeeded in diverting attention from his criminal role. In doing this, he was confident that the two Socialist Powers will not join hands to rebuff him. The

joint statement is virtually a Soviet certificate to him that he is negotiable despite his innumerable crimes in Vietnam. The outcome of the Moscow negotiations once more underlines the necessity of Sino-Soviet understanding to rebuff and defeat American imperialism." (P.B. Statement on Soviet U.S. Joint Communique)

In pursuance of the short-term needs of their foreign policies, both the CPSU and the CPC seek to impose on the Communist Parties of newly liberated countries such policies as lead to their liquidation and merger with the parties sponsored by the ruling regimes or virtually make them obedient adjuncts.

The revisionist and dogmatic deviations thus produce disastrous results for the world revolutionary movement. Our Party regards both deviations as equally dangerous and is pledged to fight them to uphold the banner of Marxism-Leninism. It is not a position of equi-distance but one of relentless fight against both distortions of Marxism-Leninism.

VII. Disruptionist and Divisive Tendencies

It is the common experience of the world working class movement that as the class struggle deepens the bourgeoisie uses methods of dividing the working class by making chauvinistic and racial appeals. We are familiar in our country with the use of communal appeal to divide the people.

The Political Resolution before the Congress warns against such appeals which are being used by the ruling classes to disrupt the unity of the workers and other toilers. Unable to solve the problems of unemployment or backwardness the ruling leadership in State after State raised demands of regional chauvinism—jobs for the sons of the soil—and set workers against workers. Such regional appeals are being made for some time in strident tones by the leaders of the Congress party who while themselves remaining united under one party are prepared to set the workers of different regions at each others' throat.

The years that have passed have also seen appeals of this type based on linguistic or other chauvinism. Our C.C. has been vigilant to fight such anti-working-class tendencies, for regional

or other chauvinism is totally inconsistent with Marxism. During the course of the last three years, the C.C. and our State unit fought these tendencies when they raised their head.

The Tamil Nadu State Committee fought the anti-Hindi linguistic fanaticism while fighting for equality for Tamil. The Maharashtra State Committee took up the fight against the Shiv Sena in Bombay and the Assam and Orissa Committees had to warn the people against chauvinistic agitations in their States.

The Kaveri water dispute was being used by the vested interests, including the ruling parties, for rousing chauvinistic passions. In August 1971, in Bangalore three State Committees of our Party, the Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka State Committees, came out with a joint statement based on a principled stand. The Tamil Nadu State Committee published a pamphlet exposing the chauvinism of the ruling party and attacking disruptors of the working class and democratic unity. The three State Committees showed commendable initiative in giving a correct lead to the people anticipating the planned mischief.

Immediately after the mid-term elections, Andhra Pradesh saw the reactionary movement for a separate Telangana State. The vested interests—the landlords—were exploiting people's anger over the economic backwardness of Telangana for their own purposes. The Right Communists in a thorough-going opportunist fashion lent their support to the demand.

The Andhra State Committee of our Party passed a resolution unmasking the game behind it. The P. B. resolution of February 1969 exposed at length the class interests and the divisive game behind it :

“It becomes evident that the bourgeois-landlord leaders of both the regions were, all the while, content and greatly concerned with the division of spoils of the State Governmental power and distribution of Cabinet portfolios, and were least bothered about either the welfare of the common people of the entire Andhra Pradesh or about the honest implementation of the ‘safeguards’ assured to the Telangana people. Both these leaders are mainly engaged in the disruption and suppression of

the strong democratic movement in Andhra Pradesh and in undoing the gains of the peasantry achieved in the course of the heroic Telangana struggle against feudalism and for the formation of Visalaandhra. Having succeeded in this reactionary attempt in some measure, a section of the big landlord leader who nourish the grievance of being denied their share of ministerial portfolios have embarked upon fanning the flames of regionalism and separatism, in a deliberate attempt to divert the growing mass discontent against the Congress policies into fratricidal strife among the people of the two regions. Students suffering due to totally inadequate educational facilities in schools and colleges. The increasing number of educated unemployed who see no prospect of their gainful employment, and the discontented middle classes whose lot is daily deteriorating—all are incited with the mischievous propaganda that it was all due to the so-called 'Andhra' domination and denial of due share to the people of Telangana region. Thus the real and basic causes for the sad and deplorable conditions, causes which are to be directly traced to the reactionary class policies of the Congress Government, are sought to be screened and shielded.

“The criminal manner in which the decadent bourgeois landlord Congress leaders are indulging in these and similar heinous activities of rousing bestial passions of casteism, regionalism, parochialism and national chauvinism in several States all over the country, is a grave menace and a serious warning to every democratic and progressive-minded man and woman in India. The dastardly attacks on the non-Maharashtrian residents of Bombay, particularly on South Indians by the fascist-like Shiv Sena leaders, the riots and lootings organized against the Rajasthanis and hate campaign worked against the Bengalis by the Assam chauvinists through the 'Lachhit Sena', the anti-Andhra hysteria worked up in and around Berhampore in Orissa, and anti-Andhra hate campaign and riots organized in the Telangana region—all belong to the same category. In all this there is a direct hand of one section of the Congress leaders or the other, and established complicity of the Congress

Governments in the States as well as the Centre. Several of these dangerously disruptive movements, it seems, are not only financed by certain big landlords and Big Business circles but also foreign agencies like the American CIA. Thus the crisis-ridden bourgeois-landlord classes are resorting to the whipping up of diverse divisive and reactionary agitations and movements. If they are allowed to grow at the rate they are developing at the present, they pose a very grave threat to the democratic movements and the very unity of the Indian Union and the different peoples who constitute it and open the gates for the rise of dark reaction at home and to imperialists from abroad.” (P.B. Resolution on the Fratricidal Strife in Andhra Pradesh)

The P.B. also said, “It cannot subscribe to the totally erroneous idea of transferring the employees of Andhra origin to the Andhra region. Such a step, instead of providing Government employment to be reserved as per the stipulations of the Telangana safeguards, introduces a vicious principle of denying employment rights to the people of one region in another region of the same State. It erects walls of hatred between the two sections of people living in two regions and hinders the growth of unity and integration of the Telugu-speaking people”. (Ibid)

On the Shiv Sena menace. the P.B. again exposed the complicity or the Congress rulers in raising it to fight the working class movement, condemned the opportunist stand of parties like the PSP, Right C.P., etc. The resolution concluded by saying :

“The P. B. warns all democratic parties against this organization and calls upon them to put up a united struggle to checkmate its advance. The P.B. appeals to the workers, middle class employees and other sections of the toiling people to forge their unbreakable unity to face and defeat this menace. It specially appeals to the Maharashtrian workers and employees not to be misled into internecine conflicts with non-Maharashtrian toilers but to build the unity of all toiling people against Congress policies which really cause unemployment.” (P. B. Resolution on Shiv Sena Violence in Bombay)

One common feature of the disruptive Telangana agitation in Andhra Pradesh and the Shiv Sena orgy of violence in Bombay was that both were patronised and helped by the leaders of the ruling Congress party. While the top leadership of the Congress in the Telangana and Andhra regions of Andhra Pradesh played their respective roles in creating the so-called 'Telangana problem', the Shiv Sena movement had the unconcealed blessing and support of the Home and Chief Ministers of the State as well as the Central Home Minister, Y. B. Chavan. Here, therefore, was a ruling party whose leaders in the two States were appealing to the worst and most chauvinistic sentiments of a section of the people against another section, inciting the killings, lootings, arson and so on, reminiscent of the worst communal riots, in order to consolidate and strengthen themselves in their own factional game.

It was also remarkable that some Left and democratic parties and elements including the Right-Communists were making opportunistic compromises with those who were raising these disruptive issues and exciting passions around them. Following as they did the policy of supporting one bourgeois faction against another, the Right Communists in Andhra Pradesh, for instance, gave the slogan that the Chief Minister should resign—as if that is the solution of the problem. In Bombay, too, while hypocritically disapproving the Shiv Sena violence, they gave a justification for the chauvinistic slogans raised by the Shiv Sena leaders. Our central leadership, as well as the State units in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, had to demarcate themselves from the opportunistic stand taken by these parties.

VIII. Assessment of Present Situation and our Tasks

Political Crisis : In the Bangalore meeting of the Central Committee the Polit Bureau made the following statement in relation to the Political crisis on August 29, 1971 :

Comrades have raised the question why the political report does not contain any reference to the political crisis in India, about which our documents had been writing since 1967. They

have asked what is it that made the P. B. shy away from using the term, political crisis.

“It must be admitted in the beginning that in the earlier documents when the term political crisis was used, it was used in a very specific sense, and it was also stated that the political crisis had not yet matured into a revolutionary crisis.

“With the deepening of the economic crisis, people are being compelled to resist and fight back the misrule of the bourgeois-landlord classes. The political parties and groups of the ruling classes find themselves in utter disarray fighting against each other, while their premier class party, the Congress, which has been built over several decades in the past is disintegrating with a vengeance. The Left and democratic parties and groups under the impact of the growing mass struggles and the mounting anti-Congress mood of the people, are increasingly realising the necessity and urgency of unity among themselves so that they might head the developing mass movement, run the non-Congress alternative Governments in States, and consolidate the popular electoral victories and forge ahead.

“As is clear from this quotation, a number of elements are mentioned here defining the political crisis. Special mention must be made here about the fight inside the Congress which had the monopoly of power since independence. The disintegration of a ruling party need not immediately be an element in the political crisis, but in the special conditions of India, where since Independence, the bourgeois-landlord rule was expressed through the monopoly rule of the Congress, this assumed much importance. Another element that is mentioned here is that the Left and democratic parties are realising the necessity of unity, etc.

“It was in this sense that the political crisis defined. What is the situation today ? Obviously, the masses are bitterly opposed to the misrule of the bourgeois landlord Government and continue to fight it, but the ruling party in the last election has strengthened itself and is no longer in the same condition of crisis as it was after the 1967 elections. Besides, when the mood of the masses is no doubt Left and fighting, the ruling

party for the time being, has succeeded in gaining their vote and confidence. And thirdly, the same ruling party by its clever manoeuvres, has succeeded in undermining the unity of the Left and democratic forces, thereby disrupting the striking power of the people and enhancing its manoeuvring power. No doubt, every day that passes makes it difficult for the disruptors to perpetuate their disruption. But the fact is there today that compared with 1967, the parties of the Left are in disarray and some of them rallied round the ruling party. Howsoever temporary this phenomenon may be, this situation cannot be described as political crisis of the ruling party.

“No doubt, the economic situation is deteriorating, disillusionment is growing and soon large numbers of people who voted for the Indira Congress will find themselves cheated after believing in a number of measures which she announced. Then the masses will move in a militant way shedding their illusions growingly, and meanwhile, under the stress of economic circumstances, and with a correct guidance from our Party, they will compel other democratic parties to give up their disruptive tactics and join the common movement as we already see is happening in West Bengal”.

The C.C. is submitting to the Party Congress its statement on the question of nationalities and corresponding amendments to the Programme.

It has not been possible to deal with the political campaigns run by the Party nor with our activities on the mass fronts.

As the Political Resolution of the Party makes it clear we are facing the threat of a one-party dictatorship, growing authoritarianism and an open onslaught on parliamentary democracy whenever it suits the ruling party and the ruling Classes.

The events in West Bengal constitute a severe and stern warning to us : give up all complacency and be ready to meet the challenge by utilising flexible forms of resistance which Marxism-Leninism arms us with. Our West Bengal comrades are facing the brunt of this new attack, the Party and the mass movement there have to face the challenge of semi-fascist

terror because they constitute the advanced detachment of the democratic and working class movement in India.

The Central Committee has time and again discussed the changing situation in West Bengal. In its April 1972 meeting, it gave particular attention to the problems of the movement under conditions of terror, virtual illegality, with offices of mass organizations occupied by gangsters and with murders perpetrated with the help of the police and administration. The results of these discussions will benefit our movement and our West Bengal Party will no doubt be successful in meeting the situation. We all must pay our tribute to our fighting cadres, our masses all of whom have shown unexampled courage and devotion to the Party in the face of the widespread terror.

We must also understand the precise meaning of this semi-fascist terror in West Bengal. The object is to physically liquidate the Party's cadres and members. Our Party in West Bengal is therefore engaged in a life and death struggle with the bourgeois-landlord State.

All our other State units must realise the gravity of the challenge in West Bengal and do everything to overcome their weaknesses so that they are able to render all help to the Party and movement in West Bengal, and restrain the Government in its vile misdeeds.

Our present Congress is meeting under a political situation which is vastly different from that which obtained at the time of the Eighth Congress.

No more is the ruling party on the defensive as it was then, nor is the democratic opposition on the offensive. The non-Congress UFs which were forged in the years preceding the Fourth General Elections stand disrupted, a section of them having openly joined the camp of the ruling party, helping it in its vicious attacks against the radical democratic movement headed by the CPI(M). The restoration of one-party rule in all the then non-Congress States except Tamil Nadu and a consolidation of the ruling party's position in Parliament have given its leaders such confidence that they can combine a political offensive on the Left democratic movement all over

the country with physical offensives in those parts of the country where the Left democratic movement headed by the CPI(M) is relatively strong.

The shamelessness with which elections were rigged in West Bengal, preceded by the two-year-long continuous attack by the police, the CRP, Congress goondas and the various anti-social, gangs including the former Naxalites, and together with attacks of a similar nature though lesser in the degree of its intensity in other States, indicates the beginning of a new phase of the ruling party's attack against the democratic opposition.

This physical attack on the radical democratic movement is, however, combined with a political offensive which is ostensibly directed against the Right reactionary forces in the country which by confusing and disrupting the radical democratic movement, becomes an offensive against the left-democratic forces as well. The ruling party in its offensive against the radical democratic movement has been able to secure the support not only of the Right Communist Party and some other forces which were part of our Left-democratic movement but also a section of the world revolutionary movement. The hymns of praise sung by the leaders of a section of the international Communist movement headed by the CPSU, together with their attack on the Left-democratic movement in the country headed by the CPI(M) as 'sectarian' and 'disruptive', has enabled the leaders of the ruling party to rehabilitate themselves before the progressive public opinion at the very time when they are resorting to the most bestial attacks on the Left-democratic movement.

The 'Left' manoeuvres, resorted to by the section of the ruling party headed by the Prime Minister and which resulted in the split of the Congress party, have thus enabled the ruling party to get out of the political crisis in which it had found itself just before and immediately after the Fourth General elections. They could not get back to the single-party rule which they had enjoyed before 1967 by the toppling games of 1967-69. On the other hand, they received a big blow in the mid-term elections of 1969. But the 'Left' manoeuvres which resulted in the split

of the ruling party helped them to get back to the same single party rule. The radical democratic movement, on the other hand, stands disrupted.

Our Party has correctly underlined the seriousness of the danger posed by the re-emergence of one-party rule which is a threat not only to the opposition parties but even to independent democratic elements in the ruling party. For, the leading circles of the ruling party are trying to establish the domination of one party over the rest of the nation, as well as of a narrow clique in the ruling party. The politics of the country is inevitably being taken towards "one country, one party, one leader." This therefore is bound to release forces of opposition to the ruling party.

Our analysis of the "Left" manoeuvres of the Indira Congress, the catching slogans it gives, has shown how the bourgeois-landlord classes use changing political slogans to sway the masses. They take full advantage of national sentiment, of the healthy patriotic feelings of the people, pose themselves as fighters for national interests and represent others as interested in sectional interests, pose themselves as fighting reactionaries and carry the people in the elections. As the resolution points out they are no longer keeping quiet after the elections but are entering among the people to control the discontent of the people and divert it into safe channels.

This is a political challenge which has to be met politically by patiently exposing and unmasking the ruling party's promises and slogans on economic and political and national questions. It should be realised that the ruling party is not ruling everywhere only with repression. It is ruling with the aid of deceitful promises by creating illusions and hopes. Such a situation cannot be met only by means of economic struggles. Along with that a desperate political struggle must be waged against the ruling party to win over the masses.

The successes scored by the ruling classes cannot be stable. They already find it difficult to implement the minimum promises they have made.

The short span of a few weeks which has passed since the State Assembly election has witnessed some developments which are an indication of the shape of things to come.

The tall promises of radical reduction in land ceilings and ensuring land to the landless by the ruling Congress party are now being seen in their true colour. The quantum of land ceilings suggested for a family, the exemption and loopholes that are sought to be left, the stiff opposition to even these suggested reforms by the powerful landlord sections in the Congress and Indira Gandhi's plea to understand the difficulties of Chief Ministers and her warning to Congress radicals, all reveal the shallow character of these big "promises" of the big bourgeois-led Government in practice yielding very little to the toiling people.

The much-talked-of document of the Planning Commission on approach to the Plan also shows that the so-called 'break from the reactionary Syndicate Congress', has not made any difference to the basic policies of the Central Government. These are bound to repeat themselves on a number of issues in the future, leading to contradictions between the leadership of the ruling party and a section of the masses who have upto now been and are even now supporting that leadership, but who are bound to get disillusioned as time goes on.

These developing contradictions within the ruling party and the apprehension of all democratic elements at the growing authoritarian trends of the ruling party are bound to create situations in the various parts of the country where the radical democratic movement can act unitedly with wide sections of the people who are today rallied either around the ruling party or behind such opposition parties as are moved by anti-Marxist prejudices. A large number of issues are bound to arise which will make it possible for a wide mobilisation—a mobilisation which will embrace sections of the people belonging to various parties.

Our Party's demand that the radical Left and democratic forces must unite and confront the ruling party is bound to get

larger and larger response. It arises from the needs of the situation, of the democratic movement and as days pass by, parties, groups and increasing number of masses are bound to rally round it. The defection and treachery of the Right C.P. and a few others cannot keep the Left and democratic forces permanently disunited.

What a powerful weapon it becomes today is seen from the experience of West Bengal. There the success of our Party in resurrecting the old U.F. (with the exception of the Right C.P.), delivered a telling blow to the electoral ambitions of the Congress which had to resort to rigging and terror to secure its aims. Thanks to this unity, the people are facing the semi-fascist terror far more unitedly and determinedly than before.

This is all the more true of such issues of the economic life of the people as lead to strikes and agrarian struggles. Even the formation of the much-boosted "National Council of Trade Union" and similar mass organizations will be powerless against the necessity of the common people to fight joint struggles. Such struggles are already being waged in various parts of the country and in various industries and sectors of economic life. On the energy with which our own Party as well as mass organizations such as the CITU, AIKS and so on, take up such issues and build the unity of the people depends the development of a countrywide movement in defence of the interests of the common people.

Such a development of the militant mass movement requires that our Party adopt a proper political approach towards parties, organizations, groups and individuals who can be brought into these struggles.

In the very interests of uniting all these elements in the struggle against the ruling classes, therefore, it is necessary for the Party to carry on a principled ideological-political struggle for the correct proletarian class standpoint. The independent growth of the Party as the ideological-political leader of a broad democratic movement is essential if the various ideological-political positions facing one another in the common

democratic movement are to be reconciled and made part of a united assault on the ruling classes.

Unity in action, principled struggle for the proletarian class standpoint and ideology—these are the two side of the very same policy of that struggle against the ruling classes which can once again put the leaders of the ruling party on the defensive and enable the rdadical democartic movement to go on the offensive

TABLE I

CPI(M) LEADERS, WORKERS AND SYMPATHISERS
KILLED BY CONGRESS, NAXALITES, RIGHT
COMMUNISTS AND OTHER DURING THE PERIOD
MARCH 1969 TO JUNE 1972

By Congress, its INTUC, Youth Congress, Chhatra Parishad, etc.	238
By Naxalities (at times jointly with Right Communists and Congress)	206
In police and CRP firings and in police lock-ups and jail custody	89
By Right Communists	62
By Samyukta Socialist Party	19
In clashes with other parties	19
During clashes with enemies	23
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	656
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FRONTWISE LIST OF PARTY MEMBERS AND
SYMPATHISERS KILLED

Party organizers (Leaders and workers)	150
Party sympathisers	58
Party's trade union leaders and workers	118
Party's kisan leaders, workers and kisans	124
Party leaders, teachers, professors	13
Mahila leaders and mahilas	11
Youth leaders and youth	101
Student leaders and students	57
Children	5
Cultural front workers	6
Employees	13
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	656
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TABLE II

PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND SALE OF PARTY ORGANS
PARTY MEMBERSHIP DEMOCRACY LANGUAGE PAPERS

STATE	1968	1972	Dec. 1968	Dec. 1971	Dec. 1968	Dec. 1971
Andhra	9,428	5,870	130	490	4,500 Weekly	3,500 Bi Weekly
Assam	751	1,135 + 53	80	145	680	
CCMs & Staff		26			D. Hitaishee	1,000 Fortnightly
Bihar	2,882	1,936 + 450	405	640	1,000	1,340 Swadhinata
Delhi Region	650	1,156	325	480	35	260 Swadhinata
		(+ Western U.P.)				
Goa	150	206	10	20		
Gujarat	250	110	70	55	60	85 Swadhinata
Karnataka	1,194	1,415	235	320	2,000 Weekly	3,000 Weekly
Kerala	20,912	39,810	150	640	25,000 Daily	45,000 Daily
					5,000 Weekly	10,000 Weekly
Madhya Pradesh	486	148	35	100	150	270 Swadhinata
Maharashtra	2,316	2,239	340	535	40	250 Swadhinata
						1,200 Fortnightly
Orissa	541	640	130	220		1,000 Monthly
Punjab & Himachal	4,100	3,682	150	300	1,500	1,500 Weekly
					30	155 Swadhinata

TABLE II (CONTD.)

PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND SALE OF PARTY ORGANS
 PARTY MEMBERSHIP DEMOCRACY LANGUAGE PAPERS

STATE	1968	1972	Dec. 1968	Dec. 1971	Dec. 1968	Dec. 1971
Rajasthan	1,195	807	40	65	100	325 Swadhinata
Tamil Nadu	10,017	9,084	420	825	2,000	3,000 Weekly
Tripura	2,092	2,240	5	30		2,000 Weekly
Uttar Pradesh	3,095	1,910	100	265	350	700 Swadhinata
		(Eastern U.P.)				
West Bengal	16,066	34,049 + 347	4,510	5,800	27,500	55,000 Desh
					7,500	Hitaishee
					1,600	20,000 Ganashakti
					1,500	3,200 Swadhinata
					1,000	3,000 Agradoot (Nepali)
					800	10,000 Chhatra Sangram
					4,000	3,000 Gananatya
					2,000	4,000 Eksathe
						3,000 Nandan
						12,000 Yuba Shakti
	76,425	106,363 + 850	7,135	10,930		

TABLE III
PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP OF MASS ORGANIZATIONS IN WHICH CPI(M)
CADRES ARE WORKING

STATE	PARTY MEMBERSHIP		C.I.T.U MEMBERSHIP	S.F.I. MEMBERSHIP	KISAN SABHA & AGRICULTURAL LABOUR	
	1972		1971	DEC. 1971	DEC. 1969	DEC. 1971
Andhra	5,870		19,734	1,670	23,000	89,000
Assam	1,135	+ 53	2,529	2,000	24,622	18,094
Bihar	1,936	+ 450	8,733	2,770	12,066	42,900
Delhi Region	1,156		6,442	—	3,100	7,333
Goa	206		6,004	—	606	505
Gujarat	110		2,724	—		2,333
Karnataka	1,415		24,770	1,625	25,482	30,000
Kerala	39,810		99,246	30,550	117,116	151,272
Madhya Pradesh	148		2,214	—		
Maharashtra	2,239		20,698		29,000	36,000
Orissa	640		2,725	3,125	6,666	3,125
Punjab & Himachal	3,682		4,925	2,520	50,076	10,975
Rajasthan	807		10,367		16,666	16,500
Tamil Nadu	9,084		91,771	2,985	40,000	68,125
Tripura	2,240		3,519	5,700	10,133	22,543
Uttar Pradesh	1,810		16,449	1,500	16,397	40,375
West Bengal	34,049	+ 347	526,987	81,670	589,833	632,495
	106,363	+ 850	850,037	136,115	964,763	1,270,333

The National Question in India*

**Note adopted by the Ninth Congress of the CPI(M)
held in Madurai on June 27- July 2, 1972**

1. The Seventh Congress of our Party while adopting the new Party Programme had decided to delete the clause, “the right of all nationalities to self-determination” from the earlier Programme, deferring the problem for more detailed discussion and study before it was finally decided. The Central Committee of our Party has now decided, after discussion, to recommend to the ensuing Ninth Party Congress to incorporate a new sub-para under the existing para 88 of the Programme, and also rearrange the entire section dealing with the state structure of People’s Democracy. The proposed amendment and the rearranged section are being appended to this note for circulation among the Party ranks for discussion.

2. The Central Committee is of the view that in order to appreciate the full import of the proposed deletion of the cause, i.e., “the right of all nationalities to self-determination”, it is not only necessary to keep in mind the principled Marxist-Leninist stand on the national and colonial question as enunciated and elaborated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, but it is also essential to concretely assess the national question as it confronts us in our country, and the particular new epoch we are passing through.

3. Marx, in the true spirit of proletarian internationalism and keeping in view the interests of the proletarian class struggle for Socialism in the foreground, has set down the principle that “no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations”. It was in

*Refer document under Item No 86 of this Volume which covers discussion on this Note on National Question in the Ninth Congress of CPI(M) held in Madurai in 1972.

pursuance of this fundamental principle that Lenin had elaborated and immensely enriched the national and colonial question, reappraising the entire issue in the light of the “epoch of imperialism and the eve of world Socialist revolution”. He was insisting that a Marxist presentation of the national question “must postulate the division of nations into oppressor and oppressed as basic, significant and inevitable under imperialism”. Explaining the fact that the demand for self-determination of nations comes under the category of democratic demands, he states that the “proletariat can retain its independence only by subordinating its struggle for all democratic demands, not excluding the demand for a republic, to its revolutionary struggle, for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie”. Summing up his famous article on “The Right of Nations to Self-determination”, he states : “In this question, the proletariat of Russia is faced with a two-fold or rather, two-sided task : to combat nationalism of every kind, above all, Great Russian nationalism, to recognise not only full equal rights as regards policy, i.e., the right of nations to self-determination, to secession. And at the same time, it is their task, in the interests of a successful struggle against all and every kind of nationalism among all nations, to preserve the unity of the proletarian struggle and the proletarian organisations, amalgamating these organisations into a close-knit international association despite bourgeois strivings for national exclusiveness.

“Complete equality of rights for all nationalities; the right of nations to self-determination; the unity of workers of all nations— such is the national programme that Marxism, the experience of the whole world, and the experience of Russia teaches the workers.”

All this, in a nutshell, brilliantly sums up the Marxist-Leninist understanding on the principle of self-determination of nations and nationalities, and serves as the guideline for all Communist and Workers’ Parties of the world in chalking out their respective programmes on the national question.

4. The national question as it confronts us in India today : the anti-imperialist movement for Indian liberation had always

been described, in general terms, as the Indian National Movement, and as its corollary people speaking different languages and nationalities living in the Indian sub-continent were being characterised as one single Indian nation. Such a definition of the term nation can stand neither the test of historicity nor science. It does not help one to analyse and assess the national problem in India in all its facets. The Indian sub-continent, both before and after its partition into the Indian Union and Pakistan, is a vast country, comprising peoples speaking different languages, living in different compact and contiguous areas, and belonging to varied ethnical, racial and cultural groups. It was a multi-national State ruled by the British colonial rulers. Neither the sentimental theory that the entire Indian sub-continent was one "nation" nor the pernicious communal theory that it comprised two nations, namely Hindus and Muslims, can meet the truth or the scientific point of view. The very fact that the Indian State is defined in Statute Book as the Indian Union, the fact that almost all the States had to be reorganised and reconstituted on linguistic basis, and the fact that there exists an irrepressible demand for real autonomy and greater powers for the States eloquently support the contention that the Indian Union is multi-lingual and multi-national in character. Without such clear thinking on the issue it is neither possible to consciously work for the preservation and strengthening of Indian unity and its integration nor easy to effectively fight against the forces of disunity and disintegration.

5. The demand for national self-determination and secession of India from the former British empire and for the formation of the separate independent Indian State, and also other demands for the formation of linguistic States in India, in clear class terms, were an expression of the growing bourgeois-democratic movement in India, directed against imperialism for national independence. Objectively speaking, these currents constituted an integral part of the world proletarian struggle against imperialism and for Socialism.

6. With the winning of political independence in the year 1947, the national question in our country has undergone a

significant change. The demand for self-determination and political independence i.e., secession from the British imperialist State, has been won and therefore, does no more remain in the orbit of the demand of political democracy, but acquires the pronounced character of the struggle against the economic dependence on the imperialists and their attempts at perpetuating their economic exploitation. Similarly, the different linguistic or sub-national currents and the struggle for their economic advance is not a struggle against one or the other oppressor nation in the Indian Union, but it is a part of the common struggle of all the nationalities in the country for the liquidation of economic dependence and backwardness. This common struggle will be facilitated by the preservation of Indian unity. On the other hand, growth of fissiparous forces help the ruling classes to disorganise and disrupt the fighting people.

7. The question of nationalities or, to put it in popular terms, the issue of linguistic States and the so-called Centre-State relations stands on a different footing. The principled question here is not one of one oppressor nation dominating, economically and politically, one or several oppressed nations, but a question of the big-bourgeois-landlord classes of different big and small nationalities of the Indian Union holding political power and pursuing the capitalist path of development in collaboration with foreign finance capital. Such a class regime and such a path of development can neither liquidate the economic dependence nor can it complete the still unfinished tasks of the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution. What we find today is more in the nature of class exploitation and oppression by the big bourgeoisie, landlords and the foreign monopolists, rather than the *political oppression* of the Indian people by the foreign imperialist or the oppression of different Indian nationalities at the hands of one or other oppressor nation of India. Though there cannot be any Chinese Wall between class oppression and national oppression, surely they cannot be substituted one for the other as they stand on a different footing. A clear and careful study would reveal that most of the demands raised and voiced by several bourgeois and petty-

bourgeois parties, though they assume national trappings, are really class demands born out of the class rule and exploitation of the bourgeois-landlord regime and its bankrupt path of capitalist development.

8. While the proletariat and its genuine Communist Party shall have to unequivocally champion the real equality and autonomy of the States in the Indian Union and oppose any and every manifestation of national oppression, it cannot but take serious note of the alarming developments that seriously threaten the unity of the working class and the toiling people of India at the hands of narrow nationalists and chauvinists of the different nationalities. Issues such as setting up a major industry like a steel plant or oil refinery, or a shipyard in the public sector are exploited to rouse and mobilise people of a particular linguistic State against the Union Centre as well as some other brother States. Border disputes between States are utilised to whip up national chauvinism while leaving out the main culprit, the Central Government, which opportunistically refuses to enforce a principled solution. Urban unemployment in key industrial centres is sought to be traced to the influx of this or that linguistic group to these centres, and anti-minority riots are organised to disrupt the unity of the class and mass organisations of the people. Different linguistic and nationality groups in Government services at the Centre as well as in the States often become victims of narrow nationalism and chauvinism fostering mistrust and animosity between different nationalities in the Indian Union. Hide-bound religious divisions are exploited by certain interested forces even to disrupt the same language-speaking nationality as seen in the case of Punjab. Warring landlord-bourgeois factions do not hesitate to incite people of one region against another region of the same nationality as witnessed in Andhra Pradesh, with the slogan of a separate Telangana State. The separatist movements in Vidarbha, Saurashtra and the like—all don the cloak of perverted and distorted nationalism and regionalism. The big bourgeois leaders at the Centre and their apologists seek to utilise all these disruptive agitations in order to deny the status of real autonomy

to the States, and even undo the reorganisation of States on linguistic basis—a demand achieved after a bitter and prolonged struggle.

9. The working class movement in India, at the present stage of development, facing the threat of disunity and disruption by the class policies of the big bourgeois-landlord Government on the one hand and the narrow nationalist and regional disruptive forces in the States on the other is called upon to evolve its own specific and concrete policy on the issue of nationalities and their integration in the Indian Union. The mere repetition of the slogan of self-determination of nations and nationalities which of course, includes the right of secession, is tantamount to a concession to the disruptive forces of narrow nationalism and chauvinism, instead of organising, educating and mobilising the working class against all such forces in the true spirit of Indian unity and proletarian internationalism. The Marxist upholding of the principle of self-determination of nations is chiefly intended in the struggle against imperialism and for forging of the fraternal bonds of class and national solidarity among different nationalities and linguistic States. The Marxist attitude to this question is strictly critical, and is guided by the principle of proletarian internationalism, namely, that “no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations”. Marxist-Leninists by inscribing this principle on their banner are “thereby committed to renounce retention by force when they come to power”; that they are committed to the just demand of “no national privileges and no national inequality”; they do not “brush aside the mass national movements once they have started and refuse to support what is progressive in them;” provided they are not the revolts of the reactionary classes; and their upholding of the principle does not at all commit them to supporting all types of disruptive secessionist movements. Such in brief, are the Marxist guidelines on the issue.

10. Lenin in his famous treatise on the national question written during the years 1913-1916, had divided the countries and States into three main types in order to examine the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat and their parties regarding the

national question. They, in the words of Lenin, are :

“First, the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe and the United States”;

“Secondly, Eastern Europe : Austria, the Balkans and particularly, Russia ;”

“Thirdly, the semi-colonial countries, such as China, Persia and Turkey, and all the colonies, which have a combined population of 1,000 million.”

Pointing out the tasks of the respective contingents of the revolutionary proletariat, he states thus :

“The tasks of the proletariat of these ruling nations are the same as those of the proletariat in England in the nineteenth century in relation to Ireland”. i.e., to come out openly in support of the secession of Ireland and its independence.

“With regard to the second type of countries which includes tsarist Russia, where a developed bourgeois democratic national movement and intensified national struggle were present, the proletariat has to champion the right of nations to self-determination against the particular oppressor nation and the most difficult and most important task in this is to unite the class struggle of the workers of oppressor nations with the workers of the oppressed nations.”

Regarding the third category of countries the Marxists “must not only demand the unconditional and immediate liberation of the colonies without compensation—and this demand in its political expression signifies nothing else than recognition of the right of self-determination, they must render determined support to the more revolutionary elements in the bourgeois democratic movements for national liberation in these countries and assist their uprising—or revolutionary war, in the event of one against the imperialist Powers that oppress them”.

The present State of the Indian Union and the specific nature and character of the nationalities problem does not strictly fit into the above three categories, and substantial differences exist.

11. In the three categories cited above, the proletarian party was enjoined to incorporate the slogan of the right of self-determination of nations, a slogan specifically *directed against*

a particular oppressor nation and its ruling class, and the proletarian party was facing the “task of uniting the class struggle of the workers of the oppressor nations with that of the workers of the oppressed nations”. In the colonies and semi-colonies the proletariat was enjoined even to render determined support to the revolutionary elements in the bourgeois democratic movement for national liberation in these countries and assist their uprising. In the case of our present-day Indian Union, this slogan is neither directed against imperialism as was the case before political independence, nor against any particular oppressor nation since such a nation is absent in that form.

12. It is true that this slogan was enshrined in the Soviet Constitution of 1935, where both the class oppression and national oppression had been abolished. It was enshrined to demonstrate the triumph of this great principle through the Soviet Socialist Revolution; and it was incorporated to assure all the small non-Russian nationalities of complete equality to the point of secession and separate Statehood. It was also meant to contrast with the imperialist States which are forcibly retaining nations and countries, denying them the right to secede and form their own independent States. It may also be mentioned here that several other Socialist States which are multinational have not incorporated the slogan of the right of self-determination of nations in their programmes. There is no compelling reason why it should be obligatory to insert this slogan in our programme, and that, too, when we cannot postulate the division of Indian nationalities into what are called oppressor and oppressed, and when the big bourgeois-landlord Government on the one hand and several chauvinist and jingoist groups in different nationalities on the other are endangering working class unity by fostering separatist and disruptive forces, thus pushing into the forefront of the proletarian party the foremost task of fighting against these trends.

13. There is another Leninist guideline for the proletariat on the issue of right of self-determination and secession. Citing the example of Norway and Sweden in the year 1905 when Norway

seceded from Sweden, Lenin was emphasising that it was correct on the part of the Norwegian working class "to support Norwegian peasant democracy—with all its philistine limitations", while in the case of the Swedish proletariat it would have been a betrayal of the cause of Socialism and democracy if they had not opposed the Swedish bourgeoisie and landlords with all their might and if they had not supported the demand for Norway's freedom to secede. Such was the Marxist point of view regarding the tasks of the proletariat of different nationalities of a single State. But here again the stand of the respective proletarian contingents could be decided on the clear basis of demarcating the oppressed Norwegian nation from that of the oppressor Swedish nation and its bourgeois-landlord aristocracy. In our case, the Party Programme, which is the programme for all the working class of India, irrespective of their separate linguistic or national entity, cannot delienate which is the oppressor nation and which are the oppressed nations. The inclusion of the demand for right of self-determination and secession might carry with it the danger of different linguistic contingents of the Indian proletariat acquiescing in the secessionist agitations, instead of opposing them, and unitedly fighting for real autonomy of States against any traces of inequality.

14. Our Party takes due note of the attempts by the bourgeois-landlord Government to impose one language, Hindi, as the sole official language of the Indian Union, and the inequality such a course engenders between the Hindi-speaking and non-Hindi-speaking nationalities. Hence it is opposed to it and advocates equal status for all the languages.

15. Similarly, it is aware that the tribal people and more particularly the small border nationalities, in several respects, suffer not only from crass class oppression but also a sort of "national" oppression, at the hands of other more advanced nationalities. Their social emancipation as well as the success of their struggle against all traces of national inequality rests with the unity and united struggle of the working class of India, but not in the demand for secession or actual secession.

Report of Discussion on the National Question in the Ninth Congress held in Madurai in 1972

Comrade M. Basavapunnaiiah introducing the amendments proposed to the Party Programme and the Central Committee's Note on the National Question explained these amendments and narrated the Party's experience in regard to this question.

The Party had tried to deal with the problem in 1943. Subsequently we found that our application of the theory was defective, that we failed to understand the role of imperialism, we failed to understand the influence of communal separatism, that we had even tried to pander to communal separatism. It is not that if we had taken a correct stand on the question, the partition of the country could have been avoided. We were too small a force for that.

Historical Background

At that time we had no Party Programme. In 1951 when we adopted the first Party Programme, we formulated in it a set of principles including the right of all nationalities to self-determination.

Subsequently we submitted a memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission in 1954. Here we completely skipped the programmatic formulation, in fact, we did not touch any of the fundamental questions.

We had some positive achievements since then. Linguistic States were formed on the basis of language and nationalities. The report of the Motilal Nehru Committee on reorganisation

Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, July 16, 1972. Refer the Note on National Question in India under Item No. 86 of this Volume.

of States had in 1927 accepted the principle of linguistic States. But once in power the Congress had gone back on this commitment and it was our Party which took up this issue and fought for it.

Even then in certain cases, as in Maharashtra, under the leadership of Dange we were led astray and trailed behind the bourgeoisie.

It is true that after we parted company with the revisionists we have been more careful in tackling questions of this kind when for instance demands were raised and agitations organised on the question of location of a steel plant or oil refinery or similar public sector projects. But our Marxism even today is not so strong as to resist such pressures. We can not claim that we have always stood by the proletarian outlook and principles. Even within the present linguistic States we see narrow parochial considerations raising their head on the question of location of projects, etc., and even on the question of employment. We have also seen separatist movements like that in Telangana and Vidarbha.

There are backward areas in the country but that is the result of the mutilated growth that has been taking place under the capitalist path pursued by the Indian ruling classes. Discrimination by the Centre against West Bengal or Kerala has been there because the democratic movement led by our Party in these States has been strong.

The proposal for the amendment of the Programme which was being made now was the result of a review of all these developments. So far we have been repeating a set of principles, now we are making an attempt at concrete application of these principles to our situation.

At the outset it should be made clear that the right of self-determination of nationalities is a principle which no Marxist will deny. But the question is, should it form part of our Programme, will its inclusion in the Programme help the path of the Indian Revolution? The principle should not be mechanically applied. We have to consider what happens to our class, our Party before we come to conclusions on this question.

Class Exploitation

What we find in our country today is more in the nature of class exploitation and oppression by the big bourgeoisie, landlords and the foreign monopolists rather than political oppression of the Indian people by foreign imperialists or the oppression of different Indian nationalities by one or other oppressor nation. Though there cannot be any Chinese wall between class oppression and national oppression, they cannot be substituted for each other. We cannot postulate the division of Indian nationalities into what are called oppressor and oppressed.

Can the Indian monopoly houses be characterised as belonging to any particular nationality? Here the question is not of one oppressor nation dominating economically and politically one or several oppressed nations, but a question of the big bourgeois-landlord classes of different big and small nationalities of the Indian Union holding political power and pursuing the capitalist path of development in collaboration with foreign finance capital.

The different linguistic or sub-national currents and the struggle for their economic advance is not a struggle against one or the other oppressor nation in the Indian Union, it is a part of the common struggle of all the nationalities in the country for the liquidation of economic dependence and backwardness.

Preservation of Unity

What can facilitate this common struggle? It will be facilitated by the preservation of Indian unity. The growth of fissiparous forces only helps the ruling classes to disorganise and disrupt the fighting people.

The big bourgeois-landlord Government on the one hand and several chauvinist and jingoist groups in different nationalities on the other are fostering separatist and disruptionist forces and today it is all the more important for us to fight for the unity of the proletariat, to fight all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas in the working class movement.

Our Party Programme which is programme for the entire working class of this country irrespective of their separate linguistic or national entity cannot delienate which is the oppressor nation and which are the oppressed nations. The inclusion of the demand for the right of self-determination and secession might carry with it the danger of different linguistic contingents of the working class acquiescing in the secessionist agitations instead of opposing them and fighting unitedly for real autonomy of States and against any traces of inequality. Some comrades will not take it only as a principle but as something obligatory.

Comrade Basavapunnaiiah drew the attention of the Congress to the amendment which was being made in the Programme taking note of the attempts of the bourgeois-landlord Government to impose one language, Hindi, as the sole official language of the Indian Union and the inequality which such a course engenders between the Hindi-speaking and non-Hindi-speaking nationalities. The amendment to the Programme again emphasises the equal status of all the languages.

Participating in the discussion on the subject were Shanti Shekhar Bose, Syed Sahedullah, Ananda Pathak and Robin Chatterjee from West Bengal, M. S. Devadas and C. A. Peter from Kerala, B. Narasimha Reddy from Andhra Pradesh, N. Ram and Mathew Kurien from the C. C. Staff, and Gerald Pereira from Goa.

The rearranged text of the section of the Party Programme on the State Structure of People's Democracy as adopted by the Party Congress now reads :

The People's Democratic India will be a voluntary union of the peoples of various nationalities of India.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is opposed to the drive of the ruling classes for centralisation denying autonomy and is also opposed to all disruptionist secessionist movements.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) works for the preservation and promotion of the unity of the Indian Union on the basis of real equality and autonomy for the different

nationalities that inhabit the country, and to develop a democratic state structure as outlined below :

1. The Indian Union shall be a Federation based on democratic centralism.
2. The People are sovereign. All organs of State power shall be answerable to the people. The supreme authority in exercising State power shall be the people's representatives elected on the basis of adult franchise and the principle of proportional representation, and subject to recall.

Universal, equal and direct suffrage for all citizens who have attained the age of 18 to be implemented in all elections to Parliament, State Legislatures and local self-government bodies. Secret ballot and the right of any voter to be elected to any representative institution to be ensured.

3. At the all-India Centre, there shall be two Houses, the House of the People and the House of States. Both shall have equal powers and equal numbers. The House of States shall have also equal representation from all the States in the Indian Union. The President shall act in accordance with the decisions of both the Houses and shall have no other powers.
4. All States in the Indian Union shall have real autonomy and equal powers.

The tribal areas or the areas where population is specific in ethnic composition and is distinguished by specific social and cultural conditions will have regional autonomy with regional Government within the State concerned and shall receive full assistance for their development.

5. There shall not be upper Houses at the States level. Nor shall there be Governors for the States appointed from above. All administrative services shall be under the direct control of the respective States or local authorities. States shall treat all Indian citizens alike, and there shall not be any discrimination on the ground of caste, community and nationality.

6. Equality of all national languages in Parliament and Central administration shall be recognised. Members of Parliament will have the right to speak in any national language and simultaneous translation will have to be provided in all other national languages. All Acts, Government orders and resolutions shall be made available in all national languages. The use of Hindi as the official language shall not be made obligatory. In the course of growing economic, social and intellectual intercourse, the people of different States of India will develop in practice the language of intercommunications most suitable to their needs. The use of English, in the fields of administration, legislation, judiciary and as the medium of instruction in education shall be discarded, replacing it with the national languages. Right of people to receive instruction in their mothertongue in educational institutions; the use of the national language of the particular linguistic State as the language of administration in all its public and State institutions, as well as its use as the medium of education in the State up to the highest standard; provision for the use of the language of a minority or minorities or of a region where necessary in addition to the language of the State shall be implemented. Urdu language and its script shall be protected.
7. The People's Democratic Government will take measures to consolidate the unity of India by fostering and promoting mutual co-operation between the constituent States and between the peoples of different States in the economic, political and cultural spheres. It will pay special attention and render financial and other assistance to economically backward and weaker States, regions and areas with a view to helping them rapidly to overcome their backwardness.
8. The Peoples' Democratic State, in the field of local administration, shall ensure a wide network of local bodies from village upward, directly elected by the people

and vested with power and responsibility and provided with adequate finances.

9. The People's Democratic State shall strive to infuse in all our social and political institutions the spirit of democracy. It extends democratic forms of initiative and control over every aspect of national life. A key role in this will be played by the trade union, peasant and agricultural workers' associations, and mass organisations of the working people. The Government will take steps to make the legislative and executive machinery of the country continuously responsive to the democratic wishes of the people, and will ensure that the masses and their organisation are drawn into active participation in the administration and work of the State. It works for the elimination of bureaucracy and bureaucratic practices in the State and administration.
10. Democratic changes will be introduced in the matter of administering justice. Prompt and fair justice shall be ensured. The separation of the judiciary from the executive will be ensured. The appointment of judges will be subject to approval of Parliament. Legislatures and other people's organs at different levels.
Free legal aid and consultation will be provided for the people in order to make legal redress easily available to all citizens.
Right of persons to sue any official before a court of law shall be ensured.
11. The People's Democratic Government will infuse the members of the armed forces with the spirit of patriotism, democracy and service to the people. It will ensure them good living standards and conditions of service, and provide them with maximum possible opportunities for cultural life, as well as the education and well being of their children. It encourages all able-bodied persons to undergo military training and be imbued with the spirit of national independence and its defence.

12. Full civil liberties shall be guaranteed. Inviolability of person and domicile, and no detention of person without trial, unhampered freedom of conscience, religious belief and worship, speech, Press assembly, strike and combination, freedom of movement and occupation.
13. Equal right for all citizens and equal pay for equal work irrespective of religion, caste, sex, race and nationality.
14. Wide disparities in salaries and incomes will be abolished.
15. Abolition of social oppression of one caste by another and untouchability to be punished by law.
Special facilities for scheduled castes, tribes, and other backward communities shall be provided in the matter of services and special and educational amenities.
16. Removal of social inequalities and disabilities from which women suffer, equal rights with men in such matters as inheritance of property, enforcement of marriage and divorce laws, admission to professions and services.
17. Secular character of the State shall be guaranteed. Interference by religious institutions in the affairs of the State and political life of the country shall be prohibited. Religious minorities shall be given protection and any discrimination against them will be forbidden.
18. The State shall take over education and its secular character shall be ensured.
Free and compulsory education up to the secondary stage shall be guaranteed.
19. A wide network of health, medical and maternity services shall be established, free of cost, and rest-homes and recreation centres for working people and old-age pension shall be guaranteed.
20. The People's Democratic State and Government will undertake the important task of unleashing the creative talents of our people for developing and extending the new progressive people's culture which is anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and democratic in character. It shall take the following necessary measures to foster, encourage and develop such literature, art and culture as will—

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- help the people to get rid of caste and communal hatred and prejudices and ideas of subservience and superstitions.
- help each nationality including the tribal people to develop their distinct language, culture and way of life in unison with the common aspirations of the democratic masses of the country as a whole.
- help all our people to develop feelings of brotherhood with all peace-loving peoples and countries of the world, and to discard ideas of racial and national hatred.

In Para 90 of Programme under the head “In the Field of Industry and Labour” add sub-item (8) at the end :

“Maximum relief from taxation to workers, peasants and artisans shall be given while graded tax in agriculture, industry and trade will be introduced and profits will be controlled.”

Amendment to the Programme of CPI(M)

Adopted by the Ninth Congress of CPI(M) held in Madurai on June 27- July 2, 1972

The State Structure of People's Democracy

88. In the sphere of state structure :

The People's Democratic India will be a voluntary union of the peoples of various nationalities of India.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is opposed to the drive of the ruling classes for centralisation denying autonomy and is also opposed to all disruptionist secessionist movements.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) works for the preservation and promotion of the unity of the Indian Union on the basis of real equality and autonomy for the different nationalities that inhabit the country, and to develop a democratic state structure as outlined below :

1. The Indian Union shall be a Federation based on democratic centralism.
2. The people are sovereign. All organs of state power shall be answerable to the people. The supreme authority in exercising state power shall be the people's representatives elected on the basis of adult franchise and the principle of proportional representation, and subject to recall. Universal, equal and direct suffrage for all citizens who have attained the age of 18 to be implemented in all elections to Parliament, State Legislatures and local self-government bodies. Secret ballot and the right of any voter to be elected to any representative institution to be ensured.
3. At the all-India Centre, there shall be two Houses, the House of the People and the House of States. Both shall

Refer the Programme of CPI(M) covered under Item No. 83 of this Volume.

have equal powers and equal numbers. The House of States shall have also equal representation from all the States in the Indian Union. The President shall act in accordance with the decisions of both the Houses and shall have no other powers.

4. All states in the Indian Union shall have real autonomy and equal powers.

The tribal areas or the areas where population is specific in ethnic composition and is distinguished by specific social and cultural conditions will have regional autonomy with regional Government within the State concerned and shall receive full assistance for their development.

5. There shall not be upper Houses at the States level. Nor shall there be Governors for the States appointed from above. All administrative services shall be under the direct control of the respective States or local authorities. States shall treat all Indian citizens alike, and there shall not be any discrimination on the ground of caste, community and nationality.

6. Equality of all national languages in Parliament and Central administration shall be recognised. Members of Parliament will have the right to speak in any national language and simultaneous translation will have to be provided in all other national languages. All Acts, Government orders and resolutions shall be made available in all national languages. The use of Hindi as the official language shall not be made obligatory. In the course of growing economic, social and intellectual intercourse, the people of different States of India will develop in practice the language of intercommunication most suitable to their needs. The use of English, in the fields of administration, legislation, judiciary and as the medium of instruction in education shall be discarded, replacing it with the national languages. Right of people to receive instruction in their mother-tongue in educational institutions; the use of the national language of the particular linguistic state as the language of administration

in all its public and State institutions, as well as its use as the medium of education in the State up to the highest standard; provision for the use of the language of a minority or minorities or of a region where necessary in addition to the language of the State shall be implemented. The Urdu language and its script shall be protected.

7. The People's Democratic Government will take measures to consolidate the unity of India by fostering and promoting mutual co-operation between the constituent states and between the peoples of different states in the economic, political and cultural spheres. It will pay special attention and render financial and other assistance to economically backward and weaker states, regions and areas with a view to helping them rapidly overcome their backwardness.
8. The People's Democratic State, in the field of local administration, shall ensure a wide network of local bodies from village upward, directly elected by the people and vested with power and responsibility and provided with adequate finances.
9. The People's Democratic State shall strive to infuse in all our social and political institutions the spirit of democracy. It extends democratic forms of initiative and control over every aspect of national life. A key role in this will be played by the trade unions, peasant and agricultural workers' associations, and other class and mass organisations of the working people. The Government will take steps to make the legislative and executive machinery of the country continuously responsive to the democratic wishes of the people, and will ensure that the masses and their organisations are drawn into active participation in the administration and work of the State. It works for the elimination of bureaucracy and bureaucratic practices in the state and administration.
10. Democratic changes will be introduced in the matter of administering justice. Prompt and fair justice shall be ensured. The separation of the judiciary from the executive

will be ensured. The appointment of judges will be subject to approval of Parliament, Legislatures and other people's organs at different levels.

Free legal aid and consultation will be provided for the people in order to make legal redress easily available to all citizens.

Right of persons to sue any official before a court of law shall be ensured.

11. The People's Democratic Government will infuse the members of the armed forces with the spirit of patriotism, democracy and service to the people. It will ensure them good living standards and conditions of service, and provide them with maximum possible opportunities for cultural life, as well as the education and well-being of their children. It encourages all able-bodied persons to undergo military training and be imbued with the spirit of national independence and its defence.
12. Full civil liberties shall be guaranteed. Inviolability of person and domicile, and no detention of persons without trial, unhampered freedom of conscience, religious belief and worship, speech, press, assembly, strike and combination, freedom of movement and occupation.
13. Right to work as a fundamental right of every citizen shall be guaranteed; equal right for all citizens and equal pay for equal work irrespective of religion, caste, sex, race and nationality shall be ensured.
14. Wide disparities in salaries and incomes will be abolished.
15. Abolition of social oppression of one caste by another and untouchability to be punished by law.
Special facilities for scheduled castes, tribes, and other backward communities shall be provided in the matter of services and other special and educational amenities.
16. Removal of social inequalities and disabilities from which women suffer, equal rights with men in such matters as inheritance of property, enforcement of marriage and divorce laws, admission to professions and services.

17. Secular character of the state shall be guaranteed. Interference by religious institutions in the affairs of the State and political life of the country shall be prohibited. Religious minorities shall be given protection and any discrimination against them will be forbidden.
18. The state shall take over education and its secular character shall be ensured.
Free and compulsory education up to the secondary stage shall be guaranteed.
19. A wide network of health, medical and maternity services shall be established, free of cost, and rest-homes and recreation centres for working people and old-age pension shall be guaranteed.
20. The People's Democratic State and Government will undertake the important task of unleashing the creative talents of our people for developing and extending the new progressive people's culture which is anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and democratic in character. It shall take the following necessary measures to foster, encourage and develop such literature, art and culture as will—
 - help the people in their struggle to improve their living conditions and enrich their material and cultural life.
 - help the people to get rid of caste and communal hatred and prejudices and ideas of subservience and superstitions.
 - help each nationality including the tribal people to develop their distinct language, culture and way of life in unison with the common aspirations of the democratic masses of the country as a whole.
 - help all our people to develop feelings of brotherhood with all peace-loving peoples and countries of the world, and to discard ideas of racial and national hatred.

* * * *

In section 90 of the Programme under the head "In the field of industry and labour" add sub-item (8) at the end.

"Maximum relief from taxation to workers, peasants and artisans shall be given while graded tax in agriculture, industry and trade will be introduced and profits will be controlled."

Diary of the Ninth Congress of CPI(M)

Held in Madurai on June 27-July 2, 1972

June 27—Exactly at 11 a.m. a delegation of agricultural workers arrive with the burning torch from Kizh Venmani where 44 agricultural workers were burnt to death in December 1968. They have marched 287 miles starting on May 19 covering all the villages and towns on the way spreading the message of the Party Congress. Comrade Sundarayya receives the torch at the gate of Kizh Venmani Nagar on the spacious Tumkum Maidan. The torch is planted in front of the Martyrs' Column—burning day and night of the week of the Congress, a constant reminder of the sacrifices many have made to build the Party.

The Red Flag is hoisted by Comrade Sundarayya. The delegates and others salute the Flag with clenched fists, march round the Martyrs' Column offering floral tributes and then march into the hall. The platform has a huge Red Flag as its backdrop and the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin adorn the proscenium.

On behalf of the Reception Committee, Comrade M. R. Venkataraman welcomes the delegates. A Presidium is then elected consisting of Comrades Promod Dasgupta, M. R. Venkataraman, M. Hanumantha Rao, C. K. Susheela and Harkishan Singh Surjeet. The delegates stand up and pay their homage as the resolutions on Comrade Ho Chi Minh, martyrs and condolence are adopted by the Congress. The Steering Committee of the Congress will consist of the members of the Polit Bureau and the Credentials Committee appointed by the

Congress has on it Comrades M. A. Rasul, P. Narayanan and C. Govindarajan.

The agenda and timetable of the Congress is then presented and approved.

The delegates' session then breaks for recess. The delegates are housed in sheds on the maidan next to the hall and there is a huge dining hall which can cater to about 400 people at a time. The Tamil Nadu leaders of the Party and the numerous volunteers are all attention to the needs of the delegates.

The session reassembles at four when Comrade B. T. Ranadive introduces the Draft Political Resolution of the Central Committee.

June 28—The session begins at 9.30 a.m. There is standing ovation when the messages from the Workers' Party of Korea and the Communist Party of Romania are read out by Comrade Sundarayya. Again the delegates stand up and cheer the fighting people of Vietnam as they approve the resolution on Vietnam moved by Comrade Ramamurti.

After Comrade Surjeet reports on the amendments during the pre-Congress discussions, the discussion on the Draft Political Resolution begins. Fortyone delegates participate in the discussions during the morning and evening sessions of the 28th and the morning session of the 29th.

June 29—At 5 p.m. Comrade Ranadive replies to the discussion and the session concludes for the day.

June 30—The session begins in the morning with the adoption of a resolution on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes moved by Comrade Ramamurti.

After a report is made on behalf of the Steering Committee as to what amendments are being accepted, the Political Resolution is approved by the Congress amidst cheers.

Comrade Basavapunnaiiah then introduces the Central Committee's Note on the National Question and the amendment proposed to the Party Programme. During the afternoon session, after Ramamurti moves the resolution on Nixon's visits to Peking and Moscow and it is adopted, Comrade Basavapunnaiiah continues his report. Ten delegates participate in the discussion that follows.

July 1—Comrade Jyoti Basu moves the resolution on Repression throughout the Country and Semi-Fascist Terror in West Bengal and Comrade Ramamurti the resolution on Freedom of Trade Unions and Workers' Struggle, both of which are adopted.

Comrade Basavapurnaiah then sums up the discussion on the national question after which the Programme amendment is adopted with some changes proposed by the Steering Committee.

Before the morning session concludes, Comrade Sundarayya announces that the message from the Communist Party of Cuba has arrived, that it is in Spanish and is being translated. Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad then moves the resolution on the Kerala Struggle and with the adoption of that resolution, the morning session came to an end.

When the delegates reassemble for the evening session, Comrade Sundarayya reads out the message from the Communist Party of Cuba and the delegates give a standing ovation. The Congress then adopts three messages of thanks to the Workers' Party of Korea, the Communist Party of Cuba and the Communist Party of Romania.

Comrade Surjeet then moves the resolution on Ceiling on Landholdings, Comrade Ramamurti the resolutions on the Approach Document to the Fifth Five-Year Plan and Ceiling on Urban Property. The resolutions are adopted after which Comrade Sundarayya makes the report on Party organisation. Fourteen delegates participate in the discussion which is summed up by Comrade Sundarayya.

Comrade Sundarayya then moves the amendment to the Party Constitution which is adopted. The Credentials Committee's report is then presented by Comrade Govindarajan.

Comrade Sundarayya then places the panel for the new Central Committee after the Congress approves that the strength of the C. C. should be 31. The panel consists of the 28 members of the previous C. C. and Comrades Keshto Ghosh, E. Balanandan and Nripen Chakrabarti. The panel is unanimously approved.

July 2—The new C. C. meets and re-elects Comrade Sundarayya as the General Secretary and members of the old P.B. to the New P.B.

When the delegates' session meets at 11 a.m. Comrade Promod Dasgupta announced that Comrade Sundarayya has been re-elected General Secretary. The delegates stand up and cheer him in a standing ovation.

The delegates then approve a Statement on the official celebrations of the 25th Anniversary of Independence and the Party's attitude to it moved by Comrade Ranadive.

Comrade Sundarayya then sums up the work of the Congress and with the singing of the *Internationale* and thunderous slogans of "CPI(M) Zindabad," the delegates' sessions of the Ninth Congress come to a close.

As the delegates come out, they find the city has taken on a new appearance. The gate and vicinity Kizh Venmani Nagar are packed with people, from all the districts of Tamil Nadu and a few from Kerala and Karnataka who are arriving to participate in the open rally in the evening. On the roads, every two-three minutes there is a truck or bus decorated and carrying slogan-shouting people. They are coming from all over the State. All the street corners are colourfully decorated and there is non-stop singing of revolutionary songs. Almost every person one meets on the streets is wearing some badge or other, mostly with portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, or Ho Chi Minh. And then by four in the evening all roads lead to the Race Course Maidan.

The School Park in the north of the city was the starting point for a huge and colourful demonstration that traversed the main thoroughfares of the city. With two huge elephants with customary decorations forming its front, there were horsedrawn carriages—numbering not less than two hundred and all decorated with flowers and festoons, tableaus, bullock carts with entire families of peasants, cycle-rickshaws forming an unbroken chain beside the thousands and thousands who marched in formation all the eight miles to the venue of the open rally.

At the head of this demonstration were the members of the Central Committee in two decorated lorries.

Fortunately there had been no rains, though an overcast sky made the atmosphere sultry. But it could not dampen the spirits of those who began collecting first in small numbers, then in groups and later in a stream at the Maidan. The two wings of the stadium flanking the centre one, which was turned into the rostrum for the meeting, were filled to overflowing in a matter of seconds. And when the impressive fireworks were over and the speeches began, the number of those who squatted facing the rostrum could easily be anywhere between thirty and forty thousand.

The newly-elected members of the Central Committee were introduced by Comrade A. Balasubramanyam, himself a C. C. member, before the meeting began under the presidentship of Comrade P. Ramamurti. Beside Comrade P. Sundarayya, Comrades B. T. Ranadive, E. M. S. Namboodiripad and Jyoti Basu addressed the gathering.

It was eleven o'clock in the night when the trek back began. The road was jammed again, the air was rent with militant slogans, the people of Madurai again lined the streets.

The Ninth Congress of the CPI(M) thus ended, and thus was born a new awareness of the struggles and sacrifices ahead and a sense of new confidence to overcome them.

The New Central Committee of CPI(M)

Elected by the Ninth Congress in Madurai in 1972

The Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) elected a Central Committee of thirtyone members—twentyeight members of the outgoing Central Committee and three more—Comrades Keshto Ghosh, E. Balanandan and Nripen Chakrabarti.

Comrades Muzzaffar Ahmad
 Promod Dasgupta
 Jyoti Basu
 Harekrishna Konar
 Samar Mukherjee
 Keshto Ghosh
 E. M. S. Namboodiripad
 A. K. Gopalan
 C. H. Kanaran
 E. K. Nayanar
 E. Balanandan
 P. Ramamurti
 M. R. Venkataraman
 A. Balasubramanyam
 P. Sundarayya
 M. Basavapunnaiah
 M. Hanumantha Rao
 N. Prasada Rao
 B. T. Ranadive
 S. Y. Kolhatkar
 Goadavari Parulekar
 Mohan Punamiya

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Harkisan Singh Surjeet
Satwant Singh
Shankar Dayal Tewari
S. S. Shrivastava
Achintya Bhattacharya
Dasrath Deb
Nripen Chakrabarti
Desraj Chadha
Ramdass

The Central Committee, meeting on July 2, 1972, re-elected Comrade P. Sundarayya as General Secretary and along with him Comrades E.M.S. Namboodiripad, A.K. Gopalan, M. Basavapunnaiah, P. Ramamurti, B.T. Ranadive, Harkisan Singh Surjeet, Promod Dasgupta and Jyoti Basu to the new Polit Bureau.

Recognise P.R.G. Now

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Calls for Signature Campaign

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has decided that Party units all over the country should immediately collect signatures on the following petition urging the Government of India to recognise immediately the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, and to do everything in its power to stop the bombing of North and South Vietnam.

The Polit Bureau directs all its units, Party members, to go from house to house, approach all mass organisations, other democratic parties and individuals and collect one crore of signatures.

The petition is to be presented to Parliament on December 20, 1972, anniversary of the Foundation Day of the National Front for Liberation which later led to the formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Greets

Democratic Republic of Vietnam

On the occasion of the National Day of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Polit Bureau of the Community Party of India (Marxist) sends its warm fraternal greetings to the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Vietnam and the people of Vietnam.

The valour, heroism and determination exhibited by the people of Vietnam in their struggle against the most powerful imperialism, the U.S imperialism, in defence of their freedom and against imperialist aggression have no parallel in the history of mankind. The most diabolical bombing resorted to by the bestial imperialists, burning of crops and forests, and genocide by the use of bacteriological weapons, the bombing of dykes and destruction of irrigation works, mining of port and similar barbarous acts never known in any war have not dampened the fighting spirit of the people of Vietnam under the leadership of their Workers' Party. On the other hand, the flame of liberty burns ever brighter and imperialist aggressors and their puppet armies are suffering defeat after defeat.

You have shown that no power on earth can stand before a people inspired with the spirit of freedom, democracy and Socialism and led by the Communist Party.

Your victories have evoked universal admiration of the working peoples and inspired the peoples of colonial and dependent countries to redouble their struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism.

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We are confident that the day is not far off when the U.S. aggressors will be completely thrown out of Vietnam paving the way for the unification of the country. The defeat of the U.S. imperialists in Vietnam will be a great victory not only for the people of Vietnam, but for the whole people of Asia and of the world.

We assure you that our Party will strive its utmost to mobilise our people against U.S. imperialism and in support of the proposals of the DRV and PRG for an end to the war.

The Chinese Veto in the Security Council of U.N.O. on Admission of Bangladesh

Statement of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) is shocked at the use of the veto in the Security Council by China to block the admission of Bangladesh to the U.N. and thereby preventing it from taking its rightful place in the world organisation.

This action of the Government of the People's Republic of China reflects its total blindness to the reality of the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign and independent nation of 75 millions from the yoke of the military dictatorship of Yahya Khan of Pakistan, a fact which has been recognised by 87 nations.

By such action, the Government of the People's Republic of China has only helped the reactionary forces in the three countries of the sub-continent and immensely harmed the democratic movement and forces of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Moreover, it has thereby helped in the continuation of tension in the sub-continent, which showed definite signs of easing after the Simla Agreement.

Such an act was unworthy of a Socialist Government and is contrary to the declarations of the Government of the People's Republic of China that it would always support national liberation struggles and champion the rights of emerging free nations.

Build United Actions*

Call given by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in a Statement issued in Calcutta on September 4, 1972

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on September 4, 1972 :

The P.B. of the CPI(M) expresses its solidarity with our people, the fighting working class and the peasant masses, the teachers and employees—all of whom have had to struggle in recent months against the rapid deterioration of their economic conditions.

Never before in recent times were the entire mass of our people under such intense attack on their standard of living as today.

Climax to Misery

The unprecedented and excruciating rise in prices, which is still gathering momentum, despite official claims to have controlled it, is heaping misery on every home and every family. The rise in the prices of all necessities of life, foodgrains, sugar, oil, vegetables and every other item of the family budget, is literally imposing starvation or semi-starvation on lakhs of families.

Taking place as this does against the background of the fall in prices in several agricultural crops, famine conditions following the drought in several parts of the country and the continuing crisis of industrial life leading to closure of factories and under capacity production, this rise in prices of essential commodities comes as a climax to the mounting misery of our people.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, September 10, 1972

In vast areas of the country in various States unprecedented famine conditions prevail which the Government is doing everything to underplay. Despite tall talk of relief operations being conducted on a war footing, a callous Central Government has not made available to the States the needed finance and foodgrains to meet the grim situation in the affected areas. The Central Government is fooling the people with stories about reserve of nine million tons of stock of foodgrains when in reality it has in its possession a stock much below the advertised figure.

The State Governments on their part are feeding the people with bombastic promises, with statistics and figures about relief operations but with very little real relief. Tens of thousands from rural areas are entering big cities as destitutes and camping in railway stations and city pavements.

Grim Realities Facing People

Overshadowing everything is the mass unemployment which has now invaded cities and villages alike. With more than five million registered unemployed in cities, with unemployment increasing at a rapid rate in the last two years, and with rural unemployment estimated at more than 25 million, the provision of employment to the unemployed has become a major problem. India's intense misery and destitution is measured by the galloping figures of its unemployed.

India's working class while struggling to maintain its jobs is faced with a growing erosion of its pay packet. It is simultaneously fighting for a minimum bonus for all sections to make up for the short-fall and has to enter into grim struggles against the employers and Government.

High prices, drought and famine, mounting unemployment and taxation—these are the realities that face every home and family.

The P.B. warns the people that these are the manifestations of the acute economic crisis which Congress policies only accentuate ; that the people can relieve their sufferings only if they stand united and overcome the anti-people policies of the Congress Government.

Only the united struggles and actions of the people, only the united actions of mass organizations and democratic parties will acquire sufficient force and authority to checkmate Congress attacks and secure the demands of our people. The P.B. calls upon all mass organizations, all democratic parties to join it in raising the demand for :

- (a) Immediate scaling down of prices of necessities of life, commandeering of stock of necessities like sugar, oil, etc., democratic vigilance committees to fight blackmarketeers and unhoard their stocks, and immediate reduction of prices to suit the purse of the common man;
- (b) Guarantee of fair price to the small peasant producer;
- (c) Work for everybody and, failing that, full unemployment benefit; right to work to be inscribed in the Constitution as a fundamental right;
- (d) Guarantee of minimum bonus of $8\frac{1}{3}$ per cent to all sections of workers and employees;
- (e) Lowering of taxation on necessities of life;
- (f) Proper organization and distribution of relief to drought-affected areas under the vigilance of popular committees.

New Pace in Unity and Struggle

These manifestations of the deep crisis of our economy are rapidly bursting illusions, with which just a few months ago millions of people voted for the ruling Congress with the hope that if only that party were given strong majorities in the State legislatures it would launch attacks on the monopolists and big landlords. People who had nourished illusions regarding "garibi hatao" are learning from their own experience that the so-called new progressive Congress is a continuation of the very same Congress which has been pursuing policies making the rich richer and impoverishing the poor.

The growing discontent and anger of the masses is setting a new pace in unity and struggle, upsetting the calculations of the ruling classes and their party. The ruling party resorts to several disruptive strategies to befool the masses. In the rural areas facing acute unemployment, several schemes are announced to

relieve the situation, but they fail to relieve the sufferings. In the industrial areas, failing to find employment for those without jobs, the spokesmen of the State Governments raise divisive slogans—sons of the soil—to appeal to linguistic chauvinism but the working class wages its struggles unitedly. The ruling party did its best to disrupt the unity of the trade union movement forming a separate council of INTUC, AITUC and HMS and pit it against the CITU and other militant centres of the trade union movement. But the pace of mass discontent has already exposed this weapon and recent months have seen an unprecedented wave of united action in which masses and organizations belonging to different centres have participated enthusiastically. The trade union organization of the ruling party could not escape from the united struggles on a number of occasions.

Battles of the People

In face of this growing urge for unity, the leadership of all trade union centres had to join hands with the CITU and other central organizations in many places to fight back the offensive of the employers and the Government. This was seen in the Statewide strike of the textile workers in Tamil Nadu, the total support which several T.U. centres gave to the Bombay municipal workers in their struggle of 8 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent bonus, in the joint struggle of tea garden workers in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, in the one-day general strike of the textile workers of Kanpur, in the first all-India strike of workers in all the cement factories in the country, and so on.

In West Bengal, despite the continuing attacks on the militant trade union cadres of the CITU and occupation of union offices, the united stand of the jute workers and their unions to secure wage increase and the strike notice jointly given by all the federations of the engineering workers proclaim the growing urge for unity and united struggle. The steel and other workers of Durgapur, the engineering and colliery workers are taking great strides in unity in the most difficult circumstances. Their organizations have on several occasions shown the capacity to

unite and face the challenge of the employers and the Government despite goonda terror. A new spirit is surging among the railway workers—the spirit of unity and action.

The sweep of the Statewide struggle of the agricultural workers and small peasants for land, against the rising prices and for minimum support prices for the crops of the small peasants can be seen in the fact that about two lakhs courted arrest in Kerala alone. The strike struggles of agricultural labourers in numerous villages of Tanjore district, culminating in a general strike of two lakh agricultural workers on August 4, won them higher wages. The massive demonstration of over 30,000 in Vijayawada for effective land ceilings, immediate steps for supply of food and other essential goods at cheap prices and fair wages is a pointer of developing mass actions in Andhra Pradesh.

Students in many colleges in Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Mysore, Maharashtra, Gujarat, etc., have gone on strike demanding lowering of college fees and taking over of education by the State and against corruption in admission and against capitation fees.

The explosive nature of the situation was seen in Shahdra near Delhi, where over 20,000 people, enraged by the behaviour of the police, fought the armed police in the streets for two days.

Appeal to Left and Democratic Parties

These battles of the people, their united actions in face of brutal repression and police attack are a reminder to the Left and democratic parties to come together once more to give leadership to the masses and channelise their anger into effective resistance for their demands. The grim lessons of West Bengal elections and somewhat similar experience elsewhere had already underlined the necessity of the unity of the democratic forces to meet the new menace of one-party dictatorship. But now the demands of the masses and their grim struggle have already made such unity the acid test of loyalty to the people.

No democratic party worth its salt can shirk its responsibility for joining hands with the other Left parties and forces in defence of the masses. All talk of fighting the Congress, the monopolists and landlords becomes meaningless if a party refuses to contribute to the united resistance of the masses at the present juncture.

The P.B. makes a fervent and sincere appeal to all Left and democratic parties, to all central mass organizations, to all organizations of workers, peasants, students, teachers, women to come together in this grim fight to defend the people against economic misery.

Position of Right Communists

The P.B. notes that even the National Council of the Right Communist Party traces the major problems facing the people today to the fact that “the masses of the toiling people have been the victims of profit-mongering of monopoly capital and their allies in the Government which is *the inevitable outcome of the capitalist path*”. The very party which has been creating illusions about the “anti-monopoly” character of the ruling Congress and its supreme leader, Indira Gandhi, has now been forced to talk of “*the unholy coalition of the big monopolies, the bankers, the bureaucrats and the leadership of the Government*” as the root cause of the crisis affecting the life of the people. The P.B. also notes that the leaders of the Right Communist Party who just a few months ago were trying in the T.U. field to “isolate” the militant sections of the T.U. movement led by the CITU have now started talking of united working class action including the CITU. Their National Council resolution points out how “the Government leadership feels emboldened to hurl threats against the working class asking them to stop strikes, stop wage demands, stop grumbling against high prices and shortages and concentrate on harder work for the so-called national gains”

The P.B. has no illusions that the declarations of the Right Communist Party mean that, that party has abandoned its path of collaboration with the ruling classes and their party. Not only do their Ministers continue in the Kerala Government and

participate in all the anti-people activities and measures of the Congress-dominated Coalition Government but the AITUC led by them still refuses to pursue the path of united action on which it had agreed in May 1971. They do the same in relation to the Kisan Sabha, students and youth organizations. The P.B., however, notes that the rapidly developing crisis in the economy and the growing discontent among the people are forcing their leaders to speak a new language—the language of unity with the Left and democratic forces and struggle against the Government.

Head Struggles of People

The P.B. calls upon all units, all Party members to throw their full strength in building united actions of the people against price-rise, unemployment, high taxation, drought and for bonus and other demands. The place of every Party unit and every Party member is among the suffering people, with the people *on the march*. Our Party units and members while making every effort to develop united actions must initiate and lead the people's struggles and demonstrations and place themselves in the forefront of these actions. In rural and urban areas alike the people must see our Party units and members as active campaigners and initiators and unifiers of their struggles. Let nothing come in the way of defending the people against the grimmest attack they are facing since independence.

The P.B. is proud that several of our units are already in the forefront of the struggle.

The P.B. greets the Party units and comrades in Kerala where, in co-operation with the KSP and the KTP, the Party organized the 80-day-long struggle of peasants and agricultural labourers focusing attention on all the major problems affecting the people in the State. It salutes more than two lakh volunteers who participated in that struggle. It is a matter of satisfaction and pride for the entire Party that this struggle and several other local or industrywise struggles in Kerala did bring in the field of action lakhs of people cutting across political and other differences.

The P. B. greets the Party units in Andhra Pradesh where the Party together with the various mass organizations organized over 30,000-strong demonstration and 70,000-strong rally in Vijayawada focusing attention on urgent questions like radical land ceilings, rise in prices, famine conditions and so on. The Party and mass organizations have planned a programme of direct action from September 15 if the Government does not take immediately effective steps to give jobs or a kilogram of food-grains per day.

The P.B. greets the Party units in Tamil Nadu where a new wave of struggles embracing the industrial workers and agricultural workers in some parts of the State together with the Statewide campaign organized by the Party and the Kisan Sabha on the main issues affecting the rural population are taking the people's movement to a new level.

The P. B. greets the party units in Karnataka where, too, anti-price rise, anti-eviction and other struggles are taking place under the leadership of the Party.

The P. B. greets the party units in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, where our Party together with other Left and democratic parties and organizations has taken up the most urgent issues of the people and are developing broad-based campaigns.

The P. B. greets the Party units in West Bengal where in spite of the semi-fascist terror which makes it extremely difficult in several industries and localities to organize normal mass campaigns, our Party and its allies of the Left Front are fighting in defence of the common people. The P.B. welcomes in particular the decision of the Left Front to organize a Statewide campaign culminating in a rally in Calcutta in December.

United Actions*

Joint Statement of CPI(M) and Socialist Leaders

P. Sundarayya, B. T. Ranadive, Promod Dasgupta, Siyabar Saran Srivastava, Ramanand Singh and Hari Krishna of CPI(M) and Karpoori Thakoor, Suraj Narain Singh, Sachchidanand, Ram Ekbal (Socialist) and Pranab Chatterjee (Hind Mazdoor Panchayat, Socialist Party Lohiyawadi) met in Patna on September 14, 1972 to discuss matters concerning the democratic movement and requiring urgent attention in view of the rapidly deteriorating condition of the masses.

The Socialists who attended stand for the unity of the Socialist Party and while continuing their efforts for unity will also endeavour for the acceptance of the agreement.

The two sides agreed on the following :

1. They agreed that trends towards one-party dictatorship and growing totalitarianism, mounting unemployment, rising prices, widespread famine, deepening economic crisis and increasing police atrocities are such challenges as must be met immediately and effectively and for that they will jointly organize protests, movements and struggles.

2. They agreed to develop united actions on several issues facing the common people. They would build united movements and actions on such issues as prices, wages, land reform, unemployment, drought and flood reliefs, issues affecting the workers, peasants, middle classes and salaried employees, youths and students, harijans, adivasis and socially and economically oppressed sections. It was agreed that the class organizations in which the members of the parties are working such as the trade

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, September 24, 1972.

unions, kisan and student organizations, etc., should be moved for joint actions and form co-ordinating committees for their organizations to promote such united movements.

3. It was further agreed that the parties should pool their strength and develop joint protest and actions on the above issues, and civil liberties, police repression. Every endeavour should be made to secure the participation of all Left and democratic parties for such joint protests and actions.

4. The Socialists suggested that they should have freedom on specific issues to associate with the Opposition parties other than the Left and democratic parties, with whom the CPI(M) may not like to join. It was pointed out by the CPI(M) that such association may hamper the common movements. With both sides keeping their separate viewpoints on this issue, the Socialists agreed to take this into consideration and as far as possible, to work for synchronisation than association.

5. They agreed on the demand for widest possible State autonomy. They agreed to campaign and agitate for securing it. They agreed that the State autonomy should be viewed within the framework of the unity of India and every effort should be made to prevent the vested interests from exploiting the demand. The struggle for State autonomy should be understood as part of the fight of the Indian masses for democracy.

6. They also considered the problems of regional imbalances and backwardness.

They considered this to be the inevitable result of the present economic system and of Government policies. They agreed that special steps should be taken to overcome the backwardness of these regions. They were also opposed to the Government policies which in the name of developing backward regions only place cheap labour at the disposal of big capitalists. To end this disparity by defeating Government policies, they agreed to mobilise the masses and develop movements.

7. They both agreed to continue discussions to develop more understanding between them.

Six Months of Congress Rule in West Bengal*

Jyoti Basu

The Congress having come to power in West Bengal by falsifying the election and by the use of gangster methods on an unprecedented scale with the help of the police and the administration, made reckless promises to the people for ushering in a new era. Since the fall of the United Front Government in March 1970, some Naxalites and anti-social elements were used by the Congress and the administration to create terror and even organise murders to cow the opposition particularly the CPI(M) so that democratic movements may not gather momentum and also to put forward such anti-social activities as an excuse to bring in large number of Central Reserve Police on the plea of maintaining law and order. Today about Rs. 3 crores are being spent on the CRP, apart from what is being spent on the West Bengal Police. By 1971 the Congress itself had mobilised large numbers of anti-social elements under its banner and geared up its own student and youth wings which could be used for violent activities against its opponents. Hence the mask was thrown away and the Naxalites were asked to surrender to the Congress or face the consequences. Large numbers surrendered and many of those who did not, were arrested or shot. The people were promised normalcy and peace and an all out

*Published as a booklet in September 1972. After the mid-term Assembly elections of West Bengal on March 11, 1972 was rigged by the Indian National Congress to defeat CPI(M) and other Left Parties to install Congress in the State Government, a reign of terror was created in West Bengal and this booklet covers the facts about this terror.

attempt was made to cover up the Congress and Government complicity in encouraging and abetting violence and secret killings. After the 1972 election, loud mouthed declarations were also made for 'restoration of democracy and peaceful conditions' together with promise of steps for economic regeneration.

The Congress was conscious of the crimes it had committed during the election and its isolation from the people. Hence in the attempt to enlist the support of the people, it started announcing multifarious schemes to activate the economy and tackling the unemployment problem. It proclaimed that the atmosphere has been created for investment on a large-scale and that West Bengal is being fully looked after by the Central Government.

In all these attempts of the Congress to enlist the support of the people is received the fullest and unstinted help of the capitalist press which has reached the lowest depths of servility and does not even keep up an appearance of independence.

The Congress Government has summed up its achievements during the six months that it has been in existence. It is possible to conceive that even after a military or police take over, after suppression of democracy, a Government may bring about some changes for the better in the economic field for a temporary period. But unfortunately for the Government in West Bengal it cannot take credit for even a temporary improvement in the situation in any sphere. Its claims have no relation to the ugly reality and what is important is that people, despite the efforts of the press have not been misled into agreeing with the Government's proclaimed achievements. The claims are being treated with contempt.

As there is widespread discontent and protest amongst the people against the prevailing conditions and daily mounting miseries, the Chief Minister has had to publish an advertisement in newspapers eulogising the great achievements of the Government during the first six months of its existence and has not forgotten to make a comparison with the conditions during the United Front Government. This pitiable effort will only

rouse the anger of the common people who are suffering as never before all over West Bengal. An admission has been made that when the Government was formed in 1972, lawlessness reigned supreme, West Bengal was in the grip of the law of the jungle, the exchequer was bankrupt and thousands had become newly unemployed.

It must be remembered that for two years after the fall of the United Front Government there was in one form or other Congress rule in West Bengal and during a period Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray was the Minister-in-Charge. In fact it had been our charge that the Government and Congress Party were behind the disorders, murders and arson in this period perpetrated by anti-social elements. Similarly for the bankrupt economy and for the majority of those who were newly unemployed because of closure of factories, the Congress Government must bear the main responsibility. The astounding claim has been made that peace and order and the rule of law have largely been established in West Bengal. In order to prove this contention, no facts have been given because they reveal a different and grim picture. A deliberate policy has now been adopted by the big newspapers not to publish all the crimes committed by the Congress rowdies. But from the available facts from the Assembly and Lok Sabha proceedings and our own enquiries it is found that between January and August '72 over 950 murders have been taken place. Since the election, about 70 of our people have been murdered by Congress gangsters. Some have been killed as a result of internal quarrels of the Congress Party. According to incomplete reports 13 women have been raped by criminals within six months and Congress supporters are involved in some cases. Since the election about 20,000 people have had to leave their homes and areas because of attacks by Congress gangsters with the police standing by and refusing to help the victims. Record number of dacoities have been committed during the last 6 months and in many cases Congress hoodlums are the culprits.

About 300 trade union offices have been attacked by Congress hoodlums and many occupied. Thousands of workers have

been compelled at the point of gun, with the connivance of the police to leave the unions belonging to the CITU, UTUC etc. Even now hundreds of workers, teachers and students are prevented from joining their duties or their classes and in many establishments Congress rowdies have found jobs in place of such 'absent' workers ! From Minister downwards requests are sent to the managements to provide jobs to Congress members and supporters. The Government and the police have been posted with all the facts but without any remedy. The decision that recruitment should be made through Employment Exchange are observed more in the breach than in the observance. In many instances, list of names sent to departments or establishments are prepared by Congress leaders.

In fact, in many areas and establishments the Congress hooligans lord it over the people and the administration. Officers and the minions of law and order generally refuse to take action against such elements. In some cases where dutiful officers and others do take action against Congress rowdies there is unwarranted intervention from the Congress leaders and Ministers. In such a situation people are afraid to complain to the police and dutiful officers and their subordinates feel helpless. In many instances where the gangsters fail, the police lend a helping hand by arresting people belonging to the opposition parties, trade unions and other mass organisations and detaining them without trial or implicating thousands of them in false cases. About 1000 people belonging to our Party or other Left parties or mass organisations are constantly in prison under such detention apart from the Naxalites. As a part of the offensive against Government employees about 34 of them have been detained without trial.

A few concrete cases will reveal how the rule of law has been established.

1. The case of the Saxby Farmer Workers (A State Government concern in Calcutta).

About 65 Congress supporters with the help of the management have secured jobs in the factory after driving out some workers belonging to the recognised union. When all complaints were of

no avail 19 workers obtained a rule from the High Court directing the police to act according to law and to give protection to them so that they can join their duties. But on 6 occasions from 1st to 15th September the said workers while attempting to go to the factory on the assurance of the officer-in-charge of the Entally Police Station, and the Deputy Commissioner, East Calcutta, were beaten up by Congress rowdies including those who have been given new appointments. They punch their cards and keep watch on all the roads leading to the Police Station and waylay them and beat them up. This is well-known to the police but they refuse to take any action against the gangsters to carry out the order of the High Court. The factory management also instead of curbing the activity of the gangster workmen, have issued charge-sheets to the 19 workers for unauthorised absence. In this case, a minister himself addressing the workers inside the factory on or about the 17th July categorically declared that the workers who have been prevented from joining their duties, will never be permitted to enter and if any worker sympathises with them, will be treated similarly. The management therefore has pleaded its inability to do anything and the police have worked out its tactics to defy the Court's order.

2. Case of the Kalyani Spinning Mill Workers (A Government concern in Kalyani, Nadia):

Gangsterism has been rampant in the area since the election with the connivance of the police. About 70 workers have been kept out by the rowdies. The said workers obtained a rule from the High Court directing the police to act according to law and to give protection to them so that they can carry on their avocations. But repeated attempts to join their work failed because the gangsters either barred the way or beat them up if they entered. The management refused to take action against the culprits. On 15th September the police escorted the workers to the factory. As soon as the police left, the workers including women were severely beaten up inside the factory by the armed rowdies and the officers ran away. The next day 16th September along with a few others. Sri Samar Mukherjee, M.P. visited the

factory where the District Magistrate of Nadia was present. He had succeeded in putting back the workers inside the factory and directed the management to carry out the orders of the High Court and promised to take action against the rowdies. But the new tactic employed by the rowdies was to waylay the workers on the roads and drag them out of trains and beat them up. This took place on 18th September. As the police took some action, the local Congress under the leadership of the Congress M.L.A. who is also a director of the factory organised a bundh and stopped trains. The workers are still working under police protection but in constant fear of the rowdies inside. But how long can officers who wish to do their duty withstand the pressure of the ruling Congress party and act according to law ?

3. The case of the Jay Engineering Workers, Calcutta :

The police in the area where the workshop is situated have been working hand in glove with the Congress rowdies for months together. The top leaders of the Jay Engineering workers were kidnapped, beaten up and many were forced to leave the area. After the election the union office was attacked on many occasions and prevented from functioning. Whenever some protests have been made or resistance organised, the police have come to the aid of the gangsters. Ultimately 9 workers of the factory who were also leading trade unionists were prevented by the hooligans from joining their duties. A rule was obtained by them directing the police to act according to law and help them to enter the factory. But all their attempts failed because the police refused to help and take action against the culprits. Ultimately the management helped the rowdies and the police by dismissing the 9 workers.

4. Similarly in Durgapur Projects, a Government Concern, about 36 workers are unable to join their duties because of attacks by Congress hoodlums. But the authorities and the police refuse to help the workers.

Attack Against Elected Bodies

Following on the subversion of parliamentary democracy, the Congress relentlessly pursued its onslaught against all democratic

processes and its attempt to impose one party rule. The elected Corporation of Calcutta was superseded because the Congress was turned into a minority after the defection of the Forward Bloc. The professed objective was to turn Calcutta into a 'garden city' and 'remove corruption'. But it has been turned into a garbage city and services have not improved.

Similarly many other municipalities have been superseded and placed in charge of administrators particularly those run by the opposition parties. Where supersession became difficult for one reason or other Congress gangsters have been employed to prevent the Chairman and other non-Congress councillors from functioning so that in effect they are run by bureaucrats or minority Congress councillors. In some others executive officers have been appointed by the Government taking away the powers of the Chairman.

The Congress armed youth have been allowed to take over elected college unions from others, prevent rivals from contesting union elections and to forcibly collect subscriptions on a large-scale. All these have taken place under police protection.

Attack on Freedom of the Press and Journalists

Not only Congress rowdies but also the leaders in responsible position like the Congress office-bearers and Ministers threaten newspapers and journals which criticise the Congress and the Government. Even individual correspondents are warned of dire consequences for news and criticisms not to their liking. The 'Bangla Desh', 'Darpan' 'Satyajug', have had to suffer at their hands. Our party daily papers and journals also cannot be sold freely in some areas. The poor hawkers have been manhandled and beaten up by Congress hoodlums with the police remaining unconcerned. Even servile newspapers like the Anandabazar and Statesman have not been spared. The former has been warned by the Congress Secretary himself for publication of some news and the latter's office was paid a visit by the State Minister of Police, Sri Subrata Mukherjee and the paper threatened for publication of a news item. But these

papers dare not publish the news of the threats. This is what the freedom of the press has been reduced to.

The Chief Minister has fulminated against agitations and movements for 5 years and the Congress Secretary and the Chief Minister have threatened action against a mass deputation to the Governor on 4th October '72 announced by the Left parties. In the meantime the Congress rowdies have been organised to five provocations and disturb meetings of Left parties with the police looking on. A Government which has endeared itself to the masses does not behave in this manner, Conscious of the enormous sufferings it has imposed on the people, the unrealisable and unfulfilled promises which it has recklessly made, it is taking recourse to semi-fascist measures to smother all democratic movements and people's protests against Government's policies. In their isolation and panic the Government and the Congress party are relying on the heavy hand of repression and employment of anti-social elements against the opposition forces. Thus the citizen's right to assemble freely, to form associations, the right to carry on his avocation of life, to live in his home and area of his choice, the right to read newspapers according to his liking, the right of journalists to write the truth are all in jeopardy under Congress rule.

As was to be expected the advertisement of the Government on its achievements is not only untruthful but also dishonest. Here are a few instances. Because of re-opening of closed factories, it is claimed, over one lakh workers got back their jobs. But how unreliable these figures are can be judged from the fact that on the floor of the Assembly on 3rd July whilst the Chief Minister stated that 60 thousand workers had been re-employed, the Labour Minister on 10th July gave the figure as 10,681 and stated again on 13th July that in 3 months 55,708 workers became newly unemployed because of fresh closures, lock-outs and strikes. Again on 27th July, he stated in the Assembly that between March and May as a result of closure 1574 workers lost their jobs and as a result of lay-off 33,279 workers became unemployed.

Now the figure of re-employed has gone up to over one lakh it is claimed but the Chief Minister, directly keeps silent on the new unemployed as a result of closures and lay-offs. There is understandably no mention of the 13,000 refugee camp employees who were given jobs illegally and used in election work by the Congress but who have now been rendered unemployed. The 10,000 licensed and 60,000 other hawkers who have been deprived of their means of livelihood and not provided with alternative arrangements find no place in the advertisement. Last but not least should it not have been mentioned that whilst even one year back (1971) the registered unemployed were about 5 lakhs, to-day it stands at over 11 lakhs. With the rural unemployed the figure of unemployment is about 35 lakhs according to Government estimates. It is of course lakhs more according to us.

With regard to investment it is stated that Rs. 8 crores were invested in West Bengal during the U.F. Govt. This figure itself is questionable but why is it not stated how many applications for investment totalling how much capital were lying with the Govt. of India and how many were withheld by it and how many applicants were asked to invest in someother state ? Why the plan to produce stainless steel in Durgapur has been abandoned by the Union Government has not been explained. As far as actual investment is concerned now, no figures are given but applications for investment are mentioned which can hardly give any satisfaction to anyone. It is also amusing to know that monopolists and big business feel so assured under a Govt. which is pledged to fight monopolies and usher in Socialism. But why not ? Because they are not only being given new licences but are being invited to participate in joint ventures with the "Garibi Hatao" Govt. The advertisers have also overlooked in a moment of forgetfulness perhaps the 3 lakhs of acres of benami land distributed by the U.F. Govts and 2 lakh 52 thousand acres of vested land licensed out to the poor peasants and landless labourers, and the thousands of share croppers evicted from their lands by the jotedars during the last 6 months and the many thousands of peasants who have been

implicated in false cases. There is no explanation why the new land legislation lowering the ceiling and enhancing the share croppers' share of the produce has not been put into effect. The Government states that it has spent Rs. 11.70 crores on relief whereas the U.F. Government spent Rs. 10.51 crores. But the dishonesty of the comparison lies in the fact that when only 2 districts were severely affected the U.F. Government spent the above amount. But when unprecedented drought hit several districts of West Bengal and the loss according to the Govt. was about Rs. 80 crores, the meagre amount of Rs. 11.70 crores were spent and the colossal suffering of the people ignored. Side by side with the figures for rural electrification (how many households and which villages have benefitted is another matter) are given. But the significant achievement of plunging Calcutta and other industrial areas in darkness from time to time, compelling tens of thousands of people to buy lanterns and candles and resulting in huge loss of production and inconvenience to all sections of the people is not at all mentioned. With regard to Farakka barrage the attention of the people of West Bengal is sought to be diverted by falsely stating that a settlement has been reached and 40,000 cusecs of water will be available. In fact the survival of the Calcutta Port is in doubt. The people living in the areas served by the Martin Light Railway wanted light with regard to its re-opening because the Prime Minister herself made a promise during the election campaign. But no firm decision has been announced even after 6 months. What is most amazing and cynical is the fact that there is no reference to the subject of inordinately high prices in a State where 70% of the people live below the poverty line (Rs. 20/- per month per person) and no steps have been suggested to alleviate their sufferings. A comparison of prices of all essential commodities two years back (when the Garibi Hatao Programme was announced with a fanfare) and now will reveal how the vast majority of our people are being fleeced, their purchasing power lowered and the rich made richer. The ration shops continue to supply inedible rice and food articles disappeared from the market. But these mundane things of life

do not seem to be the concern of the Congress usurpers of authority.

The Government is trying to take the credit for some victories obtained by the workers through their united struggles in the jute, textile, and some other industries. But it must be remembered that it was during the U.F. Govt. that for the first time in 20 years significant gains were made by the worker : jute, engineering, textile industries, tea gardens, coal mines . Similarly the struggle for revising the Bonus Act and to raise the minimum bonus has been waged by the workers for a long time and ultimately forced the hands of the Govt. The fact must not be lost sight of that unprecedented profits have been made by the jute and some other industries now as compared to the earlier period and in fact the workers were entitled to much more.

All glory to the workers of West Bengal who despite semi-fascist terror, have been able in important sectors to face the employers and Government unitedly. In this period there has also been united strikes on urgent demands as in the Engineering Industry. The vast majority of the workers and employees, teachers, students, peasants etc. know the difference between the Congress and the U.F. Governments. They have learnt through experience how the administration and the police were used in their interest during the U.F. regime and how today their elementary rights are smothered by the Congress Govt. At least during the old Congress regimes there were some attempts to cover up corruption. But now corrupt practices are open and codified. Government rules are violated and changed to recruit Congress members and supporters including anti-social ones to Government services ; lists are prepared by Ministers, Congress MLAs etc. ; recruitment to statutory bodies are made on the recommendation of Congressmen ; management in factories are presented with lists for recruitment by Congress Ministers and leaders; unemployed Congress boys are sent by Congress leaders to factories to browbeat the management to recruit them. In some cases the managements lend a helping hand in order to disrupt the old redflag unions. In some cases the new

anti-social recruits create problems for the management and the workers because they indulge in rowdyism inside the factories. Threats and intimidation are used to cancel registration and recognition of red flag unions with the help of the labour department and the managements. In recruitment of teachers also lists are often prepared by Congressmen and qualifications are of secondary importance. In admission to colleges, in many cases Chhatra Parishad is the deciding factor and it collects money from the students forcibly. A whole generation of youth is being sought to be corrupted by engaging them in such nefarious activities and encouraging them to resort to the foulest of deeds including mass copying in examinations. This is how the Congress desires to build Golden Bengal !

Despite the great difficulties and dangers all sections of the people are on the move. Protests, movements and agitations have started in different sections of the people against the intolerable conditions created by the Congress Government's policies. The need of the hour is unity and courage and the determination to make sacrifices in the struggle for democracy, the dignity of the individual and for a change in the miserable conditions of life. All over India vast masses are expressing their protests against the burdens that are being imposed on them and West Bengal too will play its worthy role.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau's Greetings On Anniversary of the Great Chinese Revolution*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) offers its warm and revolutionary greetings to the working class and people of People's China on the occasion of the anniversary of the Great Chinese Revolution, led by the Communist Party of China. This mighty victory of the working class led by the CPC was inspired by the October Revolution of 1917 and facilitated by the Soviet victory against Nazi Germany and Japanese imperialism. It turned the world balance of forces in favour of the working people of the world. The people of China, its heroic working class and the peasant masses, intellectuals and professionals remained loyal to their revolutionary heritage when they determinedly rendered every possible help to the fighting people of Vietnam in face of the U.S. imperialist aggression.

The working class and people of China have achieved marvellous advance in economy, science, medicine and every branch of human knowledge and have proved the superiority of the Socialist system over the capitalist system. Rapid economic progress, abolition of unemployment, independent development of the country's economy, freedom from foreign debts and complete preparedness to meet imperialist challenges—these have been the all-sided achievements based on socialisation of the means of production under a regime which has no room for exploitation.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) wishes the working class and people of China further successes on the path of

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, October, 15, 1972

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Socialist advance. It is also confident that very soon the people of the two countries, India and China, will witness the restoration of normal and friendly relations between the Governments of the two countries enabling the two peoples to develop firm ties of friendship and solidarity.

The Polit Bureau notes with regret that the distortions in the policies of the leadership of the Communist Party of China are hampering the Chinese people from making their full contribution to the international struggle. They found expression in the atrocious veto against the admission of Bangladesh into the U.N. and the earlier support to Yahya Khan.

The enemies of the world working class, U.S. imperialism in particular, are exploiting the distortions and differences in the Socialist camp to divide the revolutionary movement. The P.B. is confident that these weaknesses will soon be overcome opening the way to the unity of the Socialist camp and the unity of the Marxist-Leninist Parties.

On Recognition To The GDR*

Statement of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) welcomes the decision of the Government of India to accord ambassadorial recognition to the German Democratic Republic.

It sends its warm greetings to the working class and people of the German Democratic Republic on the occasion.

Throughout these years the German Democratic Republic has maintained warm friendly relations with India and has rendered valuable economic help.

Advanced public opinion in the country has been demanding establishment of ambassadorial relations with the German Democratic Republic. But the Government of India, guided by the narrow class interests it represents and heavy dependence on Western loans all these years, has been turning down this just demand.

With world events moving quickly with the West German Government itself negotiating with the GDR, the Government of India has at last gathered courage to recognise the GDR.

The P.B. has no doubt that this recognition, though belated, will help strengthen the ties between the two peoples still further.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, October 15, 1972. GDR means German Democratic Republic of Eastern Germany formed after World War II (1939-45).

CPI(M) Condemns Firing On Students In Moga*

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the firing resorted to by the Punjab police on the unarmed students of Moga leading to the death of six students and injury to many. This has led to a united protest movement of students throughout the State. The Congress Government instead of patiently dealing with the students by accepting their just demands is resorting to more and more repressive measures. The army has been asked to stand by in Moga, Jagraon and Ludhiana in order to intimidate and create terror, and hundreds of students have been arrested. This is a great provocation.

The Polit Bureau demands that all the officials responsible for the firing and repression should be suspended, judicial enquiry into the firing be held, compensation be paid to the families of dead, all the arrested students be immediately released and their just demands accepted.

On Sino-Japanese Agreement*

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Sino-Japanese agreement and Joint Communiqué announce the complete collapse of the policy of cordoning off of China initiated by American imperialists two decades ago. With the original architect of that policy himself compelled to give it up, Japanese imperialism had to follow suit and sue for an understanding with its mighty neighbour whose economic and political strength none could ignore.

The Polit Bureau of CPI(M) welcomes this development which will no doubt open big avenues for growing friendship between the people of China and the people of Japan. The latter have every reason to be satisfied with this event as the advanced democratic forces in Japan have been waging persistent struggle for recognition of People's China and eliminating U.S. imperialist influence from Japan.

Pressed by the democratic movement, the ruling circles of Japan have entered into the agreement, hoping to serve their narrow economic interests. They are attracted by the burgeoning economy of China with whom they expect to develop profitable economic relations. At the same time, like their U.S. imperialist patrons, they hope to exploit Sino-Soviet differences for their purpose and play the two great Socialist countries against one another in this vital region.

The P.B. of the CPI(M) while underlining the importance of this outstanding event expresses its confidence that the peoples of China and the USSR will see through the game and frustrate the reactionary designs of Japan's ruling classes.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, October 15, 1972

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Resolution on Language Riots In Assam

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) views the recrudescence of riots in Assam on the issue of language medium with concern as it poses a grave threat to the democratic movement of the people of Assam.

Our Party has always been in the forefront in supporting the democratic demand of our people that the medium of instruction should be the respective languages and the mother-tongues, replacing English at all levels. Our Party understands the legitimate aspirations of the people of Assam that their language should have premier place in the administration in the educational spheres in Assam State.

But the Gauhati University authorities had decided that hereafter the medium would be only Assamese language, English being allowed for a period of ten years as an alternative medium but neither Bengali nor any other minority language in the State would be allowed as medium in any college. Our Party felt that this was denying the legitimate demands of minorities.

The Bengali-speaking people started protesting against this. Sporadic attacks on them were organised by the reactionary forces to browbeat them.

The ruling Congress party instead of adhering to the democratic principles defending the existing practice of allowing the Bengali language also as additional medium in universities, got the Assam Assembly to pass a resolution that a separate university with Bengali as medium be started in Cachar, 80 per cent of

whose population is Bengali-speaking and in the Assam Valley, both in the Gauhati and Dibrugarh Universities, Assamese would be the sole medium and English an alternative.

This decision of the Assam Assembly is no solution to the problem as it still ignores and denies the right of the Bengalee and other linguistic minorities of the Assam Valley to use their own mother-tongue as medium at the college and university level. Even against this proposal, the reactionary forces have unfortunately succeeded in rousing the Assamese students in the whole of Assam Valley to come out on strike demanding that the Assamese language should be the sole medium and not even a separate university with Bengali medium should be set up in Cachar district.

Our Party is firm and fights for the protection of the right of minorities to get their education in their mother-tongue. This principle had been accepted throughout India, and at primary and secondary stages, whenever a minimum of even ten students in a class request, instruction is being imparted in their mother-tongue. It should be extended to the university level, too, and whenever a prescribed minimum number of students of a minority language demand, then university education should also be imparted in that language.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) appeals to the democratic forces in Assam and throughout the country to voice their protest against the undemocratic measure of the Assam Government and to restore the right of the Bengalees and other linguistic minorities to get their education through their mother-tongue.

The Polit Bureau earnestly appeals to all the democratic forces to ponder seriously over the consequences of this policy of denying the democratic rights of minorities, whether if extended to the whole of India it would not jeopardise the very unity of India.

The Polit Bureau appeals to the Assamese-speaking student masses that their educational and employment problem could be solved, their right to work and leisure, to a decent democratic life can be achieved and defended only when they, too, fight for

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the democratic rights of all minorities with equal zest and make a common cause with them. It appeals to them not to play into the hands of the reactionary forces.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all democratic Opposition parties in Assam to reconsider their stand of supporting the Congress Government's undemocratic stand and to mobilise the people in support of the democratic rights of minorities.

Carry Forward Struggle for Left-Democratic Unity

**Statement Issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in
Calcutta on October 11, 1972.**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta, has issued the following statement to the Press on October 11, 1972 :

In the statement issued on September 4, the Polit Bureau had drawn attention to the high prices, drought and famine, mounting unemployment and taxation which are facing every home and family.

It had warned the people that these are the manifestations of the acute economic crisis which the Congress policies only accentuate and that the people can relieve their sufferings only if they stand united and overcome the anti-people policies of the Congress Government. The P. B. called upon all mass organisations, all democratic parties to join in raising the demand for—

- (a) Immediate scaling down of prices of necessities of life, commandeering of stocks of necessities like sugar, oil etc., democratic vigilance committees to fight black-marketeers and unhoard their stocks, and immediate reduction of prices to suit the purse of the common man ;
- (b) Guarantee of fair price to the small peasant producer ;
- (c) Work for everybody and failing that full unemployment benefit ; right to work to be inscribed in the Constitution as a fundamental right ;
- (d) Guarantee of minimum bonus of 8.33 per cent to all sections of workers and employees ;
- (e) Lowering of taxation on necessities of life ;

- (f) Proper organisation and distribution of relief to drought-affected areas under the vigilance of popular committees.

Conditions are Worse

Far from the people getting any relief to their sufferings, the situation has, in fact, grown still worse. The countrywide power-crisis enveloping industry and agriculture alike has further accentuated the crisis of production, leading to still greater shortages of essential commodities, and making the problem of unemployment still more serious. Shortage of foodgrains has also become far worse, with no prospect of any improvement in the near future.

Same Old Policies to Continue

It is against this background that the policy-making body of the ruling Congress party, the AICC, met in Ahmedabad and adopted two resolutions—one on the measures to be taken to meet the immediate situation of rising prices and the other on general economic policy. The leaders of the ruling party and the Government want to make it appear as if the adoption of these resolutions proves the sense of urgency with which they are tackling the problems of the people. They also claim that new, radical and anti-vested interest policies are going to be pursued by the Government. It will, however, be found on careful scrutiny that far from breaking any new ground, the ruling party proposes to pursue the same old policies, although couched in attractive phrases.

They are talking of taking over of wholesale trade in wheat and rice and instituting control over the distribution of other essential commodities like sugar, edible oils, kerosene and cloth. It is, however, significant that they do not propose to take the one effective measure of eliminating the wholesale trader—compulsory requisition of the entire surplus of landlords, and direct purchase from the small holders who have surplus to sell by paying them additional bonus for what they sell to the Government and total rationing—even in relation to wheat and

rice in which they promise to take over the wholesale trade. As for the other essential commodities, the so-called control over distribution and sale will be as farcical as it has so far been. The domination of the wholesalers will thus continue in the entire trade, though in new forms.

The crisis of the capitalist path of development being pursued by the ruling Congress party and its Government has reached a stage in which a handful of big landlords, wholesalers and monopoly capitalists will go on becoming richer and richer at the expense of the mass of the people unless a united people's movement forces basic changes in governmental policies. No problem of the people can be solved so long as the Government continues to pursue policies which tighten the grip of foreign monopolists on the national economy, the Indian monopolists who are collaborating with them are allowed to grow fat at the expense of the people and the big landlords are allowed to transform themselves into the new-type capitalist exploiters. But the ruling Congress party which claims to have made "a sharp break with the pro-landlord and pro-monopoly policies of the old Congress" is, in effect, pursuing the same old policies. This is clear from the resolution on economic policy adopted by the AICC.

Monopolists' Demands

Emboldened by the increasing concessions wrested from the Government, monopolists have of late been openly demanding still further concessions. The slogan of "joint sector" was raised in the notorious Tata Memorandum which was a scarcely concealed effort to bring even the public sector under the effective control of Big Business. It was in the wake of this campaign unleashed by the monopolists that Industries Minister Subramaniam started talking of modifying the 1956 Resolution on Industrial Policy.

Such a shameless demand for changing the Government policy in favour of monopolists angered a big section of even Congressmen, not to speak of the resentment it caused in the

Opposition as among the common people. The leadership of the ruling party, therefore, thought it prudent to make an appearance of retreat from this position and to assure the people that the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 is not being changed.

Govt. Gives More Concessions

In practice, however, the Government is pursuing the same old policy of giving still further concessions to the monopolists as was demanded in the Tata Memorandum and as was visualised by Industries Minister Subramaniam. The recent decision of the Government to allow 32 Monopoly Houses to expand their productive capacity is the most naked evidence showing that, even while verbally repudiating Subramaniam's pronouncements, the Government is, in fact, acting upon it. It should further be noted that the Prime Minister herself at the AICC session declared that her party would amend the 1956 resolution if it was necessary, her only point was that it was not at the moment necessary.

The Polit Bureau, therefore, appeals to all mass organisations and democratic parties to join together and fight not only for the realisation of certain immediate demands but to relate all such struggles to the common movement against the basic policies of the ruling Congress party and its Government.

People in Action

The P. B. is happy to note that since its appeal to the mass organisations and democratic parties to join together in united struggles and actions, various sections of the people have gone on various forms of action. The almost countrywide struggle of students, the gigantic struggle of teachers in Bihar, the extensive movement of Government employees and other middle class employees, actions and struggles of the peasantry in several State—all these indicate a new fighting mood enveloping all sections of the people. Organised and led in the case of some by different mass organisations and political parties, these

struggles and actions show unmistakably that it is not this or that mass organisation or political party that is organising them but the people themselves going into action. People have gone into action even in places where no mass organisation or political party worth the name exists.

The growing unity of the trade union movement is in this context extremely significant. The unity that developed around the demand for a minimum bonus of 8.33 per cent was so great that even the leaders of the pro-Government trade union centres like the INTUC, AITUC and HMS had to join the struggle and refuse to surrender, as was demanded by the leaders of the Government. It was this inability of their own friends in the trade union movement that forced the Government to concede the demand.

Bonus Struggle Must Go On

While greeting the organised working class on this success, the P. B. notes that several sections of those like the railway, post and telegraph and other employees are deprived of the benefit of the minimum bonus. So, too, are the employees of the Central and State Governments. Furthermore, those workers who in previous years got higher rates of bonus and who may this year succeed in wresting more than last year are obliged to take the additional bonus by way of deposit in provident fund. Above all, State Governments have been authorised in particular cases, where they deem it desirable to order that bonus less than even the minimum may be paid.

All the provisions with which minimum bonus has been conceded shows that the struggle for bonus is to continue in new forms. The P. B. appeals to the entire working class movement to come to the defence of those of their comrades who are forced to fight against these provisions of the Government's bonus decision.

The P. B. is also happy to note that the Central Government employees have been able to wrest small amounts by way of interim relief. Apart from the meagreness of these amounts, it

is to be noted that the employees of the State Governments, local bodies and so on have not received even this much of interim relief. The P. B., therefore, calls upon all trade unions and organisations of middle class employees to fight for the full neutralisation of rise in the cost of living which is the common demand of the entire working class including the middle class employees and in the meantime, for the extension of the interim relief granted to the Central Government employees to all other middle class employees.

The Way Forward

United struggles and actions of the common people have given fillip to the unity of Left and democratic parties. Particularly to be welcomed is the new pro-unity trend developing in the Socialist Party. The united demonstration held in Patna on September 18 in which all the Socialist Groups and the CPI(M) in the State co-operated, indicates the way forward for all the Left and democratic parties.

The P. B. hails the emergence of the United Council of Trade Unions which is a continuation of the effort at uniting the trade union movement in common struggles, for which the first steps had been taken in May 1971. After a protracted struggle against the leadership of the AITUC and HMS who betrayed their May 1971 commitment to united struggles and who ganged up with the pro-Government INTUC against the CITU and other militant organisations of the working class, the other participants of the May 1971 conference took the initiative in carrying forward the struggle initiated in May 1971. The P. B. associates itself with the hope expressed in the statement of the UTCU that the leadership of the AITUC and the HMS would abandon the path of betrayal and work for the unity of the working class on the basis of the principles and policies laid down in the May 1971 statement.

Right C.P.'s Line of Collaboration

The P.B. regrets to note that the Right Communist Party has not learnt any lesson from these developments but is still

continuing its policy of collaboration with the ruling party. Its much advertised three-day struggle against the pro-monopoly policies of the Central Congress Government could have contributed to the further development of the militant mass movement, if only the Right Communist Party had shown anxiety to join forces with the Left and democratic parties like the CPI(M) and other constituents of the Left Front in West Bengal, the three-party alliance which is leading the Peasant-Agricultural Labour Council of Action in Kerala, the Socialist Party all over the country and so on. Instead of doing this, however, they have given assurances to the leadership of the ruling Congress that, on the one hand, they would maintain their relations of friendship and collaboration with the Congress Government and on the other, would in no case join the Left and democratic parties.

The P. B. considers it significant that, even for continuing its basically pro-ruling class policies, the Right Communist Party has to adopt an apparently militant stand without which it is impossible for them to go to the people. It should, therefore, be the endeavour of the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties to bring the masses rallied behind the Right Communist Party into united struggles and actions pointing out to them how their isolation from the mainstream of the Left and democratic movement in the country, their association with that very ruling party against whose basically anti-people policies they have to go into action is hampering the development of mass actions.

The P. B. notes that even though launched in isolation from the struggles and actions organised by the Left and democratic parties and mass organisations, the three-day agitation of the Right Communist Party did, in places, rouse the anger of the Government. Attacks on their demonstrations, including lathi-charges, were made by the police in several places in the country. This was the most severe in Bihar where one of their comrades was shot dead and lathi-charges were resorted to even inside the jail. The P. B. denounces this Government repression and appeals to the Right Communist Party to draw

the only conclusion which emerges out of this—that the Congress Government is not prepared to tolerate even the mildest and most peaceful form of mass struggle against its policies and that, therefore, their continuing collaboration with the ruling Congress party is inconsistent with the “agitational approach” which they have been forced by circumstances to adopt.

Menace of One-party Dictatorship

Our Party, in the Political Resolution adopted at its Ninth Congress as well as in the September statement of the P. B., had underlined the necessity of the unity of the democratic forces to meet the new menace of one-party dictatorship. This menace is growing; all actions of the common people, mass organisations, democratic parties and even sections within the ruling party are feeling the impact of this. Legitimate struggles of the working people such as the strike of the loco running staff in the Southern Railway, municipal workers of Bombay and so on are declared illegal, their leaders being detained without trial. Though it is nearly ten months since the Indo-Pak war came to an end, the Defence of India Act and the Defence of India Rules still continue on the Statute Book. Any opposition to the Government, any form of struggle resorted to by any section of the people, is denounced by the ruling party as anti-national and even inspired by foreign agents.

Such efforts at smothering all opposition in the entire country are supplemented in West Bengal where the semi-fascist attacks on the trade unions and other mass organisations of the working class as well as against democratic political parties, are still continuing.

Congress Talk of CIA

The P. B. cannot, but draw the attention of the people to the unscrupulous use being made by the ruling party of the holy anger of our people against the efforts made by U. S. imperialism to penetrate our social, cultural, economic and political life.

The CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties have been foremost and consistent in fighting the menace of American

penetration. We would, therefore, have been happy if the ruling Congress party had abandoned its dependence on American "aid" which obliges them to facilitate the espionage activities of the CIA under such garb as the Peace Corps, the USIS, the Ford Foundation, exchange of scholars, and so on. Our Party, in fact, has always demanded that an end should be put to the PL-480 and other forms of "aid" from the United States, that American capital invested in the oil and other industries should be confiscated, American personnel operating as Peace Corps volunteers, scholars under various foundations and so on should be sent back. The Government, however, has refused to take any such effective steps against the activities of the CIA.

Even now, the Government is not prepared to take any of these steps, its leaders including the Prime Minister herself making up for their occasional verbal broadsides against the CIA by the actual endorsement of the American stand that CIA's activities would not be detrimental to Indian interest. The refusal of the Government to take any concrete steps against the organisations and institutions through which the CIA operates proves conclusively that the verbal denunciations of the CIA is only the cover behind which the leaders of the ruling party are trying to attack the growing mass opposition to their policies denouncing all the mass organisations and democratic parties which are trying to channelise the growing mass discontent into a Powerful mass democratic movement as CIA-inspired.

Disruptive Manoeuvres

The P. B. expresses grave concern that the ruling party through its State units and Governments are stooping so low as to use the provincial, regional and linguistic differences to set one section of the people against another. Several State Governments headed by the Congress party are now insisting on the application of the vicious principle of reservation of jobs for the "sons of the soil" in their respective States. The ruling party and Government in Assam have also used the question of language to rouse passions between two linguistic groups in

that State and to set one of them against the other. This had led to an extremely serious situation where the army had to be called out.

Delay will be disastrous

The P. B. is confident that the various manoeuvres resorted to by the ruling party in order to contain the growing mass movement and the various forms of attack on the mass movement can be defeated if only the mass organisations and democratic parties go still further forward in their struggle for unity. The mass campaigns unleashed by the Left Front in West Bengal, the peasant -agricultural labour struggle in Kerala, the September 18 March in Patna, and the efforts at forging unity of Left and democratic parties being made in various other State—all these are indicative of the new trends that are emerging. The P. B., however, is of the opinion that these are only small beginnings and that they should be further strengthened and that, too, as quickly as possible. For, the famine and drought, high prices and shortages, unemployment and growing tax burdens—all these, together with police and other forms of attack launched by the ruling party, have created a situation in which any delay on the part of the Left and democratic parties and mass organisations will prove disastrous. The P. B., therefore, renews its appeal made on September 4 to all the mass organisations and democratic parties to come together and fight in defence of the interests of the common people and against the anti-democratic authoritarian policies adopted by the ruling party.

On Student Struggle & Repression in Punjab

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution adopted in its Chandigarh meeting on November 4-9, 1972

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) greets the students of Punjab for their united struggle against the repressive policy of the Congress Government. A number of students have been killed in police firings, and the army and Border Security Force (BSF), apart from the police, have been called in to suppress the students.

It is the united struggle of the students of the *State* and the support lent to them by people of the State who organised a successful bandh on October 11 that forced the State Government to assure a judicial enquiry into the firings, transfer of officers responsible and release of all students.

It is regrettable that instead of consolidating the victory certain elements have indulged in irresponsible actions, thereby undermining the unity of the student movement. But it was the provocative actions of the police when the colleges re-opened that led to the further worsening of the situation.

The police resorted to punitive actions, entered university campuses and colleges, manhandled the Principals and teachers of the Patiala Medical College and Amritsar Khalsa College, and converted colleges into police camps.

The Government has been making indiscriminate arrests of students and political workers, making the CPI(M) its special target. About a hundred members of the Party, most of them members of the Party's District Committees, are among those arrested. A number of students and teachers have been put under detention without trial.

On Student Struggle & Repression in Punjab 803

The Central Committee condemns the repressive measures of the Punjab Congress Government and demands the immediate release of all the arrested persons, withdrawal of Section 144 and the police, the army and the BSF from the university campuses and colleges and settlement of the grievances of the students through discussions with their representatives.

On Punjab Private College Teachers' Strike

**CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution adopted in its
meeting held in Chandigarh on November 4-9, 1972**

Three thousand five hundred teachers of 125 private colleges in Punjab have been on strike since October 25, demanding security of service and parity of pay-scales and service conditions with their counterparts in Government colleges.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) extends its full support to the striking teachers and demands that they be immediately conceded.

While this strike in Punjab is the latest, teachers in Bihar and many other States have gone on strikes on similar demands. Students also in many States have gone into action demanding Government take-over of privately managed colleges.

Only such Government take-over can meet the legitimate demands of the teachers and students and make education secular, by eliminating the hold of religious institutions over colleges.

The Central Committee demands that the Government of India make the necessary amendments to the Constitution to enable Government take-over of privately managed colleges.

Mulki Issue in Andhra Pradesh CPI(M) Demands Immediate Action by Centre

**P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M) Sent Letter
Dated November 13, 1972 to Prime Minister, Indira
Gandhi**

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has written the following letter, on November 13, 1972 to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in regard to the Mulki issue in Andhra Pradesh :

I am addressing this letter to you to draw your urgent attention to the so-called Mulki-non-Mulki agitation that is gaining daily momentum in Andhra Pradesh. Following the judgement of the Supreme Court on the appeal filed by the State Government and the ill-considered statement issued by the State's Chief Minister, Sri P. V. Narasimharao, that this judgement had given a sort of finality to the issue, there erupted an agitation leading to hartals, students' strikes, demonstrations, stoppage of trains and different other forms of action in different parts of Andhra Pradesh. It may be mentioned here that this is the fourth round of its nature since the year 1952. The previous one, that had burst up in 1969, took a disastrous shape, bordering on virtual fratricidal war between the people living in the respective regions of Telangana and Andhra. For months together, schools and colleges were closed, transport between the two regions was seriously dislocated, assaults on non-Telangana people took place in the capital city of Hyderabad and other towns in Telangana and a hate campaign was unleashed by the leaders of the so-called separate Telangana movement on the one hand and their opponents on the other. If the present

one is allowed to continue in the manner it is now taking shape, I am afraid that the future of the State of Andhra Pradesh, its unity, integrity and democratic progress are in great jeopardy.

Refusal to Act in Time

It is tragic that the Central Government refuses to intervene in time and resolve the problem in the interests of the people living in the two regions of Andhra Pradesh, and in the larger interests of the State and its unity and integrity. Instead it is allowing the different factional groupings of the Congress party in the State, coming from different regions, and the vested interests, to merely exploit the issue of Mulki agitation to serve their partisan and selfish interests.

It is highly regrettable that the Central Government, instead of coming forth with appropriate legislation to safeguard the interests of the people of Telangana when the Mulki Rules were held *ultra vires* of the Constitution by the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, advised the State's Chief Minister to file an appeal in the Supreme Court. With the Supreme Court judgement upholding the legality of the Mulki Rules, enacted by the former ruler of Hyderabad State some fifty years ago, the State and Central Governments find themselves in a quandary, each trying to throw the responsibility of resolving the issue on the other. This disruptive agitation for and against the so-called Mulki Rules, once again, is fanning the flames of fratricidal strife between the two people of the two regions and diverting the attention of the democratic masses from the burning issues of drought in the greater part of the State, the rising prices and growing unemployment, and near famine conditions threatening millions of people in the State.

Our Party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), is deeply disturbed over these disruptive developments in the State of Andhra Pradesh, and holds the ruling Congress party and its Government solely responsible for this sad state of affairs.

Our Party is of the considered view that a just and reasonable solution is possible for this issue, provided the Central

Government acts in time and enacts suitable legislation ensuring the legitimate rights and demands of the people of the Telangana region while annulling the out-dated Mulki Rules which, if persisted in and implemented, would surely pave the way for the disunity of the people and the disintegration of Andhra Pradesh.

A Permanent Solution

The Central Government must enact legislation, first to ensure employment in State Government services at all levels in the ratio of 2 : 1 for "Andhra" and Telangana regions respectively and they be posted in any part of the State and not confined to each region. This reflects the real strength of the population in the two regions. This principle may be extended to all Public Corporations or semi-Government concerns.

Secondly, the allocation of all the State resources including that of Hyderabad City and Central loans and grants for regular administrative and developmental activities in the State including Five Year Plans in the ratio of 2 : 1 while special attention to be paid and special allocations be made to develop backward tracts and areas in both the regions.

Similarly, seats in colleges and professional schools and institutions can be reserved in the same ratio.

Thirdly, the time limit for the two above-stated provisions should not be mechanically fixed, and they should continue until such time as mutual understanding and confidence develop between the two regions and the people living there and the existing imbalance in the development between the two regions gets progressively reduced and eliminated.

This alone can ensure the unity of the people of the two regions and the integration of the State of Andhra Pradesh. This alone can rescue the State from the recurring agitations and strife over the so-called Mulki Rules, some upholding them and others opposing them.

Our Party is also of the firm opinion that several solutions proposed to this problem such as regionalisation of Government services up to the rank of Tahasildar and the ending of these

safeguards by 1974, exempting the State's capital from the applicability of Mulki Rules or in the absence of it ; shifting the capital away from the Telangana region and disastrous splitting of the Andhra Pradesh into two States of Andhra and Telangana, etc., are fraught with great dangers for the future of Andhra Pradesh and its 45 million people. The proposals for the regionalisation of the services, for setting up different regions, the perpetuation of the Telangana Regional Committee with its separate budget, with separate enforcement staff and separate Chief Secretary for the enforcing of the out-dated Mulki Rules etc., would not lead to the progressive integration of the State, economically, politically and emotionally but will only help the further engendering separatist feelings, thus endangering the unity, integrity and the future of Andhra Pradesh.

I, on behalf of my Party, would earnestly urge upon you and your Government to act immediately and take necessary measures, as outlined above, instead of leaving the issue for the factional Congress groupings in the State to utilise the crisis for their partisan vested interests.

Intensify the Vietnam Signature Campaign*

**Statement Issued by the Central Committee of CPI(M)
at Chandigarh from its Session on November 4-9, 1972**

After its perfidy in refusing to sign the agreement arrived at with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the U. S. Administration is pumping into South Vietnam bombers, tanks, armoured vehicles, heavy artillery, etc., in an unprecedentedly heavy military build-up.

When the American citizens went to the polls on November 7 to re-elect Nixon, whose 1968 promise to end the Vietnam war remains a dead letter, Vietnam was under one of the heaviest bombings since the beginning of the war. Since then these intense bombings are continuing.

Behind the cover of talk about "peace with honour" and so on, the Nixon Administration has all along been escalating the war during the last four years and is persisting in that policy today.

While the Vietnamese people continue their determined struggle for national liberation, their leaderships in both the North and South, without sacrificing any principles, have offered the U. S. imperialists an honourable way out of the war. Democratic opinion in the world has the immense task of putting the utmost pressure on the U. S. imperialists to terminate their war of aggression in Vietnam and the rest of Indo-China.

The Polit Bureau of the Party had called for a campaign to collect one crore of signatures on a petition to the Lok Sabha demanding that the Government of India immediately recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 19, 1972
Refer Document under Item No. 91 of this Volume.

and take all steps to halt the U.S. bombing and mining in Vietnam.

In the new situation that has developed since then, the Central Committee calls on all Party units to intensify this campaign and rouse our people against U.S. imperialism.

The Central Committee calls on all Party units to observe, in co-operation with all democratic forces, December 20, the day the petition is to be submitted to the Lok Sabha, as a DAY OF SOLIDARITY with the heroic Vietnam people by holding meetings and demonstrations and marches to U.S. establishments wherever they exist in the country.

Intensify Efforts to Forge United Actions

**Statement Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M)
at its Session in Chandigarh on November 4-9, 1972**

Statement adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at its session in Chandigarh (Punjab) from November 4 to 9, 1972 :

Only four months ago, our Party Congress at Madurai had pointed out that the ruling Congress party's securing big majorities in the legislatures did not mean that "ahead of us is a period of stability in which the masses will patiently await the results of the policies pursued by the ruling party. Nor does it mean that the present inner-unity of the party will continue for long and division will not develop in the present unassailable majorities under stress of deteriorating conditions."

The resolution had emphasised that "the present class situation in the country, the economic situation and the deteriorating conditions of the masses make it inevitable that the discontent will mount up following the inevitable failure of the Congress to give relief to the people."

Sufferings of the People

This assessment has been proved correct by the developments since then.

These four months have been months of colossal suffering and privation for our people. Prices of all necessities of life have been rising week after week at a galloping rate, heaping untold miseries on the common people.

The hundreds of crores of rupees of indirect taxation levied by the Central and State Governments in the last two years and

the unprecedented dose of deficit financing resorted to by the Central Government have heaped unheard of misery on the people.

On the other hand, the prices of several commercial crops like cotton, jute, cocoanut, oil-seeds etc., have steeply fallen and inflicted destitution on millions of peasants.

On top of all this drought conditions in several parts of the country have led to famine conditions. Starvation deaths are taking place in several States. Mass exodus of destitute people from the villages to towns and cities in search of jobs and food is taking place in several States. The Government is concealing these facts and is trying to understate the extent of the suffering of the people.

Despite the tall talk of meeting famine conditions on a war footing, a callous Central Government has not made available to the State Government the finances or the foodgrains to feed the people. Its claims to be in a position to meet the situation with an advertised buffer stock of nine million tonnes of foodgrains have been blown skyhigh by its failure to open the promised fair price shops and cheap grain shops.

The Government is fooling the people with paper schemes of increasing production of foodgrains in the *rabi* crop by 15 million tonnes. With lack of irrigation, with shortage of power to energise tube-wells and pump-sets, with falling production of fertilisers inside the country, with limited prospect of importing even the fertilisers committed from abroad, and with the increased prices of fertilisers and the lack of purchasing power of the peasants, how this miracle of increasing foodgrains production is going to be achieved is anybody's guess.

The industrial front

On the industrial front, too, the economic crisis has further intensified. Factories continue to be closed and under-utilisation of capacity has increased.

All these have led to a phenomenal growth of unemployment, both in the urban and the rural areas. With nearly six million unemployed registered in the cities, with rural unemployment

estimated at more than 25 million, and with unemployment increasing at a rapid rate in the last two years, the provision of employment to the unemployed has become a major problem.

The heavy price that the country has had to pay for the dependence on foreign aid is now getting more and more exposed. Thermal power stations in Orissa had to be shut down for want of spares which could not be imported from the USA for lack of foreign exchange. Frequent shut downs of the Trombay Atomic Power Station has become a permanent feature. The Kalpakkam Atomic Power Station produces just a fourth of its capacity.

Bureaucratic bungling and corruption in collusion with contractors have led to tremendous loss of production. The bureaucrats looted the exchequer by purchasing old and outmoded machinery for the Steel and Alloy Steel Plant in Durgapur. They continued buying heavy boilers from a foreign concern despite their bursting and despite the company being blacklisted. The Neyveli Thermal Power Station is producing just a third of its capacity.

It is now admitted by the Irrigation and Power Minister that frequent breakdowns in the thermal power stations are due to the poor maintenance and supply of inferior coal by the contractors in collusion with the management. Sheravati, the biggest hydel power station, is unable to produce up to capacity because it was constructed with sub-standard material.

Bad planning and inefficient execution have delayed the completion of many projects like the Beas, Idikki, etc. All these have led to the terrible power shortage throughout the country, affecting industrial and agricultural production.

Monopolies Thrive

Despite the stagnation in industrial growth, the most glaring fact to be noted is that the profits and assets of the monopoly houses have tremendously increased during this very period when the conditions of the masses have deteriorated as never before. This is a measure of the ferocity of the attack of the monopolists and the Government on common people.

The tall talk of bringing about fresh land legislation with the object of distributing land to the tiller is proving another hoax. All recommendations made by the various commissions have been watered down. Little land will be available for distribution.

The social oppression on the scheduled castes and tribes has become more intense. In many States, harijan hamlets have been attacked and burnt, people murdered and their women raped with impunity for no other reason than that they wanted to assert their rights as human beings or that they demanded higher wages. The guilty go scot-free. The Congress party which sheds copious tears over the state of the untouchables and scheduled tribes does nothing to put an end to these inhuman atrocities.

These realities of life are bursting the illusions with which just eight months ago millions of our people voted for the ruling Congress with the fond hope that if only that party was voted to power in all the States, it would launch attacks on the monopolists and landlords and give relief to the common people.

Growing struggles of people

The growing disillusionment, discontent and anger of the people is expressing itself in the growing struggles of all sections of the people. The intensity of these struggles is upsetting the calculations of the ruling Congress party and its Government.

In the forefront of these struggles stand the working class. It has gone on protracted struggles facing heavy repression, brutal firing and terror in every State. In West Bengal, despite the continuing attacks on the cadre of the CITU and other militant trade unions, they have shown, on several occasions, the capacity to unite and face the challenge of the employers, the Government and the goonda gangs.

A new spirit is surging among the railway workers and Central and State Government employees, the spirit of unity and struggle.

Secondary school teachers of Bihar have fought the most protracted strike struggle in which thousands have been imprisoned and faced lathi-charges. Teachers of Delhi University had gone on strike. Private college teachers in Punjab are now on strike. The struggle is spreading to other States.

Students in Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Bihar, Kerala, Gujarat and many other States have gone on strikes against police vandalism, and medical students and interns in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, demanding provision for jobs after education, lowering of college fees and such other demands.

The fighting teachers and students have raised the demand that schools and colleges under private management should be taken over by the Government.

Kerala witnessed the unprecedented sweep of the struggle of the agricultural labourers and peasants for land, minimum support price for agricultural crops and against rising prices. Agricultural labourers in Tamil Nadu and some other States have fought struggles for higher wages.

Huge demonstrations and other forms of struggle of all sections of the working people against high prices, for famine relief have taken place in several States, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.

Despite brutal semi-fascist terror and murderous attacks against democratic forces in West Bengal, the people are standing firm and building broad-based movements.

Thus, every section of our people is on the march and everywhere their struggles are sought to be suppressed with brutal repression, firing, lathi-charges, imposition of prohibitory orders, jailing of thousands, detention without trial and police terror.

Inside the Congress Party

The gulf between the professions and practice of the ruling Congress is widening the credibility gap. This is reflected in the defeat of the Congress candidate in the Ahmedabad Parliamentary

by election, in the Nagamangalam Assembly by-election in Mysore and in the sharp fall in the margin of votes from 1,60,000 to 20,000 in the Mandya Parliamentary by-election.

They are also having their reverberations in the Congress party. In every State that party is riven with factions and group fighting has started. Charges of corruption are hurled by these groups against each other. Deputations of Congress legislators from many States have waited on the Prime Minister demanding change of Chief Ministers.

Despite these struggles and the intensifying economic crisis, the resolutions adopted by the All-India Congress Committee in its Ahmedabad session clearly show that the Congress party and Government are determined to go along the same path and pursue the same policies it has been pursuing for the last 25 years.

The decision on takes over of wholesale trade in rice and wheat is a hoax. No effective State machinery for direct procurement from the landlords exists or is being created. It has been made clear that there is not going to be monopoly compulsory procurement of the marketable surplus in the hands of the landlords and big farmers by the State. No maximum price has been fixed. The present wholesalers and millers are likely to become the authorised agents. It is significant that the State proposes to procure at market prices only four million tonnes after March 1973. The objective of all this is not to bring down the prices, but to keep supplies uninterrupted in the urban areas and leave the entire rural areas to the tender mercies of the hoarders and landlords.

These policies will intensify crisis

The economic policy resolution just reiterates the industrial policy resolution of the Government of India of 1956. It is under the operation of this very resolution that the monopolists grew at a phenomenal rate and the common people's living standards were attacked. The AICC resolution indulges in hypocritical prattle about the need for the private sector to conform to the social objectives and not be governed by profit

motives. It asks the monopolists to invest more in industries producing goods of common consumption and not luxury goods. The bankruptcy of thinking is writ large on the resolution, for consumer goods industries are stagnating due to the continuous erosion of the purchasing power of the people and luxury goods industries have come up to cater to the demands of the small upper stratum of society. At the same time, more and more concessions have been and are being given to the monopolists as 'incentives' to production.

The extracts from the document Approach to the Fifth Plan, makes it clear that the Government is bent upon pursuing its policy of heavier taxation on the common people consumption goods and deficit financing as the only method of finding resources for the Plan.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) warns the people that if the Government is allowed to continue these policies, the economic crisis will further intensify. Prices cannot be arrested. Misery of the people will further increase. Poverty and unemployment will further intensify.

In order to pass on these burdens to the people, the Government has come forward with proposals for a wage-freeze and strike-freeze in the name of 'patriotism.' With a view to isolating the militant section of the trade union movement and disrupt the unity of the workers, the Government had sponsored the National Council of Trade Unions consisting of the INTUC, AITUC and HMS, hoping thereby to sell its anti-working-class policies with a show of trade union support.

Workers overcome disruption

However, the recent struggles show that the workers have been able to overcome the disruption of the leadership of the three organisations and compel these organisations to united struggles against the attacks of the employers and Government.

In face of the militancy of the workers, these leaders hesitate to accept the proposals of the Government. The formation of the United Council of Trade Unions is a further step to carry forward the struggle for unity and united struggles. The

implementation of the programme of action charted by the Council will go a long way to frustrate the attempts of the Government of disrupt the unity of the working class.

Another important development is the rethinking that has started in the Socialist Party and the urge to joint activity with the CPI(M) and other Left parties. The joint declaration of the CPI(M) with the Socialists headed by Sri Karpuri Thakur for joint activities on mass issues is a welcome development.

Bankruptcy of Right C.P.

The intensity of the attack on the common people on the one hand and the concessions being given to the monopolists on the other, have led to further exposure of the bankruptcy of the policies of the Right Communist Party. Faced with this situation, they have been compelled to talk of struggles. Their satyagraha against high prices, although pre-arranged with the ruling Congress, shows the untenability of their policies. These leaders have even assured the Congress leaders that they would not join hands with the CPI(M) and other Left forces as against the Congress.

The right Communist leaders are clinging on to collaboration with the ruling Congress and do everything to prevent united struggles. Their disruptive activities in the service of the ruling Congress must be combated and their manoeuvres of sham struggles need to be exposed. The ranks of the Right Communist Party should realise how this policy of their leaders is disrupting the united struggles and will only help the Government and the employers to mount attacks on the working class and toiling masses.

The Central Committee warns the people that the Congress party, faced with the rising tide of mass struggles, is resorting to the most despicable methods of creating dissensions among the toiling people on the question of jobs by raising slogans like "jobs for the sons of the soil." In Andhra Pradesh, the Congress Government, instead of implementing the 1956 Gentlemen's Agreement by suitable action, has been using the outmoded Nizam's *firman* of Mulki Rules for diverting the

attention of the masses from the burning issues and dividing them by inciting fratricidal strife between the people of Telangana and the rest of the State. All these are deliberately designed to prevent the masses from uniting and launching struggles against the policies of the Government and to fight among themselves.

New Age and the Right C.P. are not worried about these mass evictions hanging over the tenants and hutment-dwellers. That is understandable. But why does *New Age* have to lie to make out that the CPI(M) has brought out this issue as an after-thought and had not raised it in the Assembly ?

The CPI(M) had not only raised the issue in the Assembly but specifically demanded that arrears of rent right up to the date on which the Act came into operation should be cancelled ; since the 24th and 25th Amendments to the Constitution are already there, the provision regarding compensation should be seriously re-considered—the Government paying compensation to the smallholders without charging it on the tenants and no compensation to the bigger owners.

These are just the amendments which would have removed the huge burden on the tenants and ensured their getting ownership rights. And these precisely were the demands which *New Age's* "Progressive Coalition" rejected.

What they say now

Three leaders of the Right C.P. have made statements on the struggle, *New Age* quotes one of them, the State Secretary of the party, N.E. Balaram, who has said, "It is not difficult to see that this tactic will disrupt the land boards taking over surplus lands and distributing them to the deserving landless."

We will quote the other two.

Chief Minister Achutha Menon has said that the Government will not allow the occupation of and setting up of huts on anybody's land and warned the Action Council against launching any such struggle.

Sri M. N. Govindan Nair, another Right Communist leader and Minister, has characterised the struggle as "madness of the Marxist Party".

All three are remembers of the Central Executive of their party and should remember what their own party had said on previous occasions. But since they have developed rather convenient memories, it becomes our painful task to remind them of some of these.

What they said then

We quote S. A. Dange, Chairman of the Right C.P., from his statement to the Supreme Court after his arrest during the Right C.P.'s "land-grab" in 1970 :

"As the Government has failed to implement its own laws and objectives of the Constitution, it is the duty of all citizens to take the implementation of the laws and the Constitution in their own hands...

"Hence, we decided to march to the big farms of the Birlas, the biggest landlord and monopolist in the country, and also other landlords and monopolists in order to distribute these lands to landless labourers and poor peasants who are without land and work...

"The decision and actions of the Government to thwart our action which was in defence of the principles of the Constitution and the ethics of life was highly unconstitutional and unethical and against the interests of the country and the people. Their action was calculated to defend and help concentration of property and material resources of the life of the community in the hands of a few." (*New Age*, August 23, 1970)

Will Sri Achutha Menon note that his threats and the actions his police is taking against the volunteers of the Action Council are "unconstitutional", "unethical" and "calculated to defend and help concentration of property...in the hands of a few" ?

Or, will Sri Menon turn round and say, all that is in relation to a Government which does not implement its own laws, my Government—by the grace of the Congress, is serious about implementing its laws.

Let us try to reactivate Sri Menon's memory with a passage from a resolution of his national Council : "Since many State Governments have already declared that they would distribute

Government lands and are making some schemes, we should utilise them for getting pattas to the lands already occupied by landless poor. Eviction from such lands should be resisted at all costs. The remaining Government fallow lands also should be occupied by the landless poor first and then try to get legal sanction also.” (*New Age*, May 24, 1970)

Does it meet Sri Achutha Menon’s point or will he say that the situation is still different because his party is in the Government ? All right. There is an even more specific passage in the resolution which we quote now :

“In West Bengal, because of the measures of the United Front Government, dominated by the Left parties, this campaign (for actual occupation of land and raising crops) assumed the form of a mini-agrarian revolution... in all, over three lakh acres of Government land and *benami* land of the landlords was occupied by peasants and agricultural workers under the leadership of different parties of the front...In this campaign, the share of our party and the kisan and agricultural workers’ organisations led by our party is 125,000 acres which is quite an impressive gain.”

What do you say now, Sri Menon ? Your party in West Bengal did all this when it was in the Government and your National Council lauded it. Was it anti-social ? Was it violence ? Was it torpedo law and order ? Was it to help landlords ? Was it madness ?

What others said of them

There were people who said all this about your party then even though your “land-grab” was a symbolic farce and not meant seriously. Shall we remind you of some of them ?

The then Governor of Madras, Sri Ujjal Singh, characterised your movement as “anti-social”; then Rajasthan Chief Minister Sukhadia “publicly stated that his Government would resist the attempt of the landless and the poor peasants to occupy land held by Government and big landlords” ; “the Congress (R) Government in Madhya Pradesh has begun to act by arresting peasants”; “these State Governments claim that they themselves

have taken initiative to distribute the Government lands”; and the crowning piece, “Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made the fantastic statement that the ‘land struggle is unconstitutional and illegal’”—all these are quotations from *New Age* of June 28 and August 30, 1970, with the comment: “Several of the pro-landlord State Governments are getting very jittery.”

When we hear just these same words from you, Sri Menon, you couldn’t even think up something original, would you mind if we are also not original and repeat only what *New Age* said · your pro-landlord State Government is getting very jittery !

The trouble, Sri Menon, is that you and your party leadership have learnt one thing very fast—to talk and act like your Congress patrons—for the vested interests, against the toiling people.

Curb Assam Ministers' Attacks on Minorities' Languages

P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M), issued a Press Statement in Calcutta on December 7, 1972.

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has issued the following Press statement, in Calcutta on December 7, 1972 :

It is reported in the press that the Home Minister of the Assam Government, Sri Hiteswar Saikia, addressing public meetings on December 3 and 4, has declared that "the Assam Government had already decided to introduce Assamese as the medium of instruction through legislation without any round table conference and would introduce Assamese in non-Assamese schools."

Sri Sinha, the State's Chief Minister, had again on December 6, reiterated his November 11 declaration that the Asamese language would be made the sole medium in the English being allowed for a transition period of ten years as an alternate medium. He announced that his Government would introduce Assamese as a compulsory subject in all secondary schools in the State from next January.

Thus, the Congress Government in Assam persists in its undemocratic policy of denying the linguistic minorities their fundamental right to get their education in their own mother languages. It is an attempt to forcibly Assamese all non-Assamese minorities. This is doubly proved by its refusal to give adequate protection to minorities, especially the Bengali speaking minority in the Brahmaputra Valley from the ravages of the reactionary vested interests, who are fanning these linguistic riots. The Press is full of reports of destruction of houses and shops, killings, and of many indignities that are

being heaped upon the Bengali minorities. Large numbers of persons are forced to leave their houses in Assam and are being turned into refugees and not given relief. Some have left the State because of denial of protection.

Our Party strongly condemns the inactivity of the Central Congress Government in not pulling up its party Ministers in Assam and taking necessary steps to protect the minorities. It is of the view that the Central Congress Government by its inactivity is conniving at these attacks on minorities which, if persisted, will have serious repercussions in other parts of India. The Central Congress leaders speak of national integration but not take any steps even to curb their own State Ministers indulging in rabid activities that would lead to the disruption of national unity.

Whilst our Party supports the linguistic aspiration of the Assamese people to establish the Assamese language as the medium of education, it reiterates that linguistic minorities have the fundamental right to receive education in their own mother-tongue at all levels. Compulsory learning of Assamese in non-Assamese secondary schools should not be enforced. It should be only optional. People and students would, on their own, learn voluntarily the Assamese language because of the economic and social needs in the State. Especially when the non-Assamese minorities are agitating for their legitimate right on the question of medium of instruction in the universities, the Assam Home Minister's announcement that the Government had decided to do away even with the right of mother-tongue being the medium of instruction at school stage (primary and secondary) would only add fuel to the fire of discontent.

Our Party urges on the democratic people of Assam, various languages not to fall a prey to reactionaries and policies and unite to struggle for their rights and demands. It appeals to the Assamese students, intellectuals, workers and peasants and democratic forces, to realise that only by championing and defending the democratic rights of minorities can they really advance their own democratic movement and

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safeguard their own rights from the onslaught of the reactionary vested interests.

Our Party appeals to the democratic forces throughout India that this question is not a mere issue of non-Assamese minorities in Assam State alone. If this attack of reactionaries on minority rights is not beaten off, they would only extend these attacks throughout India. Hence it is the urgent task to raise their voice of protest against these happenings in Assam and compel the Central Congress party and Congress Government to pull up their party Ministers in Assam so that they take necessary step to protect the languages of the minorities in the schools and colleges of Assam.

Democratic Right of Minorities for Education in Mother Tongue in Assam

Achintya Bhattacharya

The current disturbances in connection with the issue of medium of instruction in Assam brings fresh testimony to the correctness of the warning of the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) against the diversionary tactics of the ruling classes in the present period.

The background of the current language problem and the destructive forces it has let loose upon the masses leave little room for doubt on this score.

What is the Issue ?

The current language dispute arose in June last over the decision of the University in Assam to introduce Assamese as the medium of instruction in Pre-University class from this year, with the provision that English also would remain, as medium, for ten years.

The decision to raise Assamese to its rightful place and to progressively displace English was acclaimed widely as a step in the right direction. But outright denial of the right of the minority languages, in the same matter, gave rise to grave apprehension among the linguistic minorities, mainly the Bengalis and Plains Tribals (Bodos).

To gauge the depth of this problem arising out of the University decision, it is necessary to have a look at the composition of the population of the State.

Even after the exit of Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal, three more non-Assamese speaking districts—Mikir Hills, North Cachar Hills and Cachar—are in Assam today. Cachar has a 14 lakh population, 79 per cent of them Bengali-speaking. Only 0.3 per cent speak Assamese in this district. This composition was not the result of influx of the outsiders, i e., refugees from East Bengal. Between 1911 and 1961, the percentage of Bengali speaking people rose from 70 per cent to 79 per cent in Cachar.

The Mikir Hills and North Cachar Hills districts, with a population of 2.8 lakhs, belong to the area under the Sixth Schedule, dealing with the tribal areas in Assam.

The latest (1971) Census figures about the linguistic composition of Assam is not yet available. According to the 1961 Census, in the Brahmaputra Valley, of a population of 92 lakhs, 67 lakhs spoke Assamese; Bengalis numbering nine lakhs constituted ten per cent of the population; the Bodos, another important minority group, consisted of about 300,000. Thus the linguistic minorities even in the Brahmaputra Valley constitute 27 per cent.

These factors distinguish Assam from other States to an extent. The decision of the Gauhati University on the medium of instruction issue, unfortunately, overlooked this reality.

The conflict : How it developed

The Gauhati University's controversial decision had evolved over a period.

Last year, while the preparatory steps for the change-over were being planned, both the Academic Council of the Gauhati University and the Text-Books Committee had accepted Central grants to the extent of Rupees one crore for Assamese text-books and Rupees 25 lakhs for Bengali text-books.

But on June 6, 1972, the Academic Council of the Gauhati University took the formal decision to introduce Assamese as the medium of instruction in colleges, along with English for a period of ten years, with the provision that Bengali-speaking

students would be allowed to write their answer scripts in their mother-tongue but with no provision for teaching in the Bengali language.

But, suddenly, just one week after the June 6 decision, the University abandoned even this position under the pressure of "mass demonstrations" of students and youths led from behind by interested groups of leaders, many of them leading Congress men. On June 12, it took the decision of making Assamese the sole medium, with English (for ten years) uniformly for all areas, including the minority language districts, dropping the facility to write answer-scripts in Bengali.

This initial success was followed by a campaign of intimidation against a number of colleges in the Brahmaputra Valley having 60 per cent to 90 per cent of students speaking minority languages. The intimidatory tactics was to force these colleges to introduce Assamese as the sole medium from the current academic session itself. In spite of the provision in the University's decision and the plea of the students speaking minority languages, these colleges were not allowed to maintain even English as medium. Students speaking the minority languages were thus faced with an impossible situation as neither they were equipped to change over to Assamese at once having had Bengali or English as medium so far, nor a section of teachers was capable of taking lessons in Assamese all at

sudden. These teachers were afraid of losing their jobs. The affected students and teachers turned to the University seeking relief, but the latter pleaded inability.

The students of some of these colleges went to the Supreme Court for relief. In Cachar, the Bengali-speaking population reacted sharply with 'bandh', satyagraha, etc. The tribal majority of North Cachar Hills district also protested.

The reactionaries and the extremists fanned chauvinistic feelings. And very soon, the campaign took violent forms with extensive attacks on the linguistic minority. While the ruling Congress looked on, leaders of its student and youth wings took a leading part in this campaign of violence. While some police and other officials carried out their lawful duties, a large

number of others openly took side with the reactionaries and extremists in the attacks on the minorities. The Press, mainly pro Congress, and the local station of All-India Radio, which, again the Congress Government controls, gave the necessary propaganda support, rousing passions with highly tendentious and motivated writings and reporting. The atrocities committed against the minority were concealed.

Role of Congress and its Govt.

The Congress Government of Assam had been seized with this problem of medium of instruction for a long time and had at least ten months' time to take initiative and help find a just solution to the problem. Education lies in its own domain and the responsibility of putting Assamese in its rightful place and ensuring the minorities their just rights lay squarely on its shoulders. It did not fulfil any of this responsibility. Even after the June 12 decision of the Gauhati University, it refused to take any step on the specious plea that it could not interfere in the autonomy of the University.

But after the outbreak of the riot in Barpeta Road, the Congress Government had to wake up. It hurriedly called a session of the Assembly on September 23 and with amazing speed passed a resolution on the issue of medium of instruction. Strange as it may look, the fact remains that the Assembly took less than thirty minutes to pass the resolution which approved the decision of the Gauhati University but proposed a separate university for Bengali-speaking Cachar district. It also suggested the deletion of the time-limit for retention of English.

The weakness of this hurriedly passed resolution was apparently right at the moment of its adoption. It by-passed the main issue—the issue of the right of the linguistic minorities not only in Cachar but in the entire State including the Brahmaputra Valley to be taught in their mother tongue in the colleges.

Even this was not to the liking of the extremists and they let loose a violent campaign of intimidation against the linguistic minorities in the Brahmaputra Valley in order to badger them to give up their right. They would not agree to a separate

University for Cachar which, they asserted, would make Assam a bilingual State.

The people of Cachar rejected the resolution as it did not concede the right of the Bengali speaking minority throughout the State. Other minorities, especially the Plains Tribal Bodos also became apprehensive of the intention of the Government of Assam.

The conflict gave rise to large-scale attacks in Brahmaputra Valley on the Bengali-speaking minority, causing loss of life and property and disruption of the democratic movement for the time being.

Faced with this the Congress Government retreated from its previous position and promised reconsideration of the September 23 Assembly resolution.

The faction of the Assam Congress opposed to the Chief Minister, a powerful group well-connected with top bureaucrats and others in authority, lost no time in taking advantage of situation, intensified the attacks on the minorities to discredit the Ministry and pull it down.

The active participation of a section of the Congress leadership, the ineptness of the Government and the active support of certain sections of the bureaucracy fed the extremists to engineer linguistic clashes.

With the Government, the security of the Ministry and not of the minority became the main concern. It soon stood paralysed. It accepted the University's stand in toto, and refused to honour its own public commitment of holding a round-table conference to find a just solution.

If the role of the State Congress Government has been despicable, that of the Central Government headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi has been worse. Its position, as seen in the Prime Minister's own statements and Government pronouncements in Parliament, shows that its main concern is to save the Indiraite Sarat Sinha and his Ministry even if it means trampling down the democratic rights of the minority.

The Assam Congress leadership was split also on a linguistic basis. The Assamese-speaking part and the Bengali-speaking

part of the State Congress leadership stood arrayed against each other. What a wonderful party it is, this party of Smt. Indira Gandhi, the party which preaches democracy and Socialism, which cannot even keep its own State leaderships together when issues like the language one in Assam, or the Mulki controversy in Andhra Pradesh come up! What else can be expected from a party which has no principles, whose leaders thrive on opportunism and which denies the democratic rights of the people?

Hand of Foreign Agency

The Prime Minister in her recent Darjeling speech warned against the presence of a foreign agency in the troubled North-East Zone of the country. Earlier in Parliament a Government spokesman spoke of the hands of a foreign agency in the Assam riots. How far the American CIA has been able to intrude into the situation during the troubled days is yet to be ascertained. But it is well known that the climate has been very favourable to the CIA for its operations.

In its last budget session, Right C.P. members of the Assam Assembly pointed out to a Deputy Minister, an Indiraite Yuva Congress leader connected for a long period with the World University Service, as a CIA agent. The district from which this leader hails saw the worst rioting and violence this time.

A 'club' in Gauhati brought out an inflammatory leaflet calling for expulsion of Bengalis from Assam in the way Uganda of Amin turned out Gujaratis and Bengalis"!

The deep infiltration of American influence in the Academic and newspaper circles of Assam has been a matter of common talk. During the recent disturbances, extreme intolerance was seen precisely on these circles.

All these need a probe. But the Prime Minister and her Government, who talk incessantly of CIA activities, reject the demand for enquiry even by a Parliamentary body. Assam is only the latest example of how the ruling Congress fulminates against the CIA only to cover up its own evil doings without really fighting this instrument of U.S. imperialism.

Stand and Role of the CPI(M)

The stand of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on the medium issue was laid down by the State Committee resolution of May 1972 and the Polit Bureau resolution of October

Our Party understands the legitimate aspiration of the Assamese people that their language should have the premier place in the administration and in the educational sphere in Assam. Our Party has always been in the forefront in supporting the democratic demand of the people that the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue, replacing English at all levels. At the same time, our Party has always stood and stands for the right of the minorities to get education in their mother tongue.

This principle has been accepted throughout India at primary and secondary stages. It should be extended to the University level, too, wherever a prescribed minimum number of students of a minority language demand to have education in their mother tongue. Basing itself on this principle, the Party has stated that minority languages, such as Begali, Bodo, etc. should be used as media if a prescribed minimum number of students so demand.

The Party, before any one else, came out against the violence against the minority and exposed its true character and the criminal role of the ruling party. It has recently submitted memorandum to the Government on all this (see last week's *People's Democracy*).

Its cadres were harassed at Barpeta and Sorbhog because they were rousing the democratic sections against the senseless conflict. In Cachar, it opposed the drive of the Congress leaders to divert the movement for the democratic right of the minority into anti-Assamese channels. Infuriated, Youth Congress assassins killed the local DYF Secretary. But all this intimidation has failed to silence the Party.

The Party has stood solidly for the unity of the working class and the working people. The CITU listed and publicly condemned every case of attack on the work and security of the workers and employees during these rampages.

The latest phase

The agitation in the Brahmaputra Valley has for the moment subsided after the Government accepted, in toto, the demand of the movement for making Assamese the sole medium even for Cachar and other non-Assamese districts. English, of course, is to remain for ten years.

But this imposition of language has its own logic. It is nothing short of an assault on democracy. It is clear that nothing has been solved by the Government. Rather, the stage has been set for bigger turmoil with all its serious repercussions not only for Assam but the whole country.

Struggle for just solution

There is little doubt that the effort for a fair and just solution is inhibited by the present attitude of chauvinist extremists, who unfortunately have influenced broad sections of the intelligentsia and the intellectuals into believing that according to the minority language or languages their right would eventually deprive the Assamese people of their linguistic State. Linguistic States came into existence on the basis of one language for each State. This basis, they argue, would now be demolished and the Assam nationality would no more have a linguistic State of its own.

Has this fear any real basis? It, of course, has none.

The Language Act of 1960 has made Assamese the official language of Assam. This position has in no way been impaired, in the last one decade of the existence of this Act, by the fact that the same Act made Bengali the official language of Cachar.

It can again be readily seen that already education is carried on up to the secondary stage in Assam in five languages—besides Assamese and English, the Bengali, Bodo and Meitei languages are approved media in the school stage in Assam. It, therefore, does not stand to reason to say that once these media are used at the college stage, the future of the Assamese language would be jeopardised.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has been appealing to the people of Assam to give serious consideration to all these aspects of the problem and not be misled by the chauvinist extremists.

Appeal to Democratic Forces

The democratic forces of Assam, both Assamese and those belonging to the linguistic minorities, can never allow the game of these chauvinist extremists to win.

Can the aspirations of the Assamese-speaking people regarding education and employment, the right to work and leisure, to a decent democratic life be achieved if today they do not fight to defend the democratic rights of all minorities and make common cause with them ?

If they do not today fight and defeat the game of the reactionaries, the vast masses of the Assamese-speaking people themselves will lose their democratic right and become easy prey to the reactionary vested interests.

This is what the reactionaries want, this is what the democratic forces must defeat. The heavy task of defending the democratic rights of the linguistic minorities falls, first and foremost, on the shoulders of the democratic forces among the Assamese-speaking people. It is on their successfully fulfilling this task that the future of their own democratic rights rests to a very great extent.

Launch Protest Movement Against American Bombing Over North Vietnam

**Polit Bureau of CPI(M) issued statement in Calcutta
on December 23, 1972**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on December 23, 1972 :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the barbarous bombing of North Vietnam by the American Government. The all devastating operation only matches the destructive power of Hiroshima bombing and is intended to lay waste not only Hanoi and Haiphong but the whole of North Vietnam. Nixon now wishes to achieve his aims by blotting the Vietnamese out of existence.

The utterly treacherous character of this barbaric offensive is seen from the fact that it was suddenly sprung upon a world which was led to believe that peace was round the corner. The best wishes and feelings of the people of the world for peace in Vietnam, for justice to a brave and courageous people were exploited by the savage imperialist only to prepare for a dastardly attack.

The CPI(M) call upon the Indian people to launch a protest movement against these American barbarities, demand an immediate end to the bombing and acceptance of the October agreement which Nixon is now repudiating.

It is a shame that the Government of India is not capable of doing anything except bleating a verbal protest. It is nauseating that it is engaged in coaxing Nixon to accept its friendship. Let it at least come out with an unequivocal denunciation, recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and announce its intention to render every help to it.

Petition Signed By Millions Submitted to Lok Sabha Demanding Immediate Recognition of P.R.G. By The Government Of India

Solidarity Day observed on December 20, 1972 in support of Vietnam

"In the face of the gravity of the present situation we call on all men of goodwill throughout the world to raise their voices and demand that the Nixon Administration stop its bombing and sign without delay the accord agreed to hundred per cent last October" Comrade Dinh Sa Thu, PRG delegate at the Paris talks.

At the call of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Party units and various mass organisations in various parts of the country observed December 20, 1972 the Twelfth Anniversary of the Foundation of the National Front for Liberation of South Vietnam Solidarity Day.

It was the climax of the months-long campaign called by the Polit Bureau of the Party for collection of signatures on a mass petition to be presented to the Lok Sabha on the same day demanding that the Government of India immediately recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and take all steps to get the U.S. to stop their insane and savage bombing of North Vietnam and end its aggression in Indo-China.

More than five thousand workers, peasants, intellectuals, students and others including a large number of women started

gathering in the cold wintry morning at India Gate. Many walked to India Gate, others came in buses, by trains and on cycles They assembled in groups, raised anti-U.S. imperialist slogans and sang revolutionary songs.

Demonstration in Delhi

In New Delhi, the Delhi Regional Committee of the CPI(M) organised a mammoth demonstration on the occasion of the presentation of the Petition to the Lok Sabha and to protest against the renewed and intensified bombing of North Vietnam.

Petition Presented

At noon, Comrade A.K. Gopalan, leader of the CPI(M) Group in Parliament, presented the Petition to the Lok Sabha amidst pindrop silence. Comrade Gopalan said he was presenting only one copy of the Petition as a token and other copies would be presented to the Reception Office at 4 p.m.

Unfortunately or deliberately, no Cabinet Minister was present at the time of the presentation of the Petition. Pointing this out, Comrade Dinen Bhattacharya asked the Government to make an immediate statement on the people's petition and its demands.

At 2 p.m., the people assembled at India Gate formed into a demonstration. Leading the demonstration were Comrades A. K. Gopalan, Harkishen Singh Surjeet, members of the Polit Bureau of the Party, Chandrasekhar, Secretary of the Delhi Regional Committee, and others. Ahead of the demonstration was a carriage with a huge pile of the Petition copies signed by millions of people from all over the country.

Holding aloft red banners and posters, the demonstrators marched along Curzon Road, Feroz Shah Road and Jan Path and then turned into a huge rally at the Boat Club near Parliament House. Comrades A. K. Gopalan, P. Ramamurti and Srujeet addressed the rally.

A group of CPI(M) Members of parliament then wheeled the Petition carriage to the gates of the Lok Sabha and formally presented it.

At the U.S. Embassy

From the Boat Club the demonstrators marched to the U.S. Embassy. A large contingent of the Delhi Police and the Central Reserve Police which had cordoned off the Embassy, barred the demonstrators from going to the main gate

Comrades Gopalan, Ramamurti, Surjeet, Samar Mukherjee, Chandrasekhar and several M.P.s of the Party went to the Embassy gate to meet the representative of the Embassy who had come out of the main building to meet the delegation.

Comrade Gopalan informed the Embassy representative of the Petition signed by millions of the Indian people which had been presented to the Lok Sabha a short while before. He asked the representative to convey to his Government and President Nixon the anger and condemnation which the Indian people had just expressed over the barbarities committed by the US imperialists in Vietnam and demanded that the Nixon Administration sign without delay the agreement reached with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in October,

While this was going on at the Embassy gate, the huge demonstration shouted slogans: "Nixon Hai-Hai" "US imperialists, get out of Vietnam and Asia", "Grave of U.S. imperialism will be dug on the soil of Vietnam", etc.

Winding up the demonstration, Comrade Chandrasekhar called on the people assembled to pledge to intensify the campaign of solidarity with the liberation struggle of the heroic Vietnamese people.

Appendix (i)

Struggle Against Racism By the Indian Communists in Britain

The Third Conference of the Indian Communist Association in Great Britain held recently, discussed the question of racialism and organizing the struggle against it.

The conference showed that the Left-adventurist threat to the unity of the organization had been successfully fought back. The Second Conference of the Association, held at the end of 1967, was an emergency conference at a time when the Left-adventurist elements were trying to capture the organization and threatening to split it. Although they were isolated in that conference and the overwhelming majority of members stood by the statutes and objects of the Association, the period following that has been one of struggle against the Left-adventurist trend.

Splitting activities were not limited to the Association and its members, but the adventurists did their best to split the Indian Workers' Association, the traditional organization of the Indian workers in Great Britain. The main task of the Association hence was to fight back this trend to strengthen the unity of the Association on the basis of the ideological-political positions of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and to defend the unity of the IWA as a broad organization.

Today, the Association is more united as a result of this fight and the IWA in which the members of the Association work has not only been able to maintain its position as a national organisation but has also been able to make its impact on other

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, January 3, 1971.

organizations working for the welfare of immigrants as well as cooperating with the working class movement in the U.K.

The conference began with a report by Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M), on the international and national situation and the political line of the Party. Delegates spoke on this report and a number of questions were asked on which clarifications were given and then the conference expressed its full agreement with it.

This was followed by the presentation of the General Secretary's report and the discussion on it.

Association's Activities

General Secretary Gurdev Singh Dhama, in his report, dealt in detail with the struggle against the Left-adventurist trend and the activities of the Association over the past three years.

On March 17, 1968 a march was organized in defence of democracy in India. After a demonstration in front of the Indian High Commissioner's office, a deputation met the High Commissioner and handed over a resolution condemning the Government of India's anti-democratic policy, specially its action in dismissing the first United Front Government of West Bengal.

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was in London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, the Association along with other Left-wing organizations took the opportunity to highlight the race situation in Great Britain and demand that India withdraw from the Commonwealth.

The Association took part in several other marches organized by the IWA in various parts of the country against the 1969 South 'African Rugby team, against the proposed 1970 cricket tour of the South Africans and against Powellism.

When Madam Binh, leader of the PRG delegation at the Paris Conference, visited Britain, the Association organized several meetings and took part in receptions given to her. About a thousand NFL badges were sold by the Association to express solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese people fighting against U.S aggression.

In all these activities, the Association was able not only to mobilise substantial numbers of the Indian population but also to build relations with other progressive organizations.

Struggle Against Racism

Coming to the main issue facing the Indians in Britain, the issue of racialism, the report said :

It is clear that racialism has grown under the Labour administration in the past and will continue to flourish under the Tories. Since the passing of the 1962 Act on immigration, a number of new legislations have been undertaken in order to further curb the flow of immigrants into Britain. In 1965, voucher allotments were reduced to 7500 per year, and in 1968 Kenyan Asians holding British passports were denied entry and at the same time, the age-limit for dependents were adjusted to reduce their number. Ban has also been imposed recently on the entry of fiancées and legislations restricting immigrants to specified places, jobs and time-periods were being prepared. There are also risks of ban being imposed on dependents and further immigration and that "voluntary" repatriations would be enforced.

In addition the racial climate is rapidly deteriorating for those who are already resident in this country. Racial violence is breaking out against the coloured immigrants, fascist-type organizations are being set up to terrorise the immigrants into leaving the country, and through the Press and Television opinion is being created against the presence of the immigrants. Lies are being spread about illegal immigration, birth rates of the immigrants and the benefits they are deriving from the national insurance system.

The report then explained the Association's attitude to this issue : We view racialism as a diversionary policy of the ruling class in order to disrupt the working class movement and to divert public attention from the real causes of their social and economic ills, for perpetuating their class rule. The common masses of this country who get infected by 'Powellism' are no

less victims of this class rule as their Indian or other counterparts and so long as class rule remains, the basic causes promoting racial tension would exist.

“What we are observing in Britain today is a universal phenomenon in a class society where the ruling class attempts to hide the main contradiction by inciting the majority community against the minorities—whether religious, linguistic, coloured or otherwise.

“It is also important to view the Skinhead problem from the same standpoint. The Skinheads come from the underprivileged section of the British society, who are feeling alienated and insecure, and in the absence of class ideology and organization, are falling victims to racist propaganda.”

The report stated that while taking every possible care to protect Indians from the Skinhead menace, it was necessary to keep in mind the fact that both the Skinheads and the people they were beating up were victims of the same oppressors. With better ideological guidance and with the growth of the Left-wing movement in this country, many of them would be drawn into it.

The report was also quite clear that it would not be possible to solve the problem of racialism by simply organizing the coloured immigrants through militant organizations to fight this evil. On the contrary, Such attempts are likely to aggravate racial tension and would certainly play into the hands of the Powellites. The fight against racialism has to be carried on in cooperation with the working class of Britain on a class basis and the duty of the immigrant groups is to work in close collaboration and harmony with the progressive section of the British working class.

The report concluded with calling for tighter organizational discipline and coordination.

Twenty-six comrades participated in the discussion on the report, related their experiences, pointed out the shortcomings in the work of the Association and made suggestions for its improvement.

Conference Resolutions

Resolutions were adopted by the conference on racialism in Britain, British sales of arms to South Africa, on the U.S. imperialist aggression on Cambodia, supporting the working class struggles in Britain, condemning repression on the democratic movement in India and laying down concrete tasks for the Association.

The conference then elected an Executive Committee of eleven. Comrade Gurdev Singh Dhami was re-elected General Secretary and Comrades Gurnam Singh, Sohan Singh Sandhu, Narinder Dosanj and Rattan Singh Sandham were elected members of the Secretariat.

To mark the conclusion of the conference, a public meeting was held which was addressed by Comrade Surjeet.

Appendix (ii)

Election Manifesto —1971 of United Left Front, West Bengal

Historic decisions of the people never become final until and unless the people reaffirm them again and again by relentless conscious struggles. The break in the monopoly power of the Congress party has occurred in many States. But in the absence of strong Left mass movements in many States the urge of the people did not always find correct expression. Nevertheless a single break has nowhere won lasting victory. In every such State the people had to fight new battles to create and consolidate progressive and Left forces in order to make the first breakaway from the Congress, a really firm and progressive step. The victory of the people thus involves not one or two pitched battles, but a long process of repeated struggles, in course of which all manoeuvres of the pseudo-Left parties are exhausted and their true characters stand revealed while the people become more experienced, conscious, determined and organized. With the exposure and isolation of the reactionary and pseudo-Left and vacillating parties and the consequent polarisation of the masses the progressive forces become popular and strong.

In this general picture West Bengal stands in the forefront. After relentless struggles for 20 years, the people of West Bengal broke the monopoly of the Congress party's power in 1967. But this first victory was shortlived ; because with the growth of mass struggles during the first U.F. Government practically half of the Bangla Congress MLAs (who really represented the jotdar interests), defected from the United Front.

*Published as booklet by Sudhin Kumar, Convenor, United Left Front, West Bengal, in January 1971.

Sri Ajoy Mukherjee led this defection at first and held secret parleys with the Congress leaders in order to betray the U. F. Government. Later, when he got frightened, Sri Prafulla Ghosh came forward and completed this process of defection to the Congress. The people of West Bengal had to wage another bitter struggle in 1968 to reinstall an overwhelmingly strong United Front Government but still with the dubious Sri Ajoy Mukherjee at its head. The same process of defection to wreck the United Front Government began with the same Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and his Bangla Congress in the lead all over again as the masses moved into action in accordance with the U. F. programme. But Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and the Bangla Congress, by themselves, could not break the United Front Government because the United Front had still a substantial majority in the Legislative Assembly even after their treacherous desertion. So the vested interests called in their second line of defence, the CPI, the Forward Bloc and the SUC in particular, who readily fell in line with Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and refused to form another United Front Government without Sri Ajoy Mukherjee. These parties had conspired to set up a mini-front government with the help of the Congress but only after a short spell of President's rule whose main function was to suppress the popular anger at the treacherous break-up of the U. F. Government and to create political conditions for a Congress-backed mini-front government.

In accordance with this plan the West Bengal Legislative Assembly was not dissolved but only kept in suspension after the imposition of President's Rule. But this plan ultimately miscarried due to widespread movements and bitter anger of the people. The Bangla Congress along with some of the so-called Left parties must bear the full responsibility for handing over West Bengal to the Congress Government at the Centre. The imported (sixty thousand) CRP and BSF over and above the local police force, with the army kept in alert, could not cow the militant people of West Bengal and ultimately the Assembly had to be dissolved. But the Prime Minister, instead of proceeding to take the verdict of the people to elect a

government of their choice, threatened that there would be no elections in West Bengal till 'law and order' seemed satisfactory to her, i.e., safe for her party and its stooges to return to the seat of government.

In last ten months of President's Rule the situation in West Bengal has fast deteriorated in spite of tall boasts that the Central Congress Government would make all-round improvements and provide all funds necessary for the development of West Bengal. These promises have proved utterly false and nothing but crude deception of the people. In this period prices of all essential commodities have soared precipitously plunging all sections of the working people in dire distress. To fight this runaway inflation, which benefits only the money-bags, the workers and employees had to wage bitter strike struggles repeatedly. The closed factories and establishments were not only not opened but their numbers increased in this period. No new avenue of employment has been opened ; what is more many thousands of employed people were thrown out of jobs due to closures, lock-outs, rationalisation and automation. Even the administration has virtually collapsed. In order to side-track their utter failure, a section of the administration and the vested interests are deliberately encouraging anti-social activities everywhere and have carefully avoided taking the co-operation of political parties and people to curb such activities. At the same time, thousands of CRP, BSF and other police forces are let loose in towns and the countryside, in the holy name of restoration of 'law and order'. The real aim of this two-pronged attack is to place the police in a commanding position, to deprive the people of the gains achieved during the U.F. regime, particularly to deprive the peasants of surplus and *benami* lands occupied by them, to suppress the struggles of the people for better conditions of life and work, to terrorise them into submission to the vested interests and finally to the return of the Congress party to power. On the plea of putting down anti-social and Naxalite activities the rights and liberties of the common people are being trampled upon as never before. The obnoxious

laws providing detention without trial has been re-enacted and police terror and killing have been legalised really for use against political parties and mass organizations. The whole countryside is sudded with police camps. The armed CRP, BSF and the State police conduct mass searches, implicate thousands of people in false cases, arrest people en-masse, shoot people at random in their houses, in streets, in police vans and even molest women. Often people are reported missing and later their dead bodies are found lying on the streets or remote places. Even in the worst days of imperialist rule the people of West Bengal have never experienced such mass scale atrocities in the holy name in law and order. This new dimension of police terror has put to shade old conceptions of repression. Never before did the police and administration dare act in such blatant collusion with the reactionary vested interests and anti-social elements against the people in general and the Left movement in particular. Mounting miseries and bitter popular anger is the picture of West Bengal under President's Rule, which is virtually a police raj.

Throughout this period of ordeal, the parties of the great betrayal, the Bangla Congress and the Eight-Party Combination vied with the Congress, the Jana Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha in supporting this policy of mass terror against the people in general and the Six Parties in particular who firmly stood committed to the cause of the people and the policies of the United Front.

To the lasting glory of the people of West Bengal the terror regime has failed to suppress our heroic people, and make them surrender their rights and gains of the U.F. regime. They have joined battle again and again against this satanic regime, in the memorable general strike of March 17, and again on July 14, 1970 Government employees, teachers, other employees, workers of various industries, including port workers, quarter million jute workers fought fearlessly despite dire threats. The height of herosim was displayed by the Durgapur workers where 25 thousand armed police carried on unheard of repression from house to house with the active and open connivance of the

traitor parties, particularly the CPI, and failed to suppress the 60 thousand workers. A significant victory has been won by the peasants in the struggle for harvest in about 12 lakh bighas of *khas* and *benami* lands occupied by peasants.

Each one of these massive struggles was fought and won under the overall leadership of the Six Parties, who alone have consistently upheld the banner of the United Front policies and principle of relentless struggles against the vested interests for the amelioration of the conditions of the people, and for the unity of the toiling people. The Six Parties have now formed the *UNITED LEFT FRONT* with clear principles and unshakable unity, to strengthen the struggle of our people.

Through all these struggles, since the break-up of the United Front Government our people have been demanding fresh elections and restoration of responsible government. But the Central Congress Government consistently and contemptuously rejected the demand on the plea of disturbed law and order situation in West Bengal and the bankrupt plea that the voters will be intimidated. But now that the Congress has decided on parliamentary elections to retain its power, elections have been ordered in West Bengal. Even then the Central Government tried to prevent Assembly election in West Bengal because the Congress party and its stooges are afraid of the verdict of the people. However, fearing the threatened political struggles that might upset her applecart, the Prime Minister has been obliged to permit elections to the West Bengal Assembly also. Now, once again, the people of West Bengal have the opportunity to reaffirm their verdict against the Congress parties of all shades and their stooges.

We of the ULF stand firm by the commitment of the United Front to defeat the Congress party and their stooges and by the general principles of the 32-Point Programme. We are determined to pursue the policies of the United Front Government in the interests of the people and for the success of the struggles of the masses for their urgent demands. We are fully conscious of the limitations imposed by the Constitution, which will impede our efforts, to solve the basic problems of West Bengal.

We were and still are of the belief that complete social and political change is required to cure all the ills created by the outmoded social system. We have, therefore, always relied on mass struggles against the vested interests as the principal instrument of change and the government as a weapon in the hands of the struggling people. The militant mass struggles help to bring about important democratic reforms, which broaden the sweep of the struggles and strengthen the final assaults on the vested interests, guarantee its success. With this perspective we set out to implement the 32-Point Programme in 1969. Our success was acclaimed in other States and even abroad as the only correct course to lead West Bengal and India out of the present stagnation, decline and degradation.

It is the United Front Government that removed the apathy of the backward sections of the people and their sense of hopelessness generated by prolonged Congress misrule, mobilised millions of down trodden people, raised new hopes for a better life and generated the urge for struggle. The United Front Government gave human dignity to the oppressed masses by upholding their honour and democratic right to free expression of opinion, to organisation and to struggle. The U. F. Government released all political prisoners and withdrew all unjustified prosecutions against the common People, restored jobs to those victimised on political grounds. The U.F. Government recognised the trade unions of its own employees, enhanced their D. A. and set up a Pay Commission to revise their pay-scale. The United Front Government prohibited police interference in democratic movements.

Thanks to the sympathy and support of the U.F. and its Government, more than a million workers in factories, mines, plantations secured by massive united struggles substantial increases in their earnings amounting to more than Rupees 50 crores per year. The U.F. Government resisted rationalisation and automation which threatened the jobs of many thousands. It passed legislation providing for compulsory recognition of

the trade unions of the workers and employees to which the Central Government has till now withheld Presidential assent.

Consistent with the view that no effort at agrarian reform can succeed at all without the initiative of the peasants themselves, the United Front encouraged the peasants to discover and seize all land above the land ceiling—vested in the Government but still held by the jotdars illegally, all these 16 years, in spite of the Zamindari Abolition Act. Basing itself on the new confidence and strength of the peasant movement the United Front Government put a stop to eviction of share-croppers. The U. F. Government provided for granting home-stead land to the poor peasants and sharecroppers and exempted poor peasants from payment of rent.

On the food front the U. F. achievement has been signal. For 20 years the Congress Government served the black-marketeers and the hoarders and the people of West Bengal were a prey to high prices and acute distress. With the heritage of the Congress regime of two million tonnes of food deficit, the U. F. Government in 1969, streamlined and stepped up procurement and achieved the highest rice procurement in India in spite of the deficit. For equitable distribution the U. F. Government extended statutory rationing, fringe rationing, modified rationing and brought the entire population of West-Bengal under the rationing system. With the help of active mass intervention these measures defeated the game of hoarders and black-marketeers. As a consequence, in stead of the customary rise in prices during lean months, there was actually a fall in price during the rainy season, whereas even in 1967 the rice prices rose to Rs. five per kilo during the same season. The contrast is telling.

The U. F. Government considered the expansion of education as an important item of development. It sanctioned 1500 new primary schools and drew up a plan of making education up to Class VIII completely free. Due to the fall of the U. F. Government this measure could not be put into effect.

The U. F. Government took up with the Central Government the issues of satisfactory rehabilitation of all categories of

refugees and solved a number of problems benefiting a large number of refugee families.

Apart from the above immediate material gains, the biggest achievement of the U. F. regime was the unleashing of mass struggles of millions of poor peasants for a new life. This massive mobilisation of the peasant masses broke the centuries old bond of subservience to the feudal vested interests and created the irresistible force for great changes ahead. This great development was particularly assisted by the restraint imposed by the U.F. Government on the old police machinery, which had all along been only an instrument of oppression.

These are but a few salient examples of the achievements of the U.F. Government which lasted for only a year. Had it not been for internal obstructions greater achievements could have been registered. We are conscious that yet a great deal remains to be done. But it can be justifiably asserted that in spite of serious limitations and handicaps, the achievements of the U.F. Government laid sure foundations for great changes by mobilising the initiative of millions for the onslaught against the vested interests—without which no worthwhile change can ever be attempted.

While continuing the struggle for complete social and political change the United Left Front is pledged to prevent the return to power of the reactionary forces represented by all the varieties of Congress and their pseudo-Left and communal stooges, so as to weaken the offensive capacity of the vested interests and create the conditions for rapid polarisation and for massive mobilisation even of the most backward sections of the oppressed people.

We, therefore, call upon the people of West Bengal to defeat the forces of reaction and ensure progress by electing the candidate of United Left Front and defeating the various parties of reaction and their pseudo-Left, open and clandestine allies who stand unmasked before the people. It is the ULF alone that can form a strong government in the interest of the people. The days of reactionary or opportunist alliance rule are over.

Along with the election to the Assembly, the election to the Lok Sabha is also being held. It is urgently necessary to weaken and rebuff the forces of reaction at the Centre and elect to the Lok Sabha representatives of the ULF who will reflect the hopes and aspirations of the people of West Bengal.

On the side of reaction are the three factions of the Congress, the Congress (R), the Congress (O) and the Bangla Congress. With them are now allied not only the Jana Sangh and Swatantra but also parties like the PSP, and the SSP. The Eight-Party Combination, the Muslim League etc., have been assiduously trying to arrive at an understanding with one or other of these parties.

Though the parties of the reaction will possibly appear before the people as separate blocs, actually however they all have links with each other, in some cases open and in other cases clandestine. Their common aim is to crush the struggles of the people of West Bengal. All of them had opposed the general strike of March 17 called by the ULF parties to protest against the break-up of the U.F. Government. They tried to divide the people and frustrate the general strike of July 14. They tried to disrupt the movement of teachers and Government employees. The most heinous strike-breaking activities of these parties were seen during the historic struggle of the Durgapur workers when these parties collaborated with the police and the CRP. They have deservedly earned the hatred of the toiling people. Let the coming elections register their total rejection by the people.

The ULF pledges to carry forward their struggle against reaction and fight for the solution of the following priority problems of West Bengal.

1. The question of land and relations and agriculture must naturally receive top priority, as the livelihood of 75 per cent of our people depend on agriculture. Besides the problems of food shortage, the supply of raw material for industry, and the expansion of the economy depend on a prosperous agriculture.

In this matter the first task obviously is to complete speedily and in the most thorough manner the process of land reform

already initiated by the U.F. Government and give it legal sanction by legislation.

The second task is to rapidly extend irrigation, principally through small irrigation, schemes which can be completed in short time. Flood-prevention and drainage schemes must also be carried out as urgently needed measures.

Two other measures are required to help agricultural production expand rapidly—(i) provision of adequate credit to the poor peasants, and (ii) provide price support on the basis of parity prices through extension of State trading.

2. The next in importance the problem of employment for the vast number of unemployed. The slow growth of industries in West Bengal is to a great extent the result of discrimination of the Central Government against the West Bengal people, in the matter of licences, in the matter of allocation of raw material, in the matter of the size of development plans, in the matter of distribution of revenues, etc., Through the years, the Government of India and vested interests have pursued the policy of shifting head offices of financial institutions and other concerns outside West Bengal.

To reverse the trend and to create rapidly large avenues of employment, the West Bengal Government must have the power and funds to open the closed factories, to assist sick industries and to create new employment opportunities both in rural and urban sectors., With expanding agriculture and State Government control on the wealth produced in the State this programme is eminently feasible.

3. Thirdly, the State Government will have to expand State trading not only in articles of food but also in other essential commodities to ensure equitable distribution at fair prices, to hold the price line and to ensure fair remuneration for agricultural produce. The expansion of State trading must be linked with measures of direct public vigilance so that its objectives are fulfilled.

4. Fourthly, expansion of education must be regarded as one of the prime objects of development of the country. In

consonance with that view primary education must be made available to all and education up to Class VIII should be made free. These measures would not only lighten some burden on the people but also create the basis for cultural and material advance of the people.

5. Fifthly, it is only a ULF Government which can with the help of the people curb the activities of criminal and antisocial elements who are kept alive today by sections of the administration and the police and some political parties.

We detail out the above priorities particularly because without them the 32-Point Programme would lack direction and create confusion.

Implementation of the above urgent programme in West Bengal involves serious struggles for change of the Constitutional frame work, so as to secure wide powers and resources for the State which at the moment are concentrated in the hands of the Central Government.

Our experience shows that many provisions of the Constitution and their interpretation by courts of law hinder progressive social legislation and urgently necessary reforms. Secondly, the Constitution has invested the Central Government with such over-riding powers that it can interfere in all matters of the administration of the State and frustrate all democratic verdicts of the people. The party in power in the Centre can wreck or dismiss any elected government in the State, use the office of the governor and the Central services against any State Government, dissolve elected State Legislative Assemblies and withhold election and impose Central rule for indefinite period, withhold assent to legislation passed by State Legislatures, and even interfere in the jurisdiction of the State in the sphere of law and order.

We have seen two Presidential regimes in West Bengal under which grave attacks have been made against such little democratic rights as the people possess and attempts have been made to impose a police raj on the State in the interests of the vested sections.

Therefore, we shall fight for :

1. Basic revision of the Constitution ;
2. The chapter on fundamental rights have to be so amended as to ensure full democratic liberties and rights and to prevent all attempts of the vested interests to frustrate progressive social reforms ;
3. The powers of the Supreme Courts and High Courts to interfere in essential progressive measures must be curtailed;
4. All the powers of legislation under the concurrent list should be given exclusively to the States ;
5. The State Government should have complete control on the officers of the Central services working in the State and over the Radio in West Bengal ;
6. President's rule shall not extend beyond three months.
7. Similarly, the bulk of the resources of the States are monopolised by the Centre while all the development work are the responsibilities of the State Government. Experience of the last 20 years show that while the States suffer grievously due to shortage of funds, the Centre misuses the vast resources of the country for the benefit of the party in power and the vested interests, creates vast unwieldy and costly bureaucracy ; incurs wasteful and luxury expenditure ; and by discriminatory practices, creates antagonism between people of different States ; Therefore the States must have primary control on the resources of the States so as make available to the States 75 per cent of the revenues now collected by the Centre ;

Finally, interests of our people demand early restoration of normal relations and trade with East Pakistan.

These in brief are the priorities and highlights of our programme the implementation of which has already been considerably initiated. At this stage the furtherance of our aims involves most serious struggles against the bulwark of reaction at the Centre, without which we will not be able to march ahead. It is obvious that this great responsibility cannot be carried out by any leadership other than that of the United Left

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Front who have been in the forefront of the struggles of our people not only for the past decades but also in the crucial period of the last ten months during which all the varieties of Congress party and their pseudo-Left and communal allies have come out openly for the vested interests and have championed more and more repression in the name of 'peace' and restoration of 'law and order'.

The United Left Front, therefore, urges upon the people of West Bengal to totally reject these traitors—the Congress (R), Congress (O), the Bangla Congress and their allies the Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the Eight-Party Combination and reaffirm the historic verdict against reaction and in favour of the ULF.

Right C.P. Continues Its Line of Subservience To Congress

M. Basavapunnaiah

The National Council of the Right Communist Party, after days of laborious effort, has produced a resolution. "On the General Elections" of March 1971. This ten-page document is a specimen of the party's confusion and muddled political thinking, quite unworthy of a political party that claims to be a Communist Party. So brazenfaced and shameless is the leadership of the Right C.P. that it was not a word of regret for the dirty role it has played in enabling the ruling Congress Party to once again reimpose its one-party monopoly rule at the Centre, a monopoly that was seriously undermined by the elections of 1967.

To cover up its treacherous class-collaborationist political line and bankrupt election strategy and tactics, it indulges in self-praise for the supposed leading role it has played in routing the "Grand Alliance" of extreme Right reaction, while conveniently ignoring another reality, namely, the severe undermining of the unity and strength of the Left and revolutionary opposition forces and its damaging effects on the revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement in the country at this crucial juncture of events.

The Right Communist Council is impervious to the widely levelled criticism and ridicule against it by the public and Press in India, that almost all the Lok Sabha seats it has secured in the elections are not won in opposition to the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes and their political parties, but they are, in the main, gifts given by the ruling Congress Party for the meritorious

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, May 9, 1971.

services the Right Communists have rendered in undermining the Marxist-led, democratic United Fronts and Governments in the States of Kerala and West Bengal, thus bringing relief to the crisis-ridden Congress rule in the country.

Praise for Congress Victory

The resolution of the National Council remorselessly; sings praises for the “massive” and “landslide victory” scored by the ruling Congress Party depicting it as a mighty victory for the progressive, Left and democratic forces in the country. All the fretting and fuming against the election strategy and tactics of the ruling Congress Party indulged in its Election Manifesto and in the speeches and writings of its leaders, characterising those tactics as a “policy of going alone”, as “a harmful election strategy being adopted by the Prime Minister”, as a naked bid for “undivided power at the Centre”, etc., is conveniently forgotten.

The Right C. P.’s election manifesto had warned : “it will not be forgotten that in all the four previous Lok Sabha elections, the Congress was returned with a single party majority. But such majorities became a cover for the reactionaries to grow within the ruling party and carry on their machinations in the interests of monopolists and other vested interests. One result was the betrayal of even the election promises of the party in power. It has also to be remembered that the Syndicate Opposition in the dissolved Lok Sabha itself emerged from within the Congress”.

Simple honesty demands that a political party which gives such a warning in its election manifesto has to say something when the ruling Congress Party has not only secured “a single party majority” in the mid-term poll to the Lok Sabha but has also managed to bag a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha. But not a word of comment on it is found in the resolution of the Right Communist Council.

Its election manifesto had set the aim of “bringing into existence a new Lok Sabha which will have *a firm Left and democratic orientation than the last one*” and a new Lok Sabha

that “can undertake decisive measures to liquidate the remnants of landlordism and carry out land reforms in favour of the peasantry, curb the monopolies by radical measures of nationalisation and rid the country of neo-colonialist exploitation and influences”. Does this party dare say now that the brute majority of two-thirds for the ruling Congress Party comes anywhere near the above proclaimed aim? Then is it not outright deceit and demagogy on the part of the National Council to assert that the “election results have in general vindicated the correctness of the political line taken up by the Communist Party of India”?

Disruptors of Democratic Unity

The Council resolution speaks of its election tactics as one of unifying “the Left and democratic forces including the progressive sections inside the Congress”. But the election review of the National Council says something totally different. It says that “the landslide victory secured by the ruling Congress has come as the result of three main factors”—the first two being the radical image projected by Smt. Indira Gandhi and her party and the political bankruptcy of the Syndicate alliance. The third reason according to the resolution “is the fact that the *complete disarray and disunity in the camp of the Left forces, the utter opportunism of many of the Left parties and the failure and collapse of many of the Left united front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal, due to the policy of the Communist Party (Marxist) also contributed to the Congress victory*”. (Emphasis added)

After such a categorical statement regarding the collapse of the “Left forces” and their “United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal” is it not cheeky on the part of Right Communist leadership to brag that “the election results have in general vindicated the correctness of the political tactical line taken up by the Communist Party of uniting the Left and democratic forces” etc. ? Is it not utter dishonesty and a white lie to state that the Right C.P. was advocating unity of all “Left and democratic forces including the *progressive sections inside*

the ruling Congress”, whereas in reality it was not only uniting and collaborating with the ruling Congress Party in toto, but also joining hands with even the Syndicate Congress to fight the Communist Party of India (Marxist) ? What else is it except hypocrisy to prattle about “Left and democratic unity” while the actual practice is of building anti-CPI(M) united fronts and forming such Governments in the States of Kerala and West Bengal ? For a political party, which calls itself Communist, it is indeed Indicrous to talk of unity and united front, clean bypassing the key question of State power and its class essence, against which such a united front is to be forged, whether it is called united democratic front or the unity of the Left and democratic parties and groups. To busy itself with the constant talk of unity and united front against the extreme Right reaction, in and out of season, in nothing but a clever mask to hide the ugly reality of class collaboration with the bourgeois-landlord State power, betraying the interests of the proletariat and its revolutionary cause.

Several progressive-minded people and the well-wishers of the revolutionary working class movement had been expecting that the leaders of the Right C. P. would rethink about their suicidal political line of forging anti-CPI(M) united fronts including the principal ruling class parties, after the results of the general elections and revert to the path of forging the unity of the classes and masses whose objective class interests are opposed to the present State power and Government. But the resolution of the Right C.P. shatters all such hopes and further accelerates the race towards the ruling Congress Party and into utter subservience to it.

Criticism of State Units

The Right C. P. bemoans that “the negative attitude of a section of the Congress (R) leadership towards the CPI and some other Left forces in coming to electoral adjustments has disrupted the united fight against Right reaction”, thus putting the Right C. P. in some disadvantage. It censures its Bihar State unit for not *completely* kowtowing to the ruling Congress Party

during the elections, and it reprimands it with the statement that “a more flexible application of our tactical line (i.e. total surrender to ruling Congress dictates—*M. B.*) without overestimating our own strength would have enabled our Party to secure more seats”.

The National Council resolution admonishes its West Bengal State unit thus : “Our serious reverses in West Bengal were due, besides other factors, to the failure of our party to implement the line of the National Council laid down in its resolution of October 1970”. In plain words this is to criticise the West Bengal unit for not having whole-heartedly and openly forged a united front with the ruling Congress against the CPI(M).

The resolution further observes that “our poor performance in some other States such as Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh also calls for similar self critical review”.

The funniest part of the story is that having stated that four major State units of the Right C.P. namely, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Andhra have either failed to implement the election line or put a different tactical line in practice, the resolution states, “even while the party’s policy proved correct and its tactical line vindicated, our party could not at the same time emerge as a bigger force than before, both in terms of votes and seats. This certainly calls for a sharp self-critical examination and drawing of proper conclusions”. Can anybody beat this party in the art of self-deception and deception of others?

Here is another gem of the Right Communist Council’s resolution which demonstrates its ingenious talent at perverted reading of facts and assessment of things. Commenting on the performance of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in this election, it has temerity to state that “the C.P. (Marxist) as the result of its wrong and thoroughly disruptive line has lost heavily in every State except West Bengal and Tripura” and “the election has thus revealed the fact that the position of the C.P. (Marxist) as an all-India political party has been seriously eroded”.

Every politically-minded person in the country, first, is aware of the fact that the number of seats contested by the CPI(M) is more or less the same as contested by the Right C.P. and yet in terms of seats as well as votes the CPI(M) has gained, its seats increasing from 19 to 25, and its total votes increasing from 4.21 to 5.08 per cent. Secondly, the friends and foes of the CPI(M) admit that it has had to fight against both the bourgeois-landlord camps, the Syndicate-led alliance and the Indicateled alliance, principally relying on its own independent class and mass strength, unlike the Right C.P. which slavishly hitched itself to the bandwagon of the ruling Congress. Bypassing these patent facts the Right C.P. resolutin prattles about its so-called all-India strength and the alleged erosion of the CPI(M)'s all-India character !

The Right C.P. leaders, instead of feeling ashamed about losing the proletarian and revolutionary opposition character of their party, seek to console themselves by saying that they have succeeded in begging seats from the ruling Congress, not in two or three States but five or six States ! They, instead of hanging their heads in shame for having lost almost all the constituencies where the working class in a considerable force, are trying to tell their following that they have built up "an all India Party" with their bankrupt class collaborationist politics ! They do not believe in showing the required modesty and humility to realise that the Communist movement in India, after its existence for forty years and more, could not poll more than ten per cent of the votes. Instead they put up false postures to delude themselves and deceive the working masses.

Silence About Congress Policies

Quite typical of the Right-opportunist and revisionist character of the leadership of the Right C. P. is that its ten-page long election review and tasks, hardly makes any criticism or attack on the anti-working class, anti-peasant and anti-people policies of the State power and the Congress Party in sole control of that political power.

In its election manifesto, the Right C.P. had found it necessary to say the following few words : “The anti-people and anti-democratic character of the bureaucracy has been lately witnessed in the manner in which it has handled the affairs of West Bengal now under the President’s rule. In the name of dealing with Naxalite violence, police has been armed with draconian powers to detain citizens without trial and carry on other forms of police attacks against the people. To this end, the Central Government sought and also received the support of the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party”.

But in the present resolution it has not a word to say against the State’s use of violence on the struggling people. It has devoted several paras to slander and malign the CPI(M), attributing to it all conceivable crimes and depicting its policy as a “policy of armed terrorism supported by the major section in the police bureaucracy” in West Bengal, and to say that the victories scored by the CPI(M) and its front there are due to this terrorist policy !

While flatly rejecting the open appeal of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) in its post-election statement, the Right CP’s Council put the following deceptive appeal in its resolution : “The Communist Party of India earnestly appeals to the Left parties to draw the necessary lessons from the bitter experience of the harm done to the Left as a result of the policies of division and conflict in the ranks of the Left parties”.

The Right C.P. resolution does not say what the “bitter experience” is and what the harm done to the Left it though according to the same resolution everything has gone off wonderfully well in the elections—the Right reaction has been routed; the Left and democratic forces have won, and the Right C.P.’s policies have been vindicated !

Some New Discoveries

After having argued at length for unity and united front with the ruling Congress Party ; and its Government—all in the holy name of “forging links with the Left inside the Congress—the great leaders of the Right C.P. have made some new discoveries :

1. "A number of important leaders of the Syndicate have openly advocated its dissolution and are joining the ruling Congress. The trek back into the ruling Congress has already started in most State".

We can only supplement the above with the additional information omitted by our Right C.P. leaders that not only the Syndicate men, but several from the Swatantra, Jana Sangh. Shiv Sena of Bombay, PSP and Right C.P., had, long ago started their trek back to the ruling Congress Party.

2. It is further necessary to dispel all illusions that the most urgent socio-economic problems of the national economy or people's live can be solved within the capitalist framework. The Congress (R) programme does not go beyond this framework, however much the Congress leadership may try to present it as Socialism. Continuation along the capitalist path cannot also lead to the uprooting of the economic and social base of Right reaction". . "Sharp mass and class battles will have to be waged in the coming period around the pivotal issue of which path the Indian people will have to take. The period ahead will, therefore, not be one of calm of relative stability but one of sharp confrontation and struggle between the forces of national democratic advance and the counter-revolutionary forces of neo-colonialism and reaction".

Capitalist Path of Ruling Classes

The ruling Congress Party had been following the capitalist path since the attainment of political independence, some quarter of a century ago, describing it as Socialistic pattern, democratic Socialism etc. The Congress headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi has, time and again, made it clear that the same path and programme would be strictly adhered to, though some small amendments here, changes in the practice that are necessary according to it may be made knowing all this well, the leaders of the Right C.P. are allying with the ruling Congress Party; and Government, against the CPI(M). How do they explain this?

They cannot explain it. That is why they deliberately falsify the policy of the CPI(M) as one “which equates the two Congresses and sees in the landslide victory of the ruling Congress only a simple return to the conditions of monopoly ; rule of the old united Congress in the country”. Whether it is “simple return to the conditions of monopoly rule of the Congress” or a complex return to the Congress monopoly, can the Right C. P. leaders deny the fact that the State and Government headed by the ruling Congress Party are in the main representing and defending the interests of the capitalists and landlords including the big capitalists. Is it not the elementary duty of Marxist-Leninist to enlighten and educate the people as regards the basic class character of both the wings of the divided Congress while not for a moment forgetting the policy differences between the two, in order to give a united fight to defeat the extreme Right reaction ?

The unpardonable crime of the Right revisionists is to exclusively emphasise the latter, totally ignoring the former, thus becoming the tail of the ruling Congress. Why burke the basic issues and blame the CPI(M) ?

3. “The economic situation continues to be grave and serious, particularly in respect of the win problem of rise in prices and unemployment. The solution of these call for urgent and radical measures against the power of monopoly and landlordism”.

May we ask the Right Communist leaders whether the grave economic crisis which they, too, had been describing since 1967, has disappeared, and it remains only “critical with rise in prices and unemployment”? Why don't they consistently stand on their former analysis that the very path of capitalist development is caught in a grave crisis the manifesrations being many?

4. “The Communist Party of India will strive its hardest to carry forward the Left and democratic unity already achieved during the election campaign to consolidate and extend it, etc.” “The CPI(M) has advanced an opportunist and sectarian programme based on the outmoded concept on anti-Congress Left unity”.

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The entire description in the National Council resolution goes to demonstrate how the Left and democratic forces suffered a grave setback and how it was one of the three principal reasons which gave the ruling Congress the “landslide victory”. Is it this that the Right C. P. leaders want to advance as real Left and democratic unity? To talk of “anti-Congressism” or “pro-Congressism” is delightfully vague. The question of questions here is, whether the front the Right C. P. advocates is directed against the State and its ruling class or not? If it is against the capitalist landlord State, how can one escape fighting the ruling Congress Party? And finally, how can the Right Communist line of making the CPI(M) its chief enemy and unity with any and every force, including the ruling Congress Party and Government be a political line of any working of any working class party worth the name?

Appendix (iv)

Bangalore Decisions of the Central Committee of CPI(M) and how the Right Communist Secretary Reads Them

M. Basavapunnaiah

The General Secretary of the Right Communist Party, Sri C. Rajeswar Rao, has made his criticism of our Bangalore Central Committee decisions published in his party organ *New Age*, dated September 12, 1971. This critique, of course, contains nothing new. It covers the familiar ground repeating the usual refrain that the CPI(M) is sectarian and disruptionist, that it is anti-Soviet and pro-Mao and that it is calling the Right C. P. names such as betrayers, deserters and hangers-on of the ruling Congress party.

However, the criticism of the Right C.P. Secretary is interesting in one respect namely, that he has “discovered” that most of the political crimes of the CPI(M) are due to its “wrong programmatic understanding”! He writes, “many of the wrong, opportunist and disruptive positions and activities of the CPM which harm the united movement of the Left and democratic forces in our country emanate from their *wrong programmatic understanding*”.

He also tells us that he hopes “even at this late hour, the CPM leadership will make an *honest* effort to give up their wrong understanding and join hands with the CPI for building all-in unity of the Left and democratic forces and take the revolutionary democratic movement forward”. (Emphasis added)

Published in “PEOPLE’S DEMOCRACY”, Calcutta, September 26, 1971. Documents of the Bangalore decisions of the Central Committee of CPI (M) are given under Item No. 31 and 32 of this Volume.

What Our Programme States

Let us first make an honest effort to examine how 'honest' Sri Rajeswar Rao is in either understanding the programme of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or presenting it as he does in the present critique of his. He writes, "the programme of the CPM states that the present Indian State is the State of the bourgeoisie and landlords which is completely reactionary and pro-imperialist". He does not dare quote the precise formulation of the CPI(M) regarding the class character of the present Indian State, since it comes in the way of the perverted twist that he gives to say it is "completely reactionary and pro-imperialist".

May we ask our Right Communist worthy whether what he is indulging in is not cheap trickery. Anyway, it is not honest political-ideological polemics. For argument's sake let us accept this contention of our Right C.P. leader and ask him on the basis of this very premise whether he and his party programme characterise the present Indian State as "*completely revolutionary and thorough going anti-imperialist*".

To put the record straight, let us first quote what the Programme of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) actually says about the class character of the Indian State and Government.

Paragraph 56 of our Party Programme reads : "The present Indian State is the organ of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords led by the big bourgeoisie, who are increasingly collaborating with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development."

Where does our 'honest' right Communist leader find in the Programme of our Party such "dishonest" statements as "completely reactionary" "totally pro-imperialist". "cent per cent pro-feudal", etc. ? If our honourable friend is fond of such characterisations he can go to the political-theoretical literature of the Naxalites in our country who are the fitting counterparts of the Right revisionists.

Yes, the CPI(M) certainly holds the view that the present Indian State is the organ of bourgeois-landlord classes, *essentially* serving the interests of the feudal and semi-feudal landlords,

the Indian monopolist bourgeoisie and their foreign collaborators. To add words and phrases like 'complete', 'total' and 'all out' 'reactionary', etc., is to deliberately confuse the issue and mislead gullible.

The class character of the State, whenever it is defined by Marxist-Leninists, is done with a view to clearly understand the essential class content of the State under discussion, and in order to educate and enlighten the proletariat and the people accordingly. It is not done as an opportunist exercise in sophistry. Nor is it done to shield the real class character of the State and thus serve the cause of the exploiting classes.

The CPI(M) has made the class characterisation of the Indian State after a thorough and concrete analysis of the facts, and a quarter century of living experience fully confirms our contention.

Who Have Been Benefited

The Indian monopolists have registered a phenomenal growth during the last 25 years ; and the simple fact that a handful of them such as the Tatas, Birlas, Dalmias, and Sahu-Jains command more than two-thirds of the entire private industry and business in the country is proof positive of our contention. Does Sri Rajeswar Rao dare deny it ?

Collaboration agreements between Indian Big Business and foreign monopolist concerns have grown in a big way ; foreign capital investments and the consequent pumping out of profits and super-profits are on an ever-ascending scale. Does Sri Rao deny it?

The landlords, who constitute four to five per cent of the land-holding classes, are in possession of 45 to 50 per cent of the total land under cultivation, and are drawing thousands of crores of rupees per annum either as income or rent, notwithstanding all the talk of land reforms and ceiling on landholdings. This strata has come to dominate the entire rural life—from the village Panchayat and co-operative to Panchayat Samitis, Zilla Parishads and Legislative Assemblies. Can the Right Communist Secretary negate this statement ?

The saying that the proof of the pudding is in its eating is not said for nothing. Twentyfive years of post-Independent Congress rule has resulted in the tremendous growth of these vested interests, namely the bourgeoisie, the landlords and their foreign collaborating capital. Then, whose main and basic class interests is the present Indian State serving—is it for the big landlords, Indian monopolists and their foreign collaborators or the workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie ?

Leadership of the State

If the CPI(M) states that the present state and Government is headed by the big bourgeoisie, it becomes “sectarian and disruptionist” to our Right Communist leader ! Then are people to accept the utterly false theory that the non-big bourgeoisie remains the leading force in the present Indian State, and yet the monopolist and their foreign collaborators are enriching themselves enormously ?

If the CPI(M) says that the big landlords are allies and junior partners of the big bourgeoisie in the present Indian State power, it becomes “Left-opportunist and adventurist” to our Right C. P. Secretary ! And yet the same Right Communist Party which denies the sharing of State power by the landlords demagogically declares in its Draft Political Resolution, for its “Ninth Party Congress”, that in most of the States “the *leaderships of the ruling Congress and its Government are still dominated by landlord and kulak interests...*”, and that “on the agrarian front, the main effort of the *State Governments, still dominated by feudal and kulak interests* is not to effect radical land reforms...”etc. (Emphasis added)

Will our Right Communist Secretary explain why such double-talk ? Sri Rajeswar Rao flaunts before us his party’s bankrupt and Right opportunist class definition of the Indian State, that it is “the organ of the class rule of the national bourgeoisie *as a whole* in which the big bourgeoisie holds *powerful influence*” and “their class rule has *strong links* with the landlords”.

Why this jugglery with words? What do these Right revisionist pundits mean by “the national bourgeoisie as a whole ?” Does

it include the landlord and kulak bourgeoisie, or if they are excluded, on what scientific basis are they excluded from the 'whole' of the Indian bourgeoisie ?

It is argued that "the big bourgeoisie holds powerful influence" on the State power. May we know why this deceitful distinction between the acceptance of Big Business holding powerful influence on State power and at the same time furiously opposing the proposition that the big bourgeoisie is the leading force in the State power?

Among the three class strata, i.e., the big bourgeoisie, the non-big bourgeoisie and the landlords, which one is in the leading position during all the 25 years since Independence ? The CPI(M) says it is the big bourgeoisie and its political representatives. The right C.P. wobbles, quibbles, equivocates, resorts to evasive terms and in the end pleads its bankruptcy, unable to state which stratum of the ruling classes occupies the leading position in the State power. It is a leaderless combination ! "Big bourgeoisie hold powerful influence" on the State and the State has got "strong links" with the landlords ! The reader is left to conclude that the "non-big bourgeoisie" is the real leader of the ruling class combine, even though they allow to be powerfully influenced by the monopolists and takes pleasure in maintaining strong links with landlords !

Such is the ridiculous muddle into which the Right C. P. has got itself. A shamefaced apologia for the monopolists and landlords and their reactionary role in the present State power.

And yet, Sri Rajeswar Rao with gusto asserts that the present Indian State power "is not led by the big bourgeoisie" and to say that it is led by the big bourgeoisie is "to come to the ridiculous conclusion that the present Indian State led by the big bourgeoisie is acting against its own vital, interests" !

Nationalisation And So On

Then he proceeds to mount a formidable attack on the political positions of the CPI(M) with a profound question, "will the CPM leadership explain how the *present Central Government* could undertake such *big steps* as nationalisation of banks,

abolition of the privy purses and privileges of the princes, confrontation with the Right reactionary combine in the recent Lok Sabha polls, amendments to our Constitution *restricting the right to property* and signing of the historic Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation against which the *reactionary forces in our country and the imperialists outside are crying hoarse*".

Every syllable of this argument is a gem by itself and our Right Communist leader must be feeling very elated that he has demolished the whole case of the CPI(M) with the stroke of a pen !

Sri Rao, you talk of the "present Central Government" and the wonderful things it is supposed to have done. Your party programme, obviously, was not talking of the "present Central Government", and what it was talking about was the class character of the present Indian State. It is called muddled political thinking if one were to confuse and substitute the concept State with that of Government.

Secondly, it is called dishonesty to catalogue some steps of the present Government, and on that score, try to justify the position taken in your programme, some seven years ago, that the present Indian State power is not led by the big bourgeoisie.

Thirdly, all the so-called "big steps" you have piled up will in no way adversely affect the *basic class* interests of the Indian monopolists, the big landlords and their foreign collaborators. You may call them big steps, bigger steps and even the biggest steps—all to justify your party's role as the drummer boy of the bourgeois-landlord Congress Government.

It is sheer political illiteracy and making a mockery of Marxism-Leninism to try to tell the proletariat and the people that all these "big steps" undermine Indian Big Business and its foreign monopolist patrons. These and similar other steps do not and cannot alter the class character of the State.

The pressing needs of the capitalist path of development and the safety of the class rule of the bourgeois landlord classes demand such steps, when faced with the mounting anti-Government discontent in the country. Let no political ignorance

stand in the way of realising the fact that these and similar other “big steps” were taken by big bourgeois-led Governments of several countries in the past, and it is criminal to depict them as decisive blows directed against big capital, by a non-big capitalist State or Government.

Steps to regulate and discipline the big capitalists, or measures to stop their reckless speculative activities and restrict their aggressive proclivities against the non-big bourgeois stratum—all these cannot serve as the yardstick to measure one’s anti-monopolist characteristics. There are “wonderful” Acts in several imperialist countries which are anti-monopoly and anti-trust in nature.

There are also Constitutions in certain developed countries in which the right of property is not at all enshrined as a fundamental right, and yet it does not prevent the growth of multi-millionaires and bilionaires. The Indo-Soviet Pact is not, can never be, the touchstone whether the class character of the State in question is monopolist or anti-monopolist. The Anglo-Soviet Pact, Franco-Soviet Pact and similar such pacts are many in history, and it would be utterly stupid for one to prove from it that the present Indian State is led by the non-monopolist bourgeoisie. Similarly, to assert, as the Right Communists often do, that the acceptance of Soviet aid—economic, political or military—by a State and Government cannot be a valid argument to prove that such a State and Government is necessarily led by the non-big bourgeoisie.

The Indo-Soviet Pact

Sri Rajeswar Rao, in all seriousness, tries to tell us that all the reactionary forces, inside and outside the country, “are crying hoarse” against the Indo-Soviet Pact. From Rajaji of the Swatantra Party to Sri Vajpai of the Jana.Sangh, including the top leaders of the Syndicate Congress, every political party in the country has welcomed the pact, no matter what reservations one might have and what motivated them to give such support. Then, why does Sri Rao exaggerate the reactionary opposition to the Indo-Soviet Pact of Peace and Frindship ? Obviously, to

show that the present Indian State and Government represents the non-monopolists, and to justify his party's present role of "loyal opposition". Otherwise, it is untrue to say that there is country-wide opposition to the pact from reactionary forces

The Secretary of the Right C.P. has mounted a tirade, as in his opinion, the decisions of our Bangalore C.C. meeting are "giving a demoralising picture of the world Communist movement", that they are attempting "to tar the fair name of the Soviet Union", that there is no criticism of the Chinese Communist leadership for its supply of arms and money to Yahya Khan's regime, that they equate the Soviet and Chinese party leaders in their criticism, etc.

If all this is a part of the bread and butter problem of this renegade party, one can understand and pity the whole lot of leaders who had reduced this party to such a sorry plight. But if it is seriously-meant criticism, it need to be resolutely rebuffed and rejected.

It was always there with the Right C.P. leaders and, of late, it has become a refrain with them, to pick up every word of our criticism or dissent with the Soviet Communist Party and Soviet Government and broadcast in their Press that the CPI(M) is "anti-Soviet". This miserable lot of leaders, who are short of words for their eulogy of the Indian bourgeoisie and the Government as friends of the Socialist camp and pro-Soviet, are not ashamed to carry on the smear campaign that the CPI(M) is "anti-Soviet". If some criticism is directed against the Right revisionist policies and positions of the CPSU, it is instantaneously dubbed as "anti-Sovietism"; and if some strong criticism is offered against the Chinese leadership and of its Left opportunist policies, it is said that the criticism is not sufficiently rabid against China!

The CPI(M) pleads guilty on this score, and it cannot and shall not oblige our Right Communist leaders either to reduce itself to be the sycophant of this or that fraternal Communist Party, big or small, or become a willing tool of somebody to play either anti-China or anti-Soviet buffoonery in his court. Is

it not for such slavish behaviour of the Right C. P. that people reward it with the title, "more loyal than the king" ?

Socialist Arms Aid

The CPI(M) had, long ago made its position abundantly clear as regards the supply of arms by any Socialist State. It is of the confirmed view that no Socialist Government should give arms aid to any non-Socialist Government except when it is fighting against the imperialists and its agents. It was the Right C.P. and its counterparts, the Naxalites, who were justifying arms supply to the Ayub Khan Government and subsequently to the Yahya Khan Government on the strange and spurious ground that it was done either to disentangle Pakistan from the SEATO and CENTO military pacts or to 'rescue' it from the clutches of Mao's China. It is better that our Right C. P. leaders talk less about "arms aid" to non-Socialist States and Governments by the big Socialist State and their moral and political standards in this regard.

Can the stopping of Soviet arms aid to Yahya Khan after the 1971 March-April events in Bangladesh absolve the Soviet Government of its mistakes in this matter ? Can any Right C.P. leader dare say that the military equipment provided by the Soviet Government was not used against the people of Bangladesh and only arms supplied by the Chinese Government were used to crush the popular upheaval ? Was it not true that both the Soviet and Chinese Governments competed with each other in supplying arms to the Indonesian army and they were used more in the massacre of a million of Communists and their supporters than any genuine fight against the imperialists ?

Yes, it is true that the C. C. of the CPI(M) is deeply disturbed over the differences, divisions and splits in the world Socialist camp and the international Communist movement, and it expresses serious concern for its unity, above all, the unity between the Soviet Union and Socialist China, and this is not done to demoralise anybody. The CPI(M) cannot follow the perilous footsteps of such Communist Parties which, willy-nilly, wish to write off either the Soviet Union or Socialist

China, from the world movement, on one pretext or the other and yet indulge in pep-talk about the “mighty” world Socialist camp and the “new epoch” of final transition to world Socialism. Demoralised are those who prostrate before one’s own bourgeois class, and it is their opportunist talk of unity and collaboration with the bourgeois-landlord Government of the Congress party that is demoralising in the extreme. If there are leaders in the Right C. P. with the skin of an ox, who are neither worried if People’s China dubs the Soviet Union as “social imperialist” “or perturbed” to listen to Soviet denunciations of Socialist China as colluding with U. S. imperialism in its anti-Soviet war machinations, we are sorry for them, and we would hate to take them as our models. To have some sense of shame at the present state of affair in the international Communist movement does good to every Communist leader and the movement in general rather than go on talking big about the non-existing unity of the world Socialist camp.

Unity—With Whom ?

Sri Rajeswar Rao, after giving vent to his anti-CPI(M) bile, after trotting out every shameful argument in support of the treacherous class collaborationist political line of his party, after branding the CPI(M) as “anti-Soviet” and even “reactionary”, etc., writes in conclusion : “After all this, there is one important point made in the CPM political statement with which *we are in agreement*”.

The next sentence qualifies the above one saying that “*we have not much to differ* from the estimation of the critical economic situation in our country and the miserable conditions of the people described in the CPM’s political statement. We also agree with it that these are the direct result of the capitalist path pursued by the Congress Government and that they cannot be solved within the framework of the bourgeois policies pursued by the Indira Gandhi Government”.

“Only a united front of all the Left and democratic forces, including the progressive sections of the Congress can adopt

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such a revolutionary programme and solve the burning problems facing our country and take it forward”.

So, after all, the Right C. P. Secretary is “in agreement” and does not have “much to differ” with the CPI(M)’s assessment of the national economic situation. We are extremely thankful for the same.

What is the way out ? “left and democratic unity including the progressive sections in the Congress”.

Is it not audacious on the part of the Right C.P. leaders to speak of “unity including the progressive sections in the Congress” after having in fact allied with the Indira Gandhi Congress wholesale since October 1969, and much more openly during the fifth general elections?

Why such a front ? And to fight whom ? And what place do the Congress party and Government headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi occupy *in this revolution* ?

Genuine answers for these questions are extremely embarrassing to our Right Communist Leaders. Better they put these questions to themselves before answering us.

Great Significance of The 21st Session of AIKS*

Harekrishna Konar

The twentyfirst Session of the All-India Kisan Sabha held at Rurka Kalan in Punjab from September 23 to 26, 1971, is a new landmark in the development of the revolutionary peasant movement in our country. From various angles it stands out as a unique session. From the point of view of attendance of delegates, their participation in the discussions, the serious nature of the discussions, the unified understanding, fighting determination and confidence, it has really surpassed all earlier sessions.

The last two years were years of mighty struggles of millions of peasants and agricultural labourers all over the country. These struggles were not merely defensive struggles against evictions nor struggles on minor issues. They were not merely campaigns for land reform. They were active struggles for land and wages. Millions of peasants and agricultural labourers moved forward to implement land reform in practice. Though these struggles were most powerful in West Bengal and Kerala, they had great impact all over India and every State saw bigger struggles compared to the past. Through these struggles the Kisan Sabha has not only strengthened its position as the major kisan organisation in the country but has emerged as politically the only fighting peasant organisation that is called upon to discharge a historic responsibility. There is hardly any other all-India peasant organisation worth the name. The rival Kisan

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, October 17, 1971
Comrade Harekrishna Konar was member of the Central Committee of CPI(M) and General Secretary of All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS).

Sabha, led by the Right Communists, by following a blatantly class-collaborationist line, has politically ceased to be a fighting organisation. Hence our Kisan Sabha is being looked upon more and more by the rural people as the only mass organisation that can unite and lead the rural masses. The delegates assembled at Rurka Kalan were conscious of this responsibility.

Solidarity From Abroad

This unique position of our Kisan Sabha is getting more and more recognition even from fraternal mass organisations of other countries, in spite of all the efforts made by international revisionism to keep them blind about the real position in India. This is proved by the fact that fraternal messages were received from seventeen foreign and world organisations including the South Vietnam Liberation Peasant Association, the Trade Unions International of Agricultural, Forestry and Plantation workers, the Union of Agricultural Working People of Korea and similar organisations from Romania, Bulgaria, France, Finland, Japan, Syria, Costa Rica, Congo and many other African countries. Many of the messages clearly expressed their solidarity with the struggle of the Indian agricultural working people against feudal and capitalist exploitation and against police, military attacks of the ruling classes. The physical presence of the esteemed Consul-General of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and his inspiring speech in reply to our solidarity resolution and the speech of the delegation of the Iraq General Federation of Trade Unions were received with great ovation.

Another notable feature of the session was the attendance of the largest number of delegates and comrades. It should be kept in mind that the session was being held in an abnormal and very difficult situation. A few months ago the Congress rulers scored important parliamentary victories all over India except in the three States of very powerful democratic movements like West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. But in spite of such victories, the Congress rulers have not given up, but have in fact strengthened their campaign of deception and disruption intensified repression all over India which has taken the form of barbarous semi-

fascistic terror in West Bengal. All the features of fascist-like demagoguery and terror are discernible in the present situation. In this context, the presence of the largest number of delegates in the conference of an organisation subjected to brutal repression, has tremendous significance. It means that the ruling classes and their agents have failed to weaken the kisan movement in any way or to create any confusion in or terrorise it. Never before have so many delegates attended any session of the Kisan Sabha. I have never seen so much eagerness among comrades from all States to attend a session. Out of about 630 elected delegates as many as 577 attended. Compared to the total number of 669 at the 20th session, the number of delegates, observers and fraternal delegates this time was 806. Comrades came from where elected comrades could not come due to sudden illnesses. From every State, a large number of delegates came. The largest contingent of 335 came from West Bengal where semi-fascistic terror rules and where police CRP rifles and gangsters' knives have already taken a heavy toll of lives of our comrades during the last one year. This shows the strength of the kisan movement. When a fighting contingent can stand firm in face of grave attacks, it acquires the potentiality of being invincible.

Straight From Struggles

All the delegates and comrades came from the thick of bitter political and mass struggles which they themselves had organised and led and in which they themselves participated physically. Many of them were victims of brutal repression. They came with far richer experiences. This session was literally a session of experienced fighters and leaders. If we leave out the heroic Telangana struggle of the 1946-51 period, never before in any session had we to pay homage to so many hundreds of martyrs.

The delegates came not to argue on abstract formulations unrelated to the objective situation. They came with richer understanding and experiences, to assimilate and exchange them and to chalk out a line of advance in a very complex and difficult situation. The whole session permeated with this

atmosphere. No doubt the experiences were different, the level of the movement was uneven, but there was some common experience about Government policies and their impact. This found expression in the remarkably unified understanding of the comrades. The kisan movement was never so unified.

The General Secretary tried to note down this common experience and understanding in his report—on the political situation, on the “Green Revolution” as a class policy of accelerated capitalist development, on increasing class differentiation, on the class character of Government, talk about land, reforms, on lessons of the past struggles and their weaknesses and on the tasks ahead. All the resolutions were drafted on the basis of the understanding contained in the report. Hence major discussions took place on the report.

Serious Discussions

The discussion was serious and business-like. One half day was allotted for different State delegations to discuss among themselves the report and the resolutions and each delegation fixed one or two comrades to speak on its behalf. All the delegations expressed their general agreement with the analysis and formulations of the report. Some speakers suggested concrete improvements. All suggestions were aimed at strengthening our confidence in the possibility and necessity of boldly carrying forward militant struggles.

All the speakers noted that the ruling Congress has scored important parliamentary victories by its policy of deception, demagoguery and disruption and as such it has consolidated its Governmental authority. At the same time, they noted that the authority rested on a very weak and unstable foundation. The ruling classes cannot expect to have any long-term political stability. They are imposing heavy burdens on the people. They are afraid of the objective possibility of rapid disillusionment of the masses and consequent unfolding of more widespread mass struggles. Hence the ruling classes are intensifying repression and terror and are trying to liquidate the democratic forces in West Bengal by semi-fascistic methods. In such a situation, any

over-estimation of the election victory of the ruling Congress may lead to a slackening of our serious and urgent tasks of educating the masses and building their struggles, just as any under-estimation of the victory may lead to adventurist actions. The whole session was unanimous in this understanding. We shall have to make painstaking efforts. We shall have to face serious attacks. But all delegates expressed confidence of making rapid advances.

Class Essence Of Govt. Policy

This is the first time that the Kisan Sabha seriously discussed the class essence of the Government policy of agricultural development and its impact on rural class relations. The Punjab comrades, where the "Green Revolution" has been the greenest, narrated how it has immensely strengthened the small number of big landowners and rich farmers, and, on the other hand, worsened the condition of the agricultural labourers. Certain expectations were created among middle peasants and they incurred heavy debts to remain in the race for the benefits of the "Green Revolution". Still there are expectations, but the heavy debts, higher prices of tractors and fertilisers are becoming heavy burdens. The poor peasants are already losing the race. The big owners are intensifying eviction and grabbing more land. There is a new manner in which the small peasants are losing their land. Unable to remain in the race, some of them are renting out their small plots of land to big owners and are going out as "free" labour for employment. The "Green Revolution" is coming to a dead end. Sharp class divisions have further increased. Everywhere the agricultural labourers are coming into conflict with rich peasants and big landowners. These landowners are trying to mobilise all peasants to their side against the labourers. But the agricultural labourers have the possibility of drawing in the poor and middle peasants towards them against the rich who have come to dominate the whole rural life. In a condition of such class polarisation, a revolutionary kisan movement based primarily on the middle peasants cannot grow. The Punjab Kisan Sabha that was based

on middle peasants in the past—mostly Sikh peasants—was losing its vitality by the impact of the new development. Now, as the base is being shifted, the Kisan Sabha is again growing in strength. This report and the demonstration of the growing strength of the Punjab kisan movement as expressed through the preparations for the session helped all delegates to understand the new developments.

Though the agricultural development is very uneven and weak in many other States and though it has increased regional imbalances, yet it is a fact that everywhere some capitalist development has taken place and hence class polarisation has increased. As the development is uneven, there cannot be any general assessment. Hence all comrades felt the need of concrete study. But all came to the following general conclusions : the “Green Revolution” is a class policy of capitalist development ; in the absence of land reforms it has very *limited possibility* of developing agricultural production; instead of solving the agrarian crisis it is intensifying it; instead of breaking land monopoly it is strengthening it and leading to further loss of land by tenants and poor peasants; finally, it is leading to increased class polarisation increasing sharply the number of agricultural labourers and heightening their role as the most dynamic force of the kisan movement.

Emphasis On Agricultural Workers

The whole session had a fuller realisation of the importance of organising the agricultural labourers. During the last two years, good advance has been made in this respect, but it was felt that it was not significant. Much more stress will have to be given on it. In this connection, the comrades noted another point—the importance of uniting agricultural labourers and poor peasants and winning over the middle peasants. If the agricultural labourers are kept isolated from other poor and toiling peasants and if the big landowners and rich peasants succeed in their efforts to alienate these peasants from agricultural labourers, it weakens both the peasant movement and the agricultural labourers’ movement. The example of Tanjore

(Tamil Nadu) was an eye-opener. Here the agricultural labourers' movement was and is still very strong. But it is completely isolated from other peasants and even tenants. Now in the context of the increasing attacks from the vested interests and the ruling classes it is becoming increasingly difficult to defend and advance the movement. It was revealed from the speeches of some delegates that in some cases no proper differentiation was made between poor and rich peasants or landlords. All comrades felt that the task of making such differentiation and of building peasant unity was very difficult and complex. But its importance was properly realised by them.

The last 20th session had given the call for launching a countrywide movement for land and land reforms. This session felt justifiably proud that the Kisan Sabha had organised mighty movements on it and brought the question of land reforms to the forefront. Recent developments in the countryside have heightened its importance. The Congress Government, wedded to the capitalist path of development in alliance with landlords, cannot bring such reforms, however much they talk to dupe the masses. The Tamil Nadu and West Bengal comrades narrated how under cover of lowering land ceiling the Governments were doing everything to keep intact land concentration. The experience of the last two years' struggles has shown that only through organised peasants' struggles any advance for even partial reforms can be made. The session came to the conclusion that Government declaration could and should be used to draw in wider sections of peasants and agricultural labourers for joint struggles but there must be no illusions about the Government declarations. All comrades realised that by conducting mass struggle for land and against eviction and by integrating with it the struggle for work and wages the poor peasants, tenants and agricultural labourers who constituted the majority of the rural population could be united into a solid bloc. The example of West Bengal has shown it in practice. Only such a mighty force can withstand the new ferocious attacks of the Government. Without building such a force it is futile to think of winning over the peasants and building peasant unity. All the delegates

accepted the importance of the struggle for land reform with this understanding.

Broad-based Peasant Unity

In the background of the growing attack of the ruling classes, the session realised the necessity of consciously uniting the middle peasants with the poor and thus building broad-based peasant unity. This can be done by taking up those issues that agitate the middle peasants—issues connected with the desire for agricultural development like irrigation, flood prevention, cheap fertilisers, loans, etc. It was admitted that proper attention was not given to it. It was realised that movement on such issues would inevitably bring the peasants into conflict with the policies of the ruling classes and help the peasants to forge unity. The Kisan Sabha will try to see that poor peasants and agricultural labourers, apart from their own struggles, take initiative on this question also.

The 21st session realised the supreme importance of politicalising the peasants and agricultural labourers. From the experience of the last two years, it was seen that to the extent the kisan movement had been raised from the confines of economism, regular attention was given to raise the political consciousness of the peasants and agricultural labourers. The kisan movement had acquired vitality and strength to that extent. Comparatively great attention was given to this task in West Bengal and the result is inspiring. All the comrades assembled seriously resolved to overcome the weakness in this respect. The necessity of forging links with peasants under the influence of other organisations and organising united struggles was also realised by the session.

One important feature of the session was that all eyes were focused on the delegation from West Bengal. They received the biggest ovation and applause. All realised that the democratic movement in West Bengal had acquired the most powerful sweep and militant character and hence it was facing the most savage onslaught from the ruling classes. The ruling classes want to finish it off by brute force before mighty struggles

break out in other States. The comrades of West Bengal are defending the front line of the democratic forces of the country as a whole with their own blood. The delegates from West Bengal gave a pledge to the session that they would stand firm and carry on the struggle at any cost. All delegates were moved. They in their turn declared that they were inspired by West Bengal. They are with the fighting people of West Bengal and will do their all to build powerful movements in support of their brothers and sisters in West Bengal and stand by their side. All delegates realised the danger inherent in the extreme unevenness of the kisan movement and expressed their determination to overcome this weakness by applying the correct line evolved in this session.

The session conveyed greetings to the heroic people of Bangladesh. It noted the danger of this struggle being betrayed by the Indian ruling classes. The Kisan Sabha decided to strengthen the solidarity campaign in support of Bangladesh.

Note Of Confidence

The Punjab comrades deserve hearty congratulations for making very good arrangements for this historic session. They had at first some doubt about their capacity. But they have created a stir among the sturdy Punjab peasants and agricultural labourers in the course of preparations for the session. They received unexpected response from the people. This session is a vivid demonstration of the fact that a revitalised kisan movement is growing in Punjab.

The whole session concluded with supreme confidence in building up far more powerful struggles of millions of peasants and agricultural labourers in the coming days.

Mammoth Calcutta Rally On October Revolution Day

People's answer to semi-fascistic Congress repression in West Bengal

It is quite in keeping with its semi-fascistic repression in West Bengal that the Congress administration resorted to every conceivable means to torpedo the October Revolution Day rally called by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on the Brigade Parade Ground Calcutta, on November 7, 1971.

Orders went from Police Headquarters to all thanas that "the reds" must not be allowed to proceed in processions to join the rally. Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, Central Minister in charge of West Bengal Affairs, boasted before Pressmen that the Marxist rally would not be a big one, steps were being taken to see to that. The State Ad Hoc Committee of the ruling Congress discussed the way to prevent the rally from becoming successful. All the time the police authorities were unwilling to permit the rally being held on Brigade Parade Ground.

Attacks On People

And on November 7 itself, the Congress bosses came out with their police and the CRP, and the fascist thugs in particular, to attack the workers, peasants and the middle-class men and women proceeding to the ground.

At Sonarpur Railway Station, the CRP opened fire on peasants coming in train from Canning. Fifteen thousand people were coming from Midnapur district and at Kharagpur Station, the CRP and Congress gangsters tried to drag some of them out of

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, November 14, 1971. The Rally was held on November 7, 1971 at the Brigade Parade Ground, Calcutta.

the train. A similar attempt was made on 16,000 people coming from Purulia district.

The CRP and Congress gangsters attacked the incoming people at Dum Dum Station and seriously injured 12. At Khiderpore Calcuta, police and goondas stopped lorryloads of workers moving to the Brigade Parade Ground. Processionists were brutally assaulted at the Sealdah Railway Station, Kolaghat, Belgharia, Ranaghat and a number of other places.

But in face of numerous such attacks, nowhere did the people give in to the CRP or goondas but steadily moved on to the Brigade Parade Ground.

The assembly of hundreds of thousands of people on the ground mocked Siddhartha Shankar Ray and the other Congress bosses and their tall talk of "the CPI(M) being isolated" and that "its rally would not attract more than 15,000 people".

Militant Processions

Militant processions of workers and peasants came from far and near districts. They came from Maldah, Murshidabad, Purulia, Bankura, Birbhum, Nadia, Burdwan and Midnapur. From Midnapur also came a pageant of tribal men and women of Buinpur and Jhargram. Each of the hundreds of processions from the villages were in the main composed of agricultural workers.

Presided over by Comrade Jyoti Basu, the meeting was first addressed by Comrade Promod Dasgupta who referring to the mammoth gathering, said that the people who were steeled in their fight against the politics of assassination by Congress goondas and terror by the CRP could not be cowed down from joining a rally.

Scathingly criticising the nefarious activities of the ruling Congress, he said that the Congress party which right since 1967 was being rejected by the people of West Bengal had now established a semi-fascistic raj. The CRP and hired hoodlums. Well over 500 CPI(M), men and women, had been martyred during the last two years.

More than 500 factories are closed down but the workers are prevented from launching peaceful movements. More than 500 schools are closed because of goonda attacks. The teachers and students are further attacked as they agitate for the reopening of these institutions. The Congress is mobilising all the murderous forces to snatch the benami land occupied by the poor peasants from them.

The Congressite Chhatra Parishad is all-out to attack the educational institutions, teachers and students and the democratic rights of workers and employees. They are out to liquidate all that is great in our heritage. The people's very security of life and existence are in danger.

Call For United Struggles

Warning the leaders of some of the democratic parties who have rallied behind Smt. Indira Gandhi, Comrade Dasgupta said that the masses following them would not at all adjust themselves to the leaders' betrayal.

Appealing to the people, he said that united struggles were the supreme need of the hour. It is when such united efforts are so necessary that leaders of some democratic parties are resorting to new manoeuvres to subvert joint actions. They want to waste valuable time by insisting on prolonged talks and negotiations, to be followed again by talks and negotiations. As regards the formation of a Joint Council of Action of the West Bengal State Government Employees, a party like the SUC was demanding that even the organisation which supported the dismissal of the employees should also be taken into the Joint Council.

The Indira Gandhi Congress regime, Comrade Dasgupta continued, had roused the expectations of the people with its big but empty promises. Now the people are on the move to realise those hopes. They are launching movements in a big way. Hence the Government finds no other alternative but to use force with all its might. Deadly dangers to the people have developed today not from the people or the Communists as the ruling class canard has it, but from the

Congress, the party of the ruling classes in India And these could be fought only unitedly.

People Are Fighting Back

In his speech, Comrade Kesto Ghosh, Secretary of the Calcutta District Committee of the CPI(M), said that the devilish character of the semi-fascistic repression in West Bengal could be gauged from the all-out CRP and goonda attacks now going on in Beliaghata, Tollygunj and other areas in Calcutta itself. But the people including the women are heroically fighting back the CRP and goonda raiders, their bombs and bayonets, rifles and revolvers and light machineguns.

Comrade Jyoti Basu addressing the rally said that in the fight against the Congressite repression, all the great lessons of the Great October Revolution had to be remembered. We have serious differences with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union but in no way must we minimise the epoch-making import of the First Socialist Revolution in history.

Today the Congress regime conspires even against a CPI(M) rally. Their runaway election victory has not dispelled the fear haunting them. Comrade Basu pointed out that fighting against all the semi-fascistic terror, no other party could have held so big a mass rally as the CPI(M) had done on the day.

The tall eve-of-election promises of Smt. Indira Gandhi are now going with the winds. The Congressite Chhatra Parishad and Youth Congress chose to bluff the people by their move against the small traders on the plea of fighting hoarding and blackmarketing. But on the very day their movement (now called off) started, Sri Chavan raised the price-level by imposing new taxes to the tune of Rs. 70 crores.

Battle Of The Whole Of India

Comrade Basu warned that West Bengal, the fortress of the democratic movement of the Indian people, could not be subdued. The people have chosen to fight back. The truth must again and again be carried to the people of the other States that the people of West Bengal today are fighting the battle of the

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whole of the Indian people who would also have to face similar attacks by the Congress Government when they move into action against Government policies.

Because of its naked anti-people, anti-democratic and anti-federal policies the Congress is disrupting the unity of India and the Indian people. It is the sacred task of the democratic movement and of the CPI(M) in particular to cherish the unity of the Indian people, declared Comrade Basu. Subversion of national unity, disruption of national solidarity and rousing of provincial jingoism are all weapons in the Congress armoury to make Indians fight Indians, to set one section of the people against another, all with a view to smashing the united movement of the Indian people.

Referring to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's current tour abroad to canvass support for India's stand on Bangladesh, Comrade Basu pointed out, her Government had still not accorded recognition to Bangladesh.

But, Comrade Basu declared, notwithstanding total opposition of the CPI(M) to the Congress Government, despite the bloody attacks on the CPI(M) in West Bengal, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) would stand four-square against the aggressor, if the Yahya regime attacked India because of the Government's assistance to the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people.

The meeting over, hundreds of thousands of torches glowed the length and breadth of the sprawling Brigade Parade Ground.

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On Terror In West Bengal

B. T. Ranadive

The ensuing pages describe only partially the cruel and blood-curdling events that are taking place in W. Bengal over the last couple of years. They narrate in the barest possible words the attacks on the trade union leaders, on workers and their organisations, all owing allegiance to the CITU ; on their women and children. They do not represent even a tenth the tortures and cruelties perpetrated on the workers and their families and yet they are sufficient to give an idea of the grim happenings under the Congress rule in W. Bengal.

More than 150 trade union leaders and activists have been killed; several hundreds arrested and jailed; a large number wounded, suffering from loss of limbs due to police and gangster attacks; incapacitated for life and unable to support their families any more; thousands of young men—sons of workers and employees arrested; their wives and daughters humiliated and often outraged; infants and teenagers mercilessly beaten in the presence of parents...such is the horrible and unbearable long tale of Congress police and goonda atrocities against the workers.† 26

*This was a FOREWORD written by Comrade B. T. Ranadive to the booklet published by CITU West Bengal Committee containing a Memorandum submitted to Shri A. L. Dias, Governor of West Bengal in a deputation on January 8, 1972 at Raj Bhawan, Calcutta, by CITU West Bengal Committee in protest against terror and repression in West Bengal and in defence of Trade Union and Democratic rights

The FOREWORD of Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President of CITU was dated 27.1.1972.

It is the CITU, the most powerful trade union organisation in W. Bengal and claiming a membership of more than half a million in the State that is the object of this gangster attack. The INTUC, that piece of the ruling Congress is of course free to pursue its own activities, the AITUC, led by the Right C.P. which is in alliance with the Congress when the latter is doing this nefarious job, is of course not affected by this terror.

The CITU, its cadres, its leaders, its offices... they are the constant targets of these armed attacks. The workers enrolled in its unions have to face the goonda raids against their residential localities which are often burnt down in the presence of the police. Com. Ajit Mukherjee, Member, Working Committee CITU from Durgapur was attacked with lethal weapons causing grievous injuries while Com. Sunil Sen, Member, General Council CITU from Dum Dum area was shot dead and his body was thrown in a tank.

These are a part of the ordeal which the fighting people of W. Bengal under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) are passing through.

During the last two years or so, the Congress party has been assailing the militant democratic movement through a variety of ways. In the beginning, it used the Naxalite elements to attack and murder the cadres of the CITU and the CPI(M). Later on, it used mass raids by the police, and military combings to arrest and terrorise the people in constituencies which returned CITU and CPI(M) candidates. Simultaneously it used local goonda groups, recruited anti-social elements to murder individual leaders and intimidate the democratic movement.

The use of these goonda gangs has now reached another stage. They are recruited enmasse and given police protection to attack the localities supporting the CITU and the CPI(M). They are armed, often supplied with weapons by the police and any resistance to them invites police shootings. They are allowed to loot properties, destroy belongings, burn down houses and force the residents to leave the localities so that the constituency can be free for a fake electoral success of the

Congress. Thousands have to leave their places from localities like Dum Dum, Barrackpore belt and others.

Hundreds of rifles mysteriously disappear from police armoury but no explanation is forthcoming. Newspaper reports of gun-snatching have often proved to be nothing but the police method of supplying guns to the gangster elements.

Here there is no semblance of a legal order. An entire locality may be attacked in broad daylight within a stone's throw from a police station. Murders are committed during day-time but no one is arrested. The same ruling party talks of rule of law, of the Supreme Court, the Constitution elsewhere. In W. Bengal, it has made the gangsters the main defender of its Constitution. In the beginning, these gangsters were described as resistance parties of the people. But now that posture is given up. Now, however, they often call themselves Chhatra Parishad. The combined offensive of the CRP, the police and the goondas, and the open murders are the semi-fascist methods used by the Indira Congress Govt. in W. Bengal to suppress the democratic and working class movement. To mislead the people in other States, the wanton attacks are represented as clashes between the Congress or its student wing and the "attacking" Marxists.

It goes without saying that when the police take action, it is against the mass of people, the workers, the CITU and the CPI(M) cadres. After a gangster attack, the police raid the locality and arrest the residents especially all young persons, who are taken to the police station to be beaten mercilessly. False charges of murder, possession of arms are launched against them. Thousands have been arrested in this fashion. When the magistrates discharge any one for want of evidence they are promptly re-arrested under the MISA or the PVA Act. Prominent trade union leaders of 'Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union, Sen Raleigh, were re-arrested in this way after their discharge by the magistrate for failure of the police to produce any evidence against them.

The Congress press which pretends to defend freedom of expression and information has surpassed all records in

subservience to the ruling party. It is suppressing all news about these tortures and murders screening the authorities and carrying this trend towards totalitarianism in Indian politics.

The Right Communist Party which is now in treacherous alliance with the ruling party is directly helping it to conceal its misdeeds and perpetrate further atrocities by itself slandering the CITU and the CPI(M) and holding them responsible for these developments.

Thanks to the blackout by the press the entire country is unaware that this kind of semi-fascist terror reigns supreme in W. Bengal...a terror which represents a grave danger to Indian democracy and its future. With promises of *garibi hatao*, with the newly earned majority in the last Parliamentary elections, the newly earned prestige because of the Bangladesh victory, Indira Gandhi's Govt. is making desperate attempt to extinguish the advanced democratic movement in W. Bengal and suppress it with totalitarian methods. It is the prototype of things to come elsewhere whenever a serious democratic challenge emerges to the Congress from the genuine Left forces. It is ominous that the rest of the country should fail to see the danger arising from the developments in West Bengal. It is alarming that the international Communist movement, misled by the Right C.P. should busy itself praising the Indira Govt. while it is taking decisive totalitarian steps against the advanced section of India's working class and people.

The immediate aim of this semi-fascist terror is to get a fake electoral verdict in favour of the Congress in the coming elections. It is clear from the fact that the main concentration of attack is on the strong constituencies of the CPI(M) and CITU leaders. The main objective is of course to suppress this advanced democratic and trade union movement.

Why have the people and working class of W. Bengal earned this hatred from the Congress? It is because the CITU unions have led repeated and mighty struggles in defence of the working class and foiled on many occasions the game of the employers and the Govt. to make the workers a scapegoat of the recession and crisis. Under the leadership of the CITU

unions, which forged a united front with others, the jute workers waged two successful big strikes and earned a substantial increase in wages. The tea workers, the engineering workers, the textile and the steel workers of Durgapur all were successful in securing big advances in wages. Numerous and prolonged have been the strikes struggles led by the CITU in the period of the recession, when attacks on the workers were mounting. The INTUC and the AITUC leaders stood virtually paralysed in this period, refusing to lead for the most part this militant battle. The number of man-days lost in the strikes during the period was one crore and the majority of the struggles were led by the CITU. The employers, with the help of the Govt. and the reformists, tried to launch attacks on the recognised unions affiliated to the CITU but the workers beat them back.

The Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union, Durgapur waged a glorious struggle in this period fighting against tremendous repression. The workers of Sen-Raleigh and others fought prolonged battles waging over months against lock-outs or prolonged strikes to enforce their demands.

And above all, the CITU unions and the workers actively participated in the political and democratic movement, enhancing the striking power of the latter by their initiative, strength of numbers and consciousness; participating in the election struggles in the three elections; launching political protest action against the dismissal of the first U.F. Ministry; launching several bundhs in support of other workers; wresting almost all the seats from industrial constituencies and giving victory to the U.F.; launching a bundh after the collapse of the second U.F. Ministry—the West Bengal working class showed its rising political consciousness.

It capped all these advances by defeating the Indira Congress candidates in the last Parliamentary and Assembly elections in industrial centres. It continued to participate actively in all democratic issues and organised protest actions against the dissolution of the last West Bengal Assembly. It was the only section of the working class that organised strike action to

support the cause of Bangladesh in March and again in August 1971. It continued its fight for other sections and organised a bundh in support of the victimised State Govt. Employees in Oct. 1971.

The Congress Govt. and the employers seek to employ terror against it for its advanced proletarian consciousness.

As has been pointed out, the terror is being practised not only against the working class but the entire advanced democratic movement led by the CPI(M). It should be noted that over five hundred cadres, sympathisers and workers of the CPI(M) including 150 trade union cadres mentioned in this document have been killed since 1969 by the police, the CRP and the goonda gangs. The hunt is for the cadres and mass workers of the CPI(M) which heads the democratic challenge to the rule of the Congress. The students, the employees, women, kisans—all are subjected to this terror. The same brutalities are repeated against them that are perpetrated against the workers. To quote but only a few:

In the town of Garia in 24-Parganas, CRP engraved the letters CPM with sharp weapons on the head of a senior political worker, Narayan Roy Chowdhury. The local magistrate in his order stated; “The Sonarpur police officials have engraved the letters “CPM” on the head of the accused. I myself have seen the wounds. It is strange that the police report does not mention the injuries nor do the police make a request for administering medical treatment to the accused”. This is the rule of law operating in W. Bengal.

An instance of the student wing of the Congress winning elections. The Chhatra Parishad won 123 seats out of 124 :

How did they secure them ? These “students” threatened the rival candidates with revolvers in their hands, forced them to withdraw from the contest and got their nominees elected with contest.

In Asansol, the police assaulted Mr. Girdhari Mukherjee, the defence lawyer of workers and the CPI(M) members, tied him with a rope and kept him in custody for thirtyseven hours.

Eighteen-year old Salil Das of Dhakuria was arrested on 1st October by the police. His father was assured that the son would return after interrogation. But next day, his father saw only his body in one of the hospitals.

The house of Subhas Sarkar, an employee in Sadhana Aushadhalaya was set on fire by a CRP man. Two women and an infant were burnt alive. But the perpetrators of this crime and those who helped in it have not been arrested though their names are known.

Ashima Poddar, a young girl was arrested and assaulted by the police. She was made naked in the police lock-up and a police man outraged her modesty.

These are some of the instances of the goondaism that represents the Indira Raj in W. Bengal.

There is one instance at least when a person reading the *Kalantar*, the paper of the Right Communist Party which is in alliance with the Congress (R) was shot by the police. This happened in Shanti Nagar colony. This of course has not led to the weakening of ties between the revisionist CPI and the Indira Congress.

The kisans and the villages are also undergoing the same fiery ordeal in some places. Congress hirelings from towns come in trucks and lorries, swoop upon a village where the Kisan Sabha or CPI(M) is strong—spreads in constituencies which have routed the Congress, attack the leaders of kisans, burn the crops of the peasants and their houses, murder people and return without any action by the police. They come in daylight in full possession of arms, they come across miles but the police do not notice them. The police swoop upon the peasants to arrest them if they resist these murderers.

And when they come they arm themselves with written orders which authorise them to round up all male members of the village. The rule of law indeed !

The democratic movement led by the CPI(M) and its allies have emerged as a challenging force to the Congress (R) which represents the rule of the big bourgeoisie and landlords. The Congress has failed to get an electoral verdict in its favour in

successive electoral battles. It lost its majority in 1967 though all the opposing democratic forces were not united. It got rid of the first United Front through constitutional chicanery but was faced with a united front of all democratic parties in the 1969 elections. The latter headed by the CPI(M) got a majority and could be dislodged only with the aid of betrayal by the Right Communists and some others.

Since then the Congress directed ruthless terror and murderous attacks against the CPI(M), its cadres and the cadres of mass organisations led by it. It thought that it had softened the electorate sufficiently by 1971. Its goonda gangs roamed over constituencies, held the voters and polling officers at pistol point.

In Com. Jyoti Basu's constituency, armed gangs did not allow hundreds of voters to approach the polling booth and this happened with the connivance of the police. In spite of this Ajoy Mukherjee, who was pitted against Jyoti Basu and who was the joint candidate of Jana Sangha, Congress and the Right Communists was defeated. In the Parliamentary elections in West Bengal, the CPI(M) won 20 seats out of 40, with the Congress winning only 13. In the Assembly elections, the CPI(M) and its allies emerged as the biggest single group—the CPI(M) alone winning 107 seats out of 280 and the Congress winning 104.

Incensed by this failure to get absolute majority, the Congress(R) has launched the white terror against the CITU and the CPI(M) hoping thereby to terrorise the people in the coming elections.

Thus the rule of law, the right of opposition party, fundamental rights—everything is being attacked to maintain the illegal domination of the Congress (R).

Let Journalist—the W. Bengal Correspondent of the Economic and Political Weekly of Bombay speak: "While every detail of Gestapo storm-trooper atrocities is being recreated in this State, there is hardly any protest or concern voiced by any section of liberal democracy, within the State or outside". "In the circumstances, besides, arrests, tortures, and some liquidations

under suspicious circumstances, miniature Baranagar-Cossipores are hanging over some other parts of the City—partially paralysing the normal life of the locality for days together. Besides hundreds of innocent and politically untouched persons, within a particular age-range, accidentally caught suddenly cast police dragnets are having to pass through the mill...

“Against this background of white terror, the State and Union Government have launched their offensive against CPI(M)-led trade unions. The private sector employers though not yet fully reassured, have started flexing their muscles and there is already a perceptible change in their attitude to their employees.” (Nov. 6. 1971)

Let the same writer speak on the significance of the victimisation of the State employees in September last which led to big protest strike in October. The solid strength of militant trade unionism right inside the citadel of State power—the Secretariat—has long been a thorn in the side of all anti-CPI(M) forces in W. Bengal. For years, various attempts were made first by the undivided Congress and then by CPI and its allies, to split the ranks by setting up splinter organisations : but without much success. During the recent “democratic coalition” rule (of Congress (R), Muslim League, and Bangla Congress supported by CPI and F. B.), there was even a mass raid on Government employees in Writers’ Buildings undertaken by youth brigades of Congress (R) under ill-concealed police protection.

“The last move of the crumbling coalition government had been to plant some thousands of their tough gangs in Govt. offices by appointing them to newly-created jobs.”

The writer says that the offensive against the State employees was planned in Delhi. “Final touches to the plan were given by the Prime Minister herself during her recent visit to Calcutta.”

He adds, “Indira Gandhi has so far failed to secure any significant points against the CPI(M) notwithstanding that thousands have been put behind prison bars, and tortured in police custody, that police and para-military forces are having a field-day each day, that political resistance parties backed by

the organs of State power have passed into open offensive in many areas of CPI(M) influence as in Alladipur in Burdwan or in Jadavpur-Tollygunge in Calcutta”.

This offensive now is developing into kidnapping and murderous attacks against top trade union leaders and raids on their houses. Only a few days back the house of K. G. Bose, himself a victimised postal employee, and President of the National Federation of P & T Employees which has a membership of three lakhs was raided by Congress-hired goondas and his sister-in-law narrowly escaped a fatal attack. Last year, his wife was stabbed but also escaped death. The significant point is that the raid was organised when Com. K. G. Bose was discussing its possibility with the Police Commissioner of Calcutta and the letter was assuring him full protection. Com. Bose had a similar experience last time.

On 25th January 1972, Haridas Malakar, leader of the Jay Engineering Workers' Union, with a membership of 5500 members of the CITU General Council and the likely candidate of the CPI(M) from the constituency was kidnapped from his residence by armed gangsters in broad daylight and was taken to the Golf Ground the usual site for the murders of the victims. A strike of thousands of workers compelled the police to intervene and save his life, and he escaped with stab wounds.

The use of gangsters armed by the police is the new weapon of the Congress. The identity of these gansters is sometimes concealed by describing them as Chhatra Parisad Yuba Congress-student and youth wings of the Congress respectively. Often young Congress students mixed with gangsters perpetrate these murders and atrocities.

These murders are not the affair of local Congressmen only. They are decided by the policy-making body of the Home Dept. in New Delhi and executed through gangster bands. A year or so back, the Gangasakti, the daily organ of the W. Bengal Committee of CPI(M) exposed that a high intelligence officer of the Govt. of India advised the local police to physically eliminate CPI(M) cadres and pass on the responsibility to the “extremist” groups. In fact, there are the so-called counter-

insurgency tactics taught by the American experts to the intelligence branch people—tactics which the USA employs in Vietnam which produces My Lai massacres. The Congress leaders are sowing deep anti-Communist hatred in their ranks so that these heinous deeds pass unchallenged. It is also clear that the CIA agents in Congress in the bureaucracy and police officials are also joining this campaign of extermination.

This is thus no ordinary repression, no passing phase. It betokens to a new situation introducing well-known totalitarian methods of extermination in which the American imperialists have developed great expertise. It is not without significance that certain important circles in New Delhi have been saying that the only way out for the Congress in West Bengal was the Indonesian way.

This spells extreme danger to the Indian people and their freedom and democracy. All democratic rights will be extinguished if the ruling classes are allowed to adopt these semi-fascist methods to finish a Left-opposition. The present silence of democratic parties and trade union organisations only encourages the totalitarian onslaught against the people.

The CITU appeals to all democratic parties, trade union, kisan, student and mass organisations and individuals to raise their voice in time to defeat this monstrous attack against democracy and rally for the defence of the trade union and democratic movement in W. Bengal. It calls upon all those to raise their voice in time to ensure free and fair elections in W. Bengal and prevent a fraud against the Constitution and democracy.

All democratic and working class organisations should send their protests to the Prime Minister and demand :

1. Immediate end to the terror, punishment of the guilty police officers and armed rowdies often posing as Chhatra Parishad;
2. Release of all arrested persons, trade union, kisan, student and party leaders and withdrawal of warrants and cases,
3. Complete freedom for the trade union movement;
4. Immediate repatriation of hundreds of prisoners sent to jails in other States;

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5. Lifting of Emergency and creating conditions to ensure free and fair elections.

The CITU is confident that with the popular forces standing united, the offensive of the ruling classes against democracy can be frustrated and the way opened for the working class and the people of W. Bengal to exercise their franchise in the manner they want.

Appendix (viii)

West Bengal Left Parties' Memorandum To Prime Minister*

The following is the text of the memorandum submitted to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by the delegation of Left and democratic parties and Members of Parliament from West Bengal on January 31, 1972 in New Delhi :

Dear Prime Minister, we have noticed with concern and indignation that whilst the Government is itself carrying on massive repression against the democratic movements and Left parties and mass organisations which do not accept the dictates of the Congress, it is also aiding and abetting the ruling party in its violent criminal activities against its opponents and mass democratic movements. In order to cover up the reality reports are being falsified at various levels in order to present the victims as aggressors. Time and again the parties and organisations which are opposed to reactionary policies and the Congress have made representations to the Government in West Bengal and the Centre to atleast preserve some semblance of administrative neutrality. But the effect has been very discouraging. It is obvious that without a plan conceived somewhere at the top, such diabolical activities against democratic movements and forces opposed to the Congress cannot be explained.

Their Modus Operandi

Without going into details, it may be stated that the technique adopted is the same almost in every case. The Congress hoodlums operated in groups with guns, bombs and other weapons generally in broad daylight and

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, February 13, 1972

(1) Enter areas beating up people including women wounding and killing some of the inhabitants, ransacking and burning houses, raising forced subscriptions, compelling many to leave their areas. Hundreds of families which support us are living outside their homes and the police refuse to help them to return.

(2) Occupy by force union offices, compel some workers at the point of the gun to desert their unions and prevent some from even attending their places of work. About a hundred union offices have been attacked and about sixty are under forcible occupation of the anti-social elements.

(3) Prevent college union elections from being held democratically.

(4) Compel teachers of schools and colleges to resign and are preventing about 500 teachers from attending schools and eleven teachers' organisations have held a conference on January 25, 1972, to protest against this and cease work has been threatened if the situation does not change.

(5) Waylay individuals and kill them to create terror.

(6) Attack striking workers and illegally enter places of work in the presence of the police.

(7) Help jotdars and other vested interests to attack kisans and agricultural workers.

Active Police Help

The hoodlums operate almost in all cases with the knowledge of the local police and with their active help. In every case where the rowdies are confronted by the local people, the police actively intervene to beat up and arrest those who defend themselves. There are cases where Congress hoodlums dragged people out of their homes, beat them and then handed them over to the police. But the police instead of apprehending the Congressites for taking law into their hands, arrest their victims. There is hardly any case where Congress rowdies are arrested or firmly dealt with. If forced by circumstances, some arrests are made, they are released on the intervention of Congress leaders. In innumerable murder cases the culprits are not arrested and the cases not pursued seriously. Even though

hundreds of our supporters have been killed hardly any arrests have been made. Sometimes the murderers are found in the company of the police. Concrete cases have been given to the Government without any results. For instance, in Burdwan town 16 of our supporters and members, in Kalna town four and Kalna P. S. 19, in Durgapur 14 (all in Burdwan district) have been killed but no arrests have been made because the killers belong to the Congress (R) and the hoodlums get the patronage of the Superintendent of Police, Sri Panchu Gopal Mukherjee, who has been sent there to win back Burdwan district where the Congress won one seat, 24 were won by the CPI(M). Despite the grave charges against the S.P., he has just been awarded a Police Medal by the President. This is a clear directive by the Centre to the police as to how they are expected to behave and the methods that are to be adopted to save the Congress.

Governmental Repression

Not content with helping the Congress and its student and youth wings to pursue such terroristic methods, the administration is taking recourse to repressive acts against the anti-Congress democratic and Left parties and mass organisations under their influence. Whilst Congress members and supporters who indulge in violent activities are rarely arrested, thousands of our members and supporters are detained without trial or implicated in false cases and many of them beaten up and even killed in police custody. Many detenus after being released by courts or after serving their full term of detention are re-arrested at the jail gates. In many cases when bail is granted by the courts, instead of pursuing and by dropping the false cases, the police arrest the accused under the MISA and detain them without trial. After the announcement of the election, in the towns and villages thousands of alleged old warrants of arrest are being issued against our workers and fresh arrests are being made so that our election work is hampered. In innumerable instances combing operations are undertaken by the police and CRP and mostly innocent people are arrested to terrorise the

entire area. During raids, women are insulted and even molested. Gruesome cases have been reported to the Government of attacks and molestation and murder of women but in vain. There are instances where the police are pressurising our supporters to join the Congress in view of the coming elections, in some areas they have started intimidating the Muslim minorities to support the ruling party. Never have we heard police and other officers and men who torture and insult people, who concoct false cases against them, who molest women, patronise anti-social elements, who manufacture false reports to please the Congress masters being called to order by the Government. On the contrary, those officers and men who desire to remain neutral and so act according to their conscience are under constant pressure to act in the interest of the Congress. As a result of the joint operations of the police and Congress hoodlums, many areas where democratic forces are strong had to be vacated by our workers. Instead of restoring democratic rights, terror is being intensified to extend such areas.

To Ensure Free, Fair Elections

In order to preserve certain democratic processes and to ensure free and fair election, we place the following demands :

1. The administration must observe absolute neutrality and cease to be partisan towards the Congress.
2. All people who were forced out of their areas should be enabled to go back with their safety being guaranteed.
3. All parties must have equal freedom to hold meetings and to propagate their views and during the elections to send their agents to the polling booths.
4. Voters must be free to vote according to their choice and arrangements must be so made that ballot papers are not snatched away at the point of the gun from the polling officers.
5. No fresh arrests to be made on the plea that old warrants exist and no new lists of warrants against our workers must be prepared.

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6. All political prisoners detained without trial must be released to enable them to participate in the elections. All prisoners sent outside the State must be brought back immediately. Bail must not be opposed on flimsy grounds. All false cases must be withdrawn.
7. Immediate arrangements must be made to enable the normal functioning of our parties in about thirty constituencies (where the anti-Congress Left parties were victorious) where the goondas and police have jointly made it impossible for us to do so.
8. The CRP must be withdrawn and the police held in check. Withdrawal of police camps in different rural areas. Withdrawal of orders under section 144 CrPC.
9. Disbanding of the resistance groups generally recruited by the police from anti-social elements and ex-Naxalites who have been employed by the police on a pay of Rs 105 per month.
10. State Government employees and Co-ordination Committee leaders, All-India Defene Employees' Federation leaders and members in West Bengal, police personnel of the Non-Gazetted Police Karmachari Samiti victimised by the Government and dismissed from service must be reinstated.
11. Serious steps to be taken against officials who deliberately prepare false reports against parties opposed to the Congress.

Appendix (ix)

The Party and the Struggle of the Bangladesh People*

Statement of the Central Committee of CPI(M)

The Struggle of the Bangladesh people has reached a new phase with the utter rout of the West Pakistani forces of occupation. It has already created an impact on the world situation with American imperialism considering it to be fiasco of its own policies. It seems that this rout was unexpected in most of the Chancelleries of the world and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent entity was not considered a possibility. The world bourgeois Press openly talks about a new power equation in South Asia. There is no doubt that the emergence of Bangladesh has unfrozen the situation created in this sub-continent by the British-imposed partition and opened the way to a number of new developments.

The conclusion of the first phase of this struggle has added to the prestige of the bourgeois-landlord Government among the people. The defeat of the forces of occupation in Bangladesh has been taken not only as a victory of the democratic forces against reaction but also as a national victory against Pakistan, above all as a military defeat of an opponent who has been in conflict with India over a number of years. The national chauvinistic element behind this sense-of-victory enhances the influence of Indira Gandhi's Congress and facilitates its manoeuvres in the present situation. The immediate result is bound to be a greater accession of strength to it in the coming elections and a more successful screen for concealing its semi-fascist repression in West Bengal.

*Published as a Supplement to "PEOPLES DEMOCRACY", Calcutta, February 13, 1972.

The stand of the Party

From the beginning, our Party lent its full support to the struggle of the Bangladesh people. It demanded all-out help to it including help in arms from the Government. It called upon the Government to recognise the Bangladesh Government after its formation and attacked its vacillations in this connection. It criticised it for its extreme hesitation because of its fear of the USA and other imperialist Powers. It welcomed the Indo-Soviet Treaty hoping that it would enable the Government to overcome its vacillations, and give decisive help to the freedom-fighters. It was afraid that the Soviet Union through the treaty might exercise a restraining influence on the Government and it criticised all Soviet references to a political solution within the framework of Pakistan. It criticised the external Affairs Minister for suggesting the possibility of a solution within the framework of one Pakistan. Our Party stood for complete freedom of Bangladesh and fully supported the right of the Bangladesh people to take their destiny into their own hands.

Initially our Party counselled the Government against using its troops in East Bengal as it would have played into the hands of Yahya Khan and the imperialists who wanted to misrepresent the Bangladesh struggle as a feud between India and Pakistan. Our Party also feared that perhaps initially the fighting people of East Bengal were not prepared to have Indian troops on their soil, and any precipitate action might enable Yahya Khan to turn it into a Hindu-Muslim conflict.

But, at the same time, our Party called upon the government to render unflinching aid to the struggle and be prepared to force a war if it was imposed because of such aid. It reiterated this position again and warned that in the name of maintenance of peace many foreign countries were pressurising India to give up all armed help to the freedom-fighters. Our Party took the stand that notwithstanding the likelihood of a conflict all-out help for the struggle must continue. When hostilities actually broke out, our Party expressed its support for a successful conclusion of the war whereby we meant a complete defeat of the Pakistan forces of occupation and defence of the sovereignty

of the country. Our Party asked the people of India to exercise vigilance so that every step taken on their behalf strictly conformed to these two objectives.

Some Questions

In the wake of the rout of the Pakistani forces of occupation in East Bengal, many questions have been raised which indirectly question the wisdom of our Party's line. Many argue : how could we support a war between two bourgeois Governments? Many argue : is not the struggle in Bangladesh led by a bourgeois leadership? How can it be a freedom struggle? Many ask : has not the Indian bourgeoisie expansionist ambitions? Some even ask: was not the struggle in Bangladesh an internal struggle? There are some who even think that the guerrillas and commandos are only Indian armed personnel in disguise and there has been hardly any internal movement.

These questions and attendant confusion arise from a failure to understand the class content of the Bangladesh freedom struggle, the roles that the various classes are playing and the objective results of this entire conflict. Only those who miss the role of the fighting people are unable to place the vital importance of this struggle for the entire sub-continent.

Was there a conflict inside Bangladesh? The fact that more than a million people have been killed, ten million uprooted from the soil, thousands of women raped, and hundreds of villages razed to the ground—these facts show the ferocity of the struggle that raged and expose the inhuman methods which a ruling class uses only when it sees the doom awaiting it at the hands of the people. Did the people put up a fight during the course of nine months? The fact that more than a hundred thousand young men were wielding arms and that the West Pakistani as well as Indian Generals has to acknowledge the role of these fighters in bringing about a quick defeat of the forces of the military junta is proof enough for even the most blind.

The question arises, why did such a conflict which claimed one million victims take place at all? The fact is that this was

not a sudden outburst but the accumulated result of a gathering political storm whose first signs were seen on the morrow of the birth of Pakistan. If it assumed an avalanche-like form in East Bengal, it had special reasons. But the fact is that over years the ruling classes were being challenged steadily by the people of Pakistan and the challenge was growing fiercer and fiercer in East Bengal. The crumbling of the power of these ruling classes mainly drawn from the feudal barons and the new monopolists and exercised through the military caste should in any case be a source of strength to the democratic movements in the entire sub-continent and should earn the support of all progressive sections, much more so of the working class and its Party.

Democratic Movement Against Landlord Domination

Pakistan obviously has never been one nation. It was carved out of the united India in 1947. It consisted of five nationalities—Bangalees, Sindhis, Punjabis, Pathans and Baluchis, and two regions—East and West Pakistan, separated by more than a thousand miles. The State of Pakistan was formed on the basis of Islamic religion—Muslim majority areas.

Power has been concentrated in Pakistan in the hands of the military-feudal clique which looked after the interests of the new monopolists and lent itself to playing the game of foreign imperialists.

The class background of the League leadership that came to power in Pakistan after partition explains the phenomenon. Though many of the leaders were Western-educated, they mainly came from the hereditary landlord families and contained only a sprinkling of industrial bourgeoisie. The Muslim League Council in 1942, for instance, included 163 landlords out of a total of 503, those from Punjab numbering 51. The Secretary of the League, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, was himself big landlord. The landlord forces in West Pakistan were strengthened by the influx of landlords from the U.P. and other Indian provinces. The higher civil officers also came from this class.

It should be remembered that the Indian military officers in the British army were recruited largely from the loyal families of these very landlords. It was no surprise therefore that the military junta directly representing them should replace the League and throw overboard all pretensions to a parliamentary form of Government.

The class interests of the landlord class ran counter to the establishment of a parliamentary system and universal suffrage. The landlords were afraid of the people. The civil service recruited from the class and trained by the British to distrust the masses, shunned all democratic institutions and forms. The new industrial big bourgeoisie was too weak to lead the State and was itself too dependent on the landlord-dominated Government. And the people's consciousness was being continuously emasculated by the appeal to Islam, to religion, to hostility towards India. But the modicum of development along the capitalist path since partition began to have its say. The democratic challenge began to come from the intelligentsia, different sections of the bourgeoisie and the people.

Pakistan, therefore, went through all the motions of framing a democratic Constitution. It took almost a decade for the Constituent Assembly to frame the first Constitution of Pakistan and even then no general elections were held to bring it into force.

During the first decade, parliamentary government was arbitrarily suspended several times, both at the Centre and in the Provinces. Democratic rights were attacked, meetings prohibited. Civil servants supported by military officials dominated the scene and they made short work of the parliamentary facade brought over from united India.

It was under the rule of these men that the Pakistan Government concluded an open alliance with the USA against India. The developments in connection with the Indo-Pakistani war have revealed that the treaty was a virtual treaty of military alliance against India. It was under these rulers that the Government of Pakistan joined the notorious CENTO and SEATO pacts for

American aggression and global domination, openly announced as directed to contain Communism.

The rulers of Pakistan subsequently developed friendly relations with People's China. This, however, did not change their essentially pro-imperialist leanings. They did not withdraw from the reactionary pacts. They exploited their friendly relations with China only to bolster their anti-India outlook and give it a progressive facade.

The final death-blow to the parliamentary system was given in 1958, when Ayub took power, chased away Mirza out of the country, abrogated the Constitution and put the country under Martial Law. It should be remembered that Pakistan has been under a virtual Martial Law administration since 1958 except for a short period.

National Problem to the Forefront

Under these conditions, not only the widespread democratic protests and movements were inevitable but the national problem was bound to come to the forefront and it started coming to the forefront in West Pakistan also. The struggles of the Pathans in 1961, the rising of the Baluchis in 1961-62, the rebellion of the students of East Pakistan in 1962, 1963 and 1964 constitute the landmarks in the developing struggle for democracy and national equality in Pakistan.

The Punjabi military clique which ruled the roost served to bring forward the national element to the forefront; whether it was in East Pakistan or Sind or Baluchistan or the Pathan land, it was the Punjabi military clique that was found to be suppressing the people.

Notwithstanding the fact that the military-feudal clique dominating Pakistan came mainly from Punjab, the masses in West Punjab, especially the workers, the intelligentsia, and the urban petty-bourgeoisie have several times launched movements to restore civil liberties and democratic rights for the people. Though the struggle in Punjab could not obviously take the form of a struggle against national oppression, it contributed to the general democratic struggle in Pakistan as a whole. The

workers of Lahore, the intelligentsia and the journalists, etc. at one time or the other upheld the democratic banner under the most difficult circumstances. Even in the most critical days when the Martial Law administration was running amuck, when thousands were being butchered in East Bengal, there were voices in Punjab which advocated justice to East Bengal and supported the ushering in of democratic rule. There were protest strikes, demonstrations and other actions from time to time. It was this process, though repeatedly obstructed by appeal to religious and Islamic unity, that was isolating the old parties like the Muslim League closely allied to the landlords, making the emergence of their parties inevitable. The anti-Ayub movement for end of the Martial Law regime and for a democratic Constitution spread all over Pakistan including Punjab. In the elections that followed the people of Punjab and the entire West Pakistan voted decisively against the Martial Law regime.

Naturally, in varying degrees the people all over Pakistan began to demand democratic rights, a new Constitution and rule by the people. Every time popular forces in any part joined for these demands, they were suppressed and out of this suppression, the sense of national oppression and national freedom began to emerge.

The efforts of the military-feudal complex to forge the unity of Pakistan on the basis of Islamic religion, the artificially imposed common language, and opposition to all separate cultures and languages of various nationalities began to fail more and more glaringly and the irrepressible national sentiment began to grow stronger.

Economic Conditions

Like the people of India, the people of entire Pakistan including Punjab have been living in utter misery. Pakistan like India is one of the poorest countries in the world. All the evils that dog the Indian people are to be found in Pakistan, perhaps in an accentuated form. The domination of the Punjabi military clique did not stop the exploitation of the Punjabi masses.

At the time of partition, in West Pakistan, 7.5 million acres consisted of holdings of more than 500 acres and was owned by one per cent of the landowners while 65 per cent of the owners held about 7.4 million acres in lots of less than five acres each. In Punjab proper, nearly 60 per cent of the cultivated land belonged to big zamindars while in Sindh, a few hundred landlords owned practically all the land.

This was the situation till the Land Reform Act was passed. That measure also did not bring about much of a change. In fact, the authorities had really no intention of eradicating tenancy, much less of transferring land to the tiller. To quote the Reforms Committee, "tenancy would continue to be a dominant feature of the tenure structure, despite the present attempts at the redistribution of ownership in land and making access to the land more free." What effect could the Reform Act then have in relaxing the grip of the landlords? The reform of 1959 while it pretended to abolish the intermediaries prescribed a ceiling of 200 hectares of irrigated and 400 hectares of unirrigated land thus making a mockery of the demand for abolition of zamindari. Needless to say, the landlords openly evaded these limits also, holding on to their monopoly of land.

The same was the situation in East Pakistan on the eve of partition. But partition gave a certain blow to the big landlords there. A large number of big landlords were Hindus who fled to India. Their lands were taken over by the Government but there was hardly any systematic attempt to redistribute the land in favour of the landless. The peasants often complained that the Government was more exacting than the landlords it replaced. In the Eastern region 48 per cent of the peasants possessed no land; 20 per cent possessed less than three acres each.

Pakistan's industrial advance has been much below that of India. Even then a heavy price in foreign exploitation had to be paid. The foreign loans were secured at extortionate prices. The purchasing power of some of the foreign loans to Pakistan has been found to be 15 to 20 per cent below their nominal value. In regard to certain loans the quotation from tied sources were 51 per cent higher than free international quotations, and in

other cases, they were higher by 40 to 50 per cent. With this monstrous exploitation, the conditions of the people of entire Pakistan continued to worsen.

As in India, concentration of wealth and capital in the hands of a few concerns grew with tremendous rapidity. Sixtysix per cent of the country's industries, 79 per cent of the insurance companies and 80 per cent of the banking industry are controlled by 22 families.

Not satisfied with this the ruling classes of Pakistan agreed to be a willing tool of american imperialism and enter the CENTO, SEATO pacts and, at one time they had given military air bases to the USA for its machinations against the USSR. Joining the imperialist pacts, the junta spent as much as 65 per cent of the total budget on military expenditure and used its friendly relations in the imperialist Powers for launching war adventures in the sub-continent. It must be realised that with national oppression, increasing poverty, the ruling classes continually required an instrument to sidetrack the attention of the masses and that instrument was readily available in the Islamic appeal of the State and its opposition to 'Hindu' India. All these heaped more and more burdens on the people leading to greater and greater anger among the various nationalities.

Apart from the big upheavals that sometimes shook entire linguistic units, big protest actions were launched by the workers, the students and others from time to time but they were mercilessly suppressed. All democratic liberties including trade union liberties stood virtually extinguished.

The National Problem of East Bengal

The Eastern section, where the majority of Pakistanis resided, shared this economic misery with the rest of Pakistan with a few additions thrown in.

The national problem of East Bengal was bound to erupt despite the soporific influence of Islamic unity which could prevail only for sometime. In fact, the support to Pakistan and the influence of Islamic unity in the earlier years was also based on a vaguely felt desire to advance the interests of East Bengal

and its economic advance as a district entity. In the beginning, this entity had to be asserted against Hindu landlord domination and hence the support to Islam. But Islamic unity began to lose its magic when it was discovered that East Bengal under the new dispensation also must play the role of a subordinate to overlords from Punjab, when especially the incipient bourgeois interests realised that every advantage was monopolised by the landlords or new industrial monopolists of the Western wing, leaving hardly anything for the development of the local bourgeoisie. These latter, together with perhaps some landlord elements, soon took the lead of the national discontent.

The ground was ripe because the anti-democratic set-up in Pakistan aggravated both the national and the democratic problems in East Bengal. The denial of democracy was common to both wings. But what accentuated the situation in East Bengal was that *this denial led to national inequality, discrimination and suppression.*

The new industrial monopolists came mostly from West Pakistan, from its different regions. They together with the Punjabi landlords began to appropriate for themselves all the advantages arising from the formation of the new State. The traders who developed into industrialists came from the West. They were helped by the import policy of the Government who saw to it that the new industries mostly developed in the Western region. The Eastern section had few industries in the beginning. Whatever were developed subsequently the capitalist from the West had a large stake in them.

The development of these industries, besides, to a large extent, depended on the foreign exchange earned by the exports from East Bengal. This left the rising East Bengal bourgeoisie high and dry and clogged economic development of the region and made the Bengalees feel that they were being ruled by exploiters from the West.

The administration of the Central Government was dominated by West Pakistan officials most of whom were connected with landlord families. As one Western writer put it, "The non-Bengalee officers who came to occupy almost every senior post

in East Bengal, often conducted themselves with the arrogance of imperial guardians and hardly as fellow country men". The senior officers of the armed forces also mostly came from West Pakistan and the armed force absorbed nearly two-thirds of the Central revenue. Thus the Bangalees felt that they were being denied their share of tax revenues, developmental expenditure and their wealth was being drained away.

The national element was intensified by the systematic discrimination against the Bengali language, culture and in jobs and service—the most sensitive point of the intelligentsia and the educated petty-bourgeoisie. In the fifties, the proportion of West Pakistanis to East Pakistanis in the Central services was more than five to one. In 1963, out of 790 junior civil grants recruited by the Martial Law regime, only 120 came from the Eastern part. According to one source, East Pakistan accounted for only two per cent in the field services of the Pakistan armed forces. A Government report of 1964-65 showed that there were only five per cent Bangalees in the field army and seven per cent among the junior commissioned officers and ordinary soldiers. Bangalees occupied 19 per cent posts in the navy corps. In the air force the proportion was 11 per cent in G.D. pilot branch.

Besides, the military junta by its hostile policy towards India ruined the small traders, petty merchants, etc. The junta prohibited all trade relations between Pakistan and West Bengal, cutting the former from its natural market for many of its products. Perishable commodities, like fish, eggs, vegetables which could be sold in abundance in West Bengal markets, were left without an opening leading to the ruination of the trade and the small traders.

Simultaneously, they deprived East Pakistan of the vital supplies of coal from West Bengal and compelled it to import it from across the seas, inflicting a high cost of production and handicapping the growth of industries.

Thus almost every modern interest was alienated, leading to the formation of national opposition.

The feeling of anti-colonial resentment started gathering momentum within a few years of the formation of Pakistan. The talk about occupied regime started as early as 1954 when Governor's rule was established in East Pakistan. The talk of Punjabi 'imperialism' with demand for provincial autonomy also began to appear in the earlier years. It was not accidental that leading figures in East Pakistan began to recall the historic Lahore resolution of the Muslim League in 1940 which declared Pakistan to be a State "in which constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

The same feeling of rising nationalism enabled the Bengalees to fight the game of the West Pakistani junta to divide the people of East Bengal. The national legislature in 1956 approved separate electorates for minorities in West Pakistan for provincial and national elections and wanted to foist the same on East Bengal. But the Bengalees resisted and secured joint electorates for their region.

In East Bengal, unlike in West Pakistan, the peasants to an extent had traditions of anti-landlord struggle. Our Kisan Sabha and the struggle waged by it had left their impact on their consciousness. Besides, most of the landlords being Hindus, the Muslim League leaders had not much difficulty in taking an anti-landlord stand. In fact, shortly before the partition, the Muslim League had introduced in the Bengal Assembly a measure for the abolition of intermediaries. After 1950, the East Bengal leaders legislated the transfer of Hindu landlords' holdings to the Government. Though even after this, 48 per cent of the peasants continued to be landless, the measure seems to have undermined the main social prop of the military junta—the big landlords and provided a freer base for the freedom movement.

Merging of Democratic and Freedom Movements

East Pakistan was not only separated by a thousand miles from the seat of the Government but actually constituted the majority of Pakistan's population. It was in East Pakistan that the first rumblings against national oppression and inequality were heard. In 1947, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali

Khan, declared Pakistan to be a Muslim State, and its lingua-franca to be the Urdu language. This attempt to foist the mother-tongue of only five per cent of the population evoked strong protests in East Bengal and when Jinnah came to address the Dacca University Convocation in 1948, the students demonstrated demanding the recognition of Bengali as the State language on a par with Urdu. Several hundred students were arrested on the morrow of the formation of Pakistan. When Dacca University students were demonstrating for recognition of the Bengali language they were fired upon and a number of them were massacred and even according to official versions thirteen were killed. Since then, that date, February 21, 1952, is being observed as Martyrs' Day in East Pakistan. It was only in 1954 that Bengali was recognised as one of the State languages.

The ruling classes of West Pakistan not only tried to suppress the Bengali language but the Bengali culture also. The Bengali language and culture were virtually labelled as un-Islamic. In the 1954 elections in East Bengal, the Muslim League party was routed by a U.F. formed under the leadership of some of the dissident Bengalee leaders. The U.F. came out with a 21-point programme, item 19 of which is extremely significant in the light of recent developments and shows how the national element had already started developing against the policies of the ruling classes.

Item 19 says: "Securing all subjects including residuary powers except defence, foreign affairs and currency, for East Bengal which shall be fully autonomous and sovereign... and establish Naval Headquarters and Ordnance Factories in East Bengal so as to make it militarily self-sufficient." The U.F. further demanded that the Central Government should declare Bengali as a State language on a par with Urdu. It also demanded complete freedom in regard to export of jute, consultation between the centre and East Bengal on allocation of foreign exchange for imports, and other demands.

The imprint of the bourgeois leadership is there to be seen clearly. And yet demands for parity of language directly concerned the interests of the people. They also could not be

indifferent to the call for military self-sufficiency which was in fact addressed to the need of getting rid of the West Pakistani forces.

The U.F. Government was not allowed to function. Its dismissal was followed by a reign of terror and banning of the Communist Party.

The blind rulers of West Pakistan behaved as if the national problem could be conjured away by simply ignoring it. They passed two Acts, one declaring parity between East and West Pakistan, which really meant equating the 56 per cent of the people of the East with the 44 per cent people of the West and secondly, by another Act, they dissolved the separate provinces in West Pakistan such as Sind, Punjab, NWFP and Baluchistan and the whole of West Pakistan was constituted as one unit or a single province. Not only each national unit was not to have its own legislature but it was not even considered as a separate constituent unit.

The disastrous results of the military rule were to be seen after Ayub Khan took over from Iskander Mirza . There were revolts of every nationality except the Punjabi. The Sindhis, the Baluchis, and the Pathans and East Bengalees, all revolted during this period. In East Bengal, in 1962, 1963 and 1964, students led huge movements which were brutally suppressed by the Martial Law regime. Besides these struggles, there have been struggles of the working class, struggles of different sections which were also brutally suppressed by the Martial Law administration. The ruling junta also organised Bengalee-Bihari riots in East Bengal to break the strikes of workers and others. As in the days of the British, pogroms were organised with the aid of a small section which acted as a tool of the ruling classes.

Thus, in East Bengal, the democratic and freedom movements began to merge together in a common stream. The ties with the Centre started loosening very rapidly and the demand for autonomy, though not yet for complete freedom, began to emerge more and more prominently . This was seen during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war over Kashmir when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman stated : "Our Government is fighting for referendum in

Kashmir. Let it hold a referendum here in East Pakistan and they will see that 85 per cent of the people are behind me.” Soon after the Sheikh came out with a six-point programme which announced the combination of democratic demands with the demand for autonomy. The six-point programme demanded :

1. The Constitution of Pakistan must be federal, with parliamentary form of Government and legislature directly elected on the basis of adult franchise,
2. Federal subjects to be limited to foreign affairs and defence only.
3. There should be separate currencies for the two wings easily convertible into each other or (b) in the alternative, one currency, subject to statutory safeguards against flight of capital from the East to the West wing.
4. Power of fixation and revenue collection to be vested in the federating States. The Centre to be financed by allocation of a share in the States' taxes.
5. Separate foreign exchange accounts to be kept for East and West Pakistan, the requirement of the Federal Government to be met by the two wings in equal proportions or on any other fixed basis as may be agreed upon.
6. Self-sufficiency of East Pakistan in defence matters. An ordinance factory and a military academy to be set up in the Eastern wing. The Federal naval headquarters to be located in East Pakistan.

Here, once again, we find the combination of democratic demands with the demands for national autonomy, and for a relaxation of the grip of the Centre on the resources and the functioning of the State Government. It was really a demand for a very loose type of federation with complete military self-sufficiency for the Eastern wing.

Once again, the imprint of bourgeois leadership is seen on the demands. They no doubt express in a constitutional form the popular desire to get rid of the domination of the West Punjabi clique but they nowhere refer to the demands of the peasants, of the workers or of other sections of the toilers for social and

democratic advance, for better living conditions. Nor do they contain a word of protest against the alliance with the imperialists which the ruling classes of West Pakistan had forged all these years.

The Anti-Ayub Movement

But because of the feeling of national oppression, the desire to get rid of the Martial Law regime, these demands became the rallying point for the expression of national discontent and advance of the cause of democracy. They got wide and spontaneous support from every section of the population. It unnerved Ayub Khan who unleashed unheard of brutalities against the people, indulged in widespread arrests and tried to suppress the movement. It led to the arrests of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a large number of his followers. A widespread mass movement, unprecedented in its dimensions took place against the terror regime of Ayub Khan. During 1968-69, there was a mass upsurge throughout Pakistan. In East Pakistan, the popular upsurge was based on the eleven point programme put forth by the Students' Action Committee composed of all the progressive and democratic students' organisations and supported by the Awami League. The eleven-point programme showed distinct signs that the consciousness of the struggle was outgrowing the demands for autonomy and emphasising the need of a broader and wider democratic programme ensuring the demands of the toilers for social and democratic advance. It contained demands for social and democratic advance. It contained demands for a neutral and independent foreign policy, scrapping of the military pacts, nationalisation of banks, insurance and other big industries, living wages for workers, reduction of rents and taxes, educational reforms, full civil liberties, besides the six points of the programme of the Awami League. Here we find a further merging of the struggle for democracy with the struggle for freedom. Of vital importance here is the demand for scrapping of military pacts to which the ruling junta of West Pakistan was tried and which the ruling

junta of West Pakistan was tied and which made Pakistan and its people a victim of imperialist designs and conspiracies.

Simultaneously, there was a big upsurge in West Pakistan where the pent-up forces of democracy and national freedom, though not so conscious as in East Bengal, were trying to assert themselves. The anti-Ayub parties of West Pakistan forged a common front for the demand of parliamentary democracy and adult franchise. Caught in the pincer of the democratic movement of West and East Pakistan, dictator Ayub had to quit the stage and Martial Law was again clamped on Pakistan in March 1969.

The final Phase

Yahya Khan was forced to order general elections, the first of its kind in Pakistan under the surging tide of resistance both in West and East Pakistan. The discontent of the people in West Pakistan was seen in the victory of Bhutto's party which got a majority of seats in the National Assembly from West Pakistan, the Awami League led by Sheikh Mujibar Rahman swept everything before it, getting complete endorsement from the people for the demand for democracy and autonomy. Yahya Khan's refusal to summon the constituent Assembly, his open plotting against elected representatives of the people led to the call for a five-day general strike in East Bengal. A twelve-hour curfew was declared in Dacca from the evening of march 2, when the strike was to take place. The military junta resorted to mass killings of the defiant people and not less than 2,000 people were killed in a single day in Dacca. However, the strike showed the united determination of the people to secure freedom for themselves because not only the workers and peasants and other toilers joined the strike but the call was also obeyed by the police forces and police officers, who demonstrated their solidarity with the people. With this repression, the die was cast. There was no turning point for either the military junta or the people. On March 25, the military junta started mass massacres and challenged the entire people to revolt. The East Bengal Regiment, East Pakistan Rifles and the police joined the

people in defending their motherland against the occupation army. The people of East Pakistan were compelled to wage the war of resistance to establish democracy in their land. The struggle of the people of East Bengal for democracy and civil liberty merged with their struggle for freedom from the military junta of West Pakistan.

The subsequent developments are fresh in our memory. The massacres, the brutalities, arming of counter-revolutionaries and hoodlums to practice genocide of intellectuals, all these have been met by the united resistance of a nation determined to win its freedom with the armed strength of the young guerrillas determined to sacrifice everything for the sake of their country.

These should first convince everybody that the developments in East Pakistan leading to the rebellion of an entire people logically followed from the military dictatorship's policies which added national oppression to the democratic and economic suppression ; that this upsurge constituted an integral part of the democratic developments in Pakistan as a whole which have been taking place over a number of years, and that if it has burst in East Pakistan, it is both because of the special features of the situation here as well as of the uneven development of the democratic and national movement in the two sections.

Left Traditions and Forces

It should be remembered that East Bengal before partition was the seat of our peasant movement in Bengal. It had seen two sessions of the All-India Kisan Sabha. It was the scene of the militant *tebhaga* movement led by our party then. It had strong anti-imperialist traditions.

The Left influence in East Bengal before partition, therefore was considerable. The main base and influence of our united Party before partition lay in East Bengal. Apart from the peasant movement, the majority of Party members were from this region. Though partition caused a diversion and gave a setback to the development of Left forces, the traditions were soon revived.

After partition, Bhashani and his followers played the role of a democratic Left, fighting for democratic reforms, and for the demands of the peasants and other toilers. In the recent upsurge the part played by the student left is all-important. It was they who set the pace which made it impossible for the leadership to compromise the movement.

However, the main weakness of the situation has been the absence of a proletarian Marxist-Leninist Party capable of initiative and leadership. A major section of the pre-partition Communist Party of India came under revisionist influence and followed reformist policies which resulted in its failure to develop as an independent organisation with mass influence.

Another section which showed signs of taking the correct path was misled by the Chinese Communist Party's line to embark upon a sectarian path while mouthing radical slogans. The Anti-Ayub struggle was presented to them as a reactionary struggle directed against a friend of People's China. Even the militant Bhashani was misled into isolating himself from the anti-Ayub upsurge under this same plea.

When the militant movement forced Ayub out of office and wrested the demand for elections from the military junta and when the masses were determined to express their anger through the elections, these groups and Bhashani, under the misguidance of the CPC leadership, raised the slogan of boycott, and surrendered the initiative and leadership of the struggle to the bourgeois leaders.

Plea of Internal Struggle

In essence therefore, the struggle of the people of Bangladesh became a struggle of an oppressed nationality for the right of self-determination, a right which under the given circumstances the Party of the working class was bound to support. The argument of the Chinese Government that the Bangladesh struggle was an internal matter constitutes a rejection of the international outlook of the working class. The freedom or class struggle in any country is a part of the international struggle of the working class. The Party of the working class cannot

consider that an oppressed nation struggling for its own freedom is an internal matter to be decided between the oppressing ruling class and that oppressed nation. That is nothing but an attempt to hand over the fighting people to their ruling classes and get them crushed. The Chinese argument that the Bangladesh struggle is a secessionist struggle also makes no sense and is a denial of the right of session for an oppressed nationality. Marxist-Leninists are not opposed to all secessions. They uphold the right of the oppressed nationality to secede, that is, right of self-determination to the point of secession, when it helps the general advance of the proletarian movement. Besides, when we were dealing with a State knocked together by imperialist machinations on the basis of the medieval ideology of Pan-Islamism, to say that the people of such a State have no right to get away from a theocratic State exploiting them is to excel all records of opportunism and surrender before the bourgeoisie. Our Party was absolutely correct in understanding the genuine freedom and democratic content of the Bangladesh struggle and supporting it by all means.

Demand on the Congress Government

The question, however, is asked whether in all this, it was correct to call on the Congress Government to intervene and lend help to the freedom force. Indira Gandhi's Government is carrying on a semi-fascist brutal terror against our Party and the democratic movement in West Bengal. The terror not only did not stop during the whole period of the Bangladesh struggle but was actually intensified. It did not cease even during the critical days of the war and while the Indian army was supposed to be fighting for the freedom of Bangladesh on its soil, the Congress police and and goondas were shedding the blood of democratic leaders in Calcutta and elsewhere. How could we, therefore, have relied upon the Congress Government to help the cause of the Bangladesh people ?

Our demand that the Congress Government should render all help including armed help to the fighting people of Bangladesh was not only correct but the only practical demand that the

working class party could have made. It was also the demand which was supported by all other democratic parties. The main question was not one of giving just ideological or oral support to the struggle but of supplying the fighters with weapons and arms in thousands. We and other political parties could have fulfilled this need only symbolically. Only the Government had the requisite stock of arms and the people had a right to demand of the Government that it should be kept at the disposal of the Bangladesh fighters. Not to have done so would have amounted to an open denial of armed help to the people of Bangladesh and would have been nothing short of sabotage of their struggle. In fact, for a few months at least the Government actually hesitated to put any arms at the disposal of the fighting forces, afraid of the international consequences. Had there not been general support to this demand, the Government would have vacillated still further the struggle of Bangladesh might have been jeopardised. Of course, the main source of its vacillation arose from international pressure.

It was very correct to remember that Indira Gandhi's Government was guilty of brutal repression against our Party and people, especially in West Bengal. At the same time, it was our Party which had declared that if the price of helping the freedom struggle was imposition of war on us, it should be faced. In the name of peace, we should not abandon our elementary duty to help the Bangladesh people. That is why when war was declared we could not forget that it arose out of the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people and it must be carried out to its successful conclusion. This was not a question of identifying with alien class interests but of taking note of a favourable situation in which one ruling class was prepared to render help to the democratic movement against a military junta. In our various statements, we sharply underlined what the aims and objects of this war should be. We stated that our Party was interested in it only in so far as it secured the freedom of Bangladesh while protecting our own sovereignty. We demanded vigilance to see that every step taken during the course of the war, and after, is strictly confined to these objectives. We

protested against despatch of Indian officials, demanded expansion of democratic freedoms for the toiling masses and other measures to see that selfish interests did not exploit the situation. It is clear that we demarcated our aims from the narrow class interests which the Government had in mind.

Marxist-Leninists and War

Some of those influenced by the wrong line of the CPC argue: how can we support a war between two bourgeois-landlord Governments, how can we support the bourgeois-landlord Government of our country and wish for its victory? This argument sometimes finds an echo in our own ranks some of whom are puzzled by our open support to the war.

The theoretical position must be clearly understood. Marxist-Leninists are not pacifists. They do not oppose all wars. They judge each war on the basis of the issue involved, on how its outcome affects the general advance of the proletarian movement and its revolutionary development, on the basis of which classes are being isolated and defeated. They are unquestionably opposed to all imperialist wars and in such wars, they work for the defeat of their own Governments. They are opposed to all counter-revolutionary wars, wars of national agrandisement whose only result is to rouse national animosities and split the unity of the working class in the affected countries. But they are not opposed to all wars. When the outcome of the war in favour of a particular Government leads to progressive results, Marxist-Leninists support that Government. Those influenced by the CPC's stand should do well to remember Lenin's words:

“We marxist differ from both pacifists and anarchists in that we deem it necessary to study each war historically (from the standpoint of Marx's dialectical materialism) and separately. There have been in the past numerous wars which despite all the horrors, atrocities, distress and suffering, that inevitably accompany all wars, were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy most harmful and reactionary institutions (e.g. an autocracy or serfdom) and

the most barbarous despotisms in Europe (the Turkish and the Russian). That is why the features historically specific to the present war must come up for examination.

“The Great French Revolution ushered in a new epoch in the history of mankind. From that time down to the Paris Commune, i.e., between 1789 and 1871, one type of war was of a bourgeois-progressive character, waged for national liberation. In other words, the overthrow of absolutism and feudalism, the undermining of these institutions, and the overthrow of alien oppression, formed the chief content and historical significance of such wars. These were therefore progressive wars ; during *such* wars, all honest and revolutionary democrats, as well as all Socialists, always wished success to that country (i.e., that bourgeoisie) which had helped to overthrow or undermine the most baneful foundations of feudalism, absolutism and the oppression of other nations, For example, the revolutionary wars waged by France contained an element of blunder and the conquest of foreign territory by the French, but this does not in the least alter the fundamental historical significance of those wars, which destroyed and shattered feudalism and absolutism in the whole of the old serf-owning Europe.” (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Pp. 300-01)

Such is Lenin’s directive. The recent war was not an imperialist war between two Powers. It arose out of the struggle of the Bangladesh people for freedom from a military-feudal monopolist junta, supported by American imperialism. Victory in it meant a blow to feudal-military dictatorship in the sub-continent, a blow to the U.S. Government. Defeat would have made the entire sub-continent including India completely vulnerable to American imperialism. The only victory would have been that of the imperialists. That is why it was correct to support the victory of one side over another.

The Role of the Government

How can we believe all the statements in support of democracy and freedom that are being issued by the same Government which tramples them underfoot in West Bengal ? Our Party did not give any certificate to the Government for its aims and

objectives. In the first place we are directly concerned with the objective results of their action. In so far as their armed forces concentrated on the border, kept the Pakistani border forces continuously engaged, they tremendously helped the Mukti Bahini forces to spread their hold to all the rural areas. When the net was being tightened on the Mukti Bahini forces by the Pakistani army, when international forces were demanding placing U.N. observers on the borders, so that all armed help to the fighting people could be checked and eliminated, the action of the Indian Army in directly intervening in Bangladesh definitely helped the freedom-fighters to settle accounts with the Yahya regime and its international patrons. Delay might have compromised the feature of the struggle and its success. That is why we asked the people to support the war, that is why we said that we were interested in carrying the war to its successful conclusion.

The Government of course, had its own aims and objectives. It was interested, in the first place, in eliminating West Pakistani rule from East Bengal so that it may no longer face a strong opponent on both wings, an opponent supported and armed by American imperialism. The existence of Pakistan as it was, with the armed support of American imperialism, constituted a source of tension and danger and necessitated diversion of huge sums towards defence expenditure. It was becoming clear that with the recession in the economy, the Government would rather save something on defence expenditure for its capitalist development. Apart from that, it was clear that the capitalist economy would be in complete doldrums with nearly one crore of refugees on our country. The balance of power between India and Pakistan maintained by the USA was nothing but a containment operation directed against the democratic movement in India, and operation from which the bourgeoisie also suffered.

Finally, of course, there was the consideration of economic gain from a free Bangladesh which could supply many of its needs from the neighbouring areas of India. Outlet for coal, supply of the much-needed raw jute, for new trade and investment, economic expansion, these certainly formed part of

the calculations of the ruling classes when it decided to help the struggle under the Awami League leadership. The Congress Government was therefore interested in liquidating the Yahya Khan regime to ease the situation for itself and establishing a regime which would be friendly towards it, and which would naturally represent the class interests of the bourgeoisie there. But this also meant that for the sake of its own immediate interests it was interested in bringing about the downfall of the West Pakistani occupation regime and thus help the freedom forces in Bangladesh.

Once the Government overcame its vacillations, it began to arm the guerrilla bands quickly and train them in various camps. But in training them it did not forget to take the utmost precautions to see that the freedom struggle did not overstep the bounds that were set by its intent. In the beginning it saw to it that only those certified by the Awami League were given training in arms. The Government further saw to it that those suspected of Communism were allowed no entry into the camps. But with all this, the needs of its immediate objectives were so big that it could not but put arms in the hands of more than 100,000 young men from East Bengal. These young men have played a heroic and vital role during the freedom struggle. Indian and Pakistani Generals alike have opined that but for the incessant activities of the Mukti Bahini, victory could not have been secured in such a short time. To deprive them of their legitimate right and duty to defend the people's victory with arms, especially when the new State is still not free from the bands of counter-revolution, denude them of their armed power is to disorganise the task of consolidating the newly won freedom.

Ruling Party Exploits Bangladesh Victory

The Bangladesh developments, no doubt, enhance the influence of Mrs. Gandhi and her party among the people. Her party is cashing in on the sense of the democratic and national victory which the people are experiencing following the rout of the West Pakistani forces. Controlling the Government, the army

and all the economic resources, it was but natural that the ruling party should be seen as being in the forefront of the struggle. In reality, the ruling party continuously vacillated, would not take a decision for months, did not start the arming of the guerrillas for a long time, and took an equivocal position on the question of the recognition of the Bangladesh Government. It was our Party which consistently advocated direct armed support to the Bangladesh struggle and demanded recognition of the Government. We also stated that if this meant war, it must be faced. The Government of India, after a lot of hesitation, had to embark upon this very course. Our comrades in West Bengal, in face of a critical situation, rendered inestimable help to the young Bangladesh fighters. They also did valuable work in the refugee camps.

Claiming all credit for the victory in Bangladesh, the Government of India is using it to launch terror attacks against us in West Bengal. These provocative attacks not only did not cease but were intensified during the war days. Had we however, fallen a victim to this provocation and changed our principled stand towards the Bangladesh struggle, because of the Government's vile deed towards us, it would have served the interests of the ruling classes. It would have enabled them to point us out as anti-democratic and anti-national and isolate us from the democratic masses full of sympathy for Bangladesh, full of anger against the atrocities of the Pakistani rulers and their war drive.

International Impact of Bangladesh

There is failure to see the international impact of the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent State. It is upsetting the power equation that hitherto existed in the sub-continent, an equation which enabled the American imperialists to intervene any time in the sub-continent through Indo-Pakistan conflicts. The State of Pakistan run by a military dictatorship and based on the appeal to Islam could always be a handy instrument of American conspiracies, to divert the growing proletarian and democratic movements in India and Pakistan. American imperialists have

given much thought to the containment of the proletarian movement in India since the formation of the first Communist-led Ministry in Kerala in 1957. Since then, internally, they have created various agencies to fight the rising influence of the Communist Party. The penetration of the CIA Agencies in the bureaucracy has been one of their weapons to curb the rising working class movement. The brutalities perpetrated in West Bengal are not unconnected with the expertise which high Indian intelligence officials learnt in the USA. Externally, the same purpose was achieved by a bellicose and strident Pakistan, overwhelmed by the religious appeal and armed to the teeth by American imperialism. The break up of this creation of British imperialism changes the balance of forces in the sub-continent and weakens one of the pliant instruments of American imperialism, to intervene and sidetrack the democratic movements in the two countries. The emergence of Bangladesh thus promises a setback to American policies and must be given its due importance.

Because the Bangladesh struggle had this importance, it revealed almost all the contradictions of the present period. The major contradiction here was between the oppressing military set-up allied with American imperialism and the people of Pakistan as a whole which burst out in East Bengal into a national revolt. It was indirectly a fight against the subservience to the USA and exploitation by it. In the background was the deepening capitalist crisis and the worsening of the economic conditions of the people.

In the face of this revolt, the imperialist camp got divided. Britain and France took a friendly attitude towards the Bangladesh people and India. West Germany also refused to join the American bandwagon. America could claim the support of Japan only in its designs against the Bangladesh struggle. The sharpness of the conflicts for world markets, trade and exports already seen in the currency upsets was revealed on the issue of Bangladesh.

American imperialism and the Soviet Union sharply clashed with each other on the sub-continent. It almost led to a confrontation of the two navies in the Bay of Bengal. In the

U.N. and elsewhere, while the U.S. imperialists did everything to denounce India and support Pakistan, the Soviet Union came out strongly in support of the Bangladesh people and India exposing the Yahya Khan regime.

India-U.S. Conflict

One of the important developments connected with this struggle was the conflict of interests that developed between the Indian bourgeoisie and American imperialism. Never before perhaps had such a sharp conflict come to the forefront and was witnessed by the ordinary man. The American imperialists declared to be the aggressor, stopped economic aid, threatened it by sending the task force to the Bay of Bengal, and charged it with seeking to break up Pakistan and conquer it. The Government of India, backed by the Soviet Union, plunged headlong in the Bangladesh struggle, despite American denunciations, brought about the fall of Dacca and is getting prepared to meet the threats of withdrawal of economic aid. It is true that in doing all this, it knows that it has the sympathy of both Britain and France, and also the democratic Party opponents of Nixon in the USA. But nonetheless this sharp conflict of interests and our Programme had visible development on specific issues. Thanks to this, the bourgeois Press has turned its broadsides against American imperialism and its threatening policies, exposing to the common man its hostility to the Indian people.

This is a significant development which our Party must take note of because here the main enemy of the world working class is getting exposed as an enemy of the Indian people. This is a consummation for which our Party has been working and it could take just pride in telling the people that while the Congress Government often sang the virtues of American democracy for the loans and credits that it got, our Party understood the real character of American imperialism and warned the people against it.

It is for our Party to unite the people against American conspiracies, create a strong public opinion against its blackmail

so that the Government dares not again compromise with the U.S. imperialists. The breach that has arisen must be widened by us and our Party has already demanded a moratorium on all debt payments to the USA, confiscation of American concerns beginning with the oil concerns and stoppage of all aid from the USA.

New Landmarks

Notwithstanding the future dangers and the present limitations, the landmarks registered by the routing of Pakistan's military regime in Bangladesh must be fully understood. The Bangladesh people have undone one of the biggest handicaps to the free development of the democratic movements in the sub-continent ; they have not only inflicted a defeat on American imperialism but they have also made a contribution to the further acceleration of the democratic movement in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh itself. They have taken initial steps to break down communal barriers that put severe limitations on the democratic and class struggles in India. Thus they have created new opportunities for the advancement of the democratic movements in the two countries. It's true that the vested interests might be again able to exploit the same old communal prejudices but the need of the democratic movement there demand that the old barriers should not be restored.

Over and above, they have given a serious blow to the reactionary Pan-Islamic ideology. It is evident that its influence prevented the democratic masses in several countries from lending full support to the Bangladesh struggle.

Developments in West Pakistan

It is quite clear that the sacrifices of the Bangladesh people are also having their echo in West Pakistan. If Yahya's army was defeated in Dacca, he himself was summarily thrown out by the people of West Pakistan along with other members of his junta.

The need to put on a democratic image under the impact of Bangladesh developments is so pressing that Bhutto, who is

blessed by Nixon, had to announce a number of measures to appease people. Starting with the abolition of privy purses of the Princes and demands on the monopolists to return their foreign holding to Pakistan, Bhutto announced his intention to nationalise important industries. These measures arose out of the need to pacify a people for long deprived of all democratic rights and mercilessly exploited. They were the direct result of Bangladesh developments, where after the armed struggle, the representative elected by the people are conducting the affairs of the Government.

Bhutto continues to retain the Martial Law. He has not yet called a session of the elected Assembly—Central or Provincial. He has assured foreign monopoly capital that it is safe and should not fear nationalisation. He has talked about a land reform and land to the landless but has said that this will be done after consulting the Governors.

Bhutto's democratic mask is, however, being torn by his class affiliations. After declaring that the privy purses would be abolished, he suddenly remembered that the Quaid-e-Azam had promised their inviolability to the Princes and he went back on his announcement. Similarly, under pressure from the vested interests, and his American patrons, Bhutto disowned all intentions regarding nationalisation of the concerns owned by the twentytwo families.

It is clear that Bhutto will not succeed in bamboozling the people for any length of time. The struggle of the people of West Pakistan against Martial Law will go on. The leaders of the Baluchis and the Pathans have expressed their dissatisfaction with Bhutto's make-believe democracy and the Press is clamouring against restrictions imposed on it. There are voices demanding friendly relations with India. It is difficult to maintain West Pakistan, on the basis of a denial of democracy.

CPSU and CPC

Our Party considers both the People's China and the Soviet Union to be Socialist countries and leading members of the Socialist Camp. We expect from their parties and leaders a

policy based on Marxism-Leninism in dealing with internal and external events. We expect them both to support all freedom struggles unhesitatingly, thereby enhancing the prestige of Socialism and Socialist Camp. We had occasion in the past to state that sometimes both these parties sacrifice the interests of the revolutionary struggles in other countries to the narrow diplomatic needs of their foreign policy. We also had occasion to criticise the uncritical supply of arms by both to certain Governments. It seems both China and the USSR, the latter till recently, have been supplying some arms to the West Pakistan military junta, a step which cannot be justified on the basis of any principles.

The struggle of seventyfive million people for freedom is an outstanding world event and it should have been enthusiastically supported by the entire Socialist Camp. The Socialist countries should have set in example by recognising the Bangladesh Government and rendered every aid possible to it from the beginning.

In the context of the struggle of the Bangladesh people the position taken by People's China can only be describes as grossly opportunist and one which openly helped the Yahya Khan military regime, the tool of American imperialism. Whether they were due to intense suspicion of India's ruling classes or intense hatred of the leadership of the Soviet Union, China's policies ended in supporting the butchery organised by the Yahya Khan regime and betraying the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people. In its broadcasts the Peking Radio never mentioned the butchery, the uprooting of millions of refugees, never mentioned the elections and the rout of Yahya Khan's party, but only depicted the whole struggle as an invasion by India. This is the logical conclusion of a dogmatic outlook which does not consider any country to be Socialist except People's China and which equates the Soviet Union with the USA.

With this wrong world outlook, the CPC does not recognise freedom struggles in the territories of its own reactionary allies but sees them where it helps its diplomatic interests. It is the

Chinese Party which continuously brought to the forefront the question of the freedom struggle in the present epoch and stressed the responsibility of all Socialist countries and Communist Parties to support them unhesitatingly. And it is the CPC again that failed to support this struggle and decided to bolster the dirty regime of Yahya Khan.

In contrast, on this issue, after some hesitation, the Soviet Union took a stand of supporting the Bangladesh struggle and endorsing the steps taken by the Government of India in support of it. It entered into a treaty with the Government of India which made it clear that the Soviet Union was interested in a political and democratic solution of the problem. Till the last, however, it continued to talk of a political solution based on the wishes of elected members, but within the framework of a united Pakistan. In the end, however, it supported the idea of a free Bangladesh.

Its warning to other Powers not to complicate matters by intervention, the help it gave in arms and other materials to the Government of India and the valuable role it played in frustrating the American conspiracies in the Security Council and, above all, the despatch of its fleet to counter the blackmail of the U.S. Seventh Fleet—all these have been of tremendous help to the freedom struggle of the Bangladesh people and have enabled the government of India to take a firm line in relation to it.

It is true at the same time that the CPSU and the Right Communist Party are busy building up the image of Indra Gandhi in India which actually helps the latter to screen its semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and especially against our Party. Due to the Soviet Union's friendly relations with the Indian Government, the latter is painted as virtually a Socialist Government. This makes the task of our Party and the revolutionary movement more difficult than before. The international Communist movement is never told the truth about terror that is being launched in India but on the other hand, it is given an exactly contrary account through the Right Communist Party in which our Party is held responsible for all the violence unleashed against us.

Tasks Ahead

Our Party, especially in West Bengal is faced with a very critical situation. In spite of our difficulties, our responsibilities for the Bangladesh struggle increases many times. It is only the first phase of the struggle that is over. Pakistan's occupation army has been vanquished but it cannot be said that even now the freedom of Bangladesh has been completely ensured. The agencies of American imperialism are busy creating a reactionary set-up in Bangladesh and winning over conservative elements, with financial blandishments. All those in the camp of the people are not imbued with a democratic anti-imperialist and secular outlook. The conspiracies of American imperialism and the agents of the military junta are yet to be finally defeated. They will find a fertile breeding ground in these elements. They can be finally liquidated only on the basis of a democratic and secular and anti-imperialist programme, one defending the interests of the peasants, workers and other toilers, eliminating American influence and extending democracy to all sections of the people. The Government of India is partly aware of these conspiracies and itself is interested in defeating them. But the way in which it is bound to function in its own class interests is likely to prevent it from waging an effective fight against the pro-imperialist elements.

The remnants of the Pakistan agents, the pro-imperialist elements and conspirators can be defeated only on the basis of rousing the vigilance of the masses and their active participation in consolidating the newly won freedom. Of vital importance in this respect is the active role of the young men from the Mukti Bahini and the guerrillas.

But under one pretext or another, the vested interests are bound to curb these very agencies in the name of unity and reconstruction. Unless this is combated the future of democracy in Bangladesh as well as its freedom might be compromised.

In any case, it is the duty of India's working class and the democratic movement to see that India's armed forces are not used to stifle the democratic forces in Bangladesh and that they

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devote themselves exclusively to mopping up the final remnants of the armed counter-revolutionary bands.

Our party must continually demand the expansion of the rights of the trade union and kisan movements, greater freedom for the student movement and other democratic sections so that the toiling masses are enabled to set the pace for democratic advance. Our Party is confident that the advanced democratic forces in Bangladesh will spearhead the struggle for eliminating imperialist and pro-Pakistani influences and consolidate their newly won freedom, champion the cause of workers peasants and other toiling sections for better living conditions and expansion of democratic rights. Our Party is confident that guided by a correct line, they will soon succeed in setting the Bangladesh movement on the firm road of rapid advance.

Appendix (x)

Statement of Leftist Parties of West Bengal On West Bengal Election, 1972*

1. In their Policy Statement of the 6th February 1972 the Left Front of West Bengal consisting of Communist Party of India (Marxist), Revolutionary Socialist Party, Socialist Unity Centre, Workers' Party of India, Revolutionary Communist Party of India, Marxist Forward Bloc and Biplabi Bangla Congress, and supported by Forward Bloc had said : "It is obvious that the Congress(R) with its allies will make a desperate effort including the most naked use of the gangsters' knives and all the repressive machinery of the Government to win in this election." Towards the end of that statement they had repeated : "Desperate efforts will be made by the ruling Congress Party to prevent the people from exercising their right of franchise freely. Terror, repression, intimidation; threats of reprisals and punishments will be used as well as bribery and other corrupt practices. The big newspapers, the radio, the cinema, the administrative machinery will all be used in the interests of the Congress(R) party."

2. The Leftists had good reasons to apprehend all this. In Burdwan District in 1971, the CPI(M) got 24 seats and Congress one seat out of 25 seats. But during the Burdwan Municipality Election, held in November 1971, the Leftists had got a foretaste of the things to come. Burdwan town has been under a reign of terror ever since the United Front Government fell in March 1970 ; the terror-regime was extended to cover almost the entire Burdwan District soon after the 1971 General Election, and Burdwan town became a playground of murderous criminal

*Published as a booklet before the mid-term election of West Bengal State Assembly held on March 11, 1972.

gangs nurtured by the Congress(R) and aided by the police and administration. Fifteen murders were committed by these criminal gangs within a year; some of these murders were committed in open daylight on the high streets very near the police-station; the victims were either members or supporters of the CPI(M); a leading advocate of the town, who was defending CPI(M) workers in various law-suits, was also included in the list. Not one arrest was made by the police in connection with these murders, there was not even a show of investigation. At the time of the Municipality election, Leftist candidates and supporters were immobilized at the point of guns; voters were not allowed to vote in many places, and their votes were 'cast' by the 'volunteers' of the Congress-CPI combine. The Congress-CPI alliance secured what they called a 'sweeping victory' through these measures. The importance of this 'success' for the Congress party was underscored by the Prime Minister herself; when addressing a public meeting in Calcutta, convened ostensibly on the Bangladesh issue, she found time, even at a moment when war was going on and various parts of north-west India were under air-attack, to gloat over this 'victory' in a Municipality election. The Prime Minister's approval of this new experiment in 'democracy' was further confirmed by the award of President's Medal to the Superintendent of Police of the Burdwan District; it was an unmistakable reward for the killing of over fifty members and supporters of the CPI(M) and detention, torture and harassment of hundreds of Leftist workers and supporters in the District under his superintendency.

3. The Congress(R) hands had been shown again in the Students' Union elections in a large number of colleges under the President's Rule in West Bengal. In most of these elections, Leftist students were prevented even from filing their nomination papers by brute force backed by the police. In many colleges, students were not allowed to enter the college-premises on the election day, and armed gangs occupied the college premises with the connivance of the police. The Chhatra Parishad, the students' wing of the Congress(R), gloated over their 'victories' through such elections; most of these 'victories' were

‘uncontested’, for the simple reason that the Leftist student organizations had not been allowed to contest.

4. Leftist parties became aware that this may be the general pattern of election operations by the Congress(R)-CPI alliance in the Assembly elections, too. Indications of preparations for such a general pattern had been coming forth from other directions also. Already in December 1971 Leftist parties were practically ‘banned’ in large areas of at least 34 Assembly Constituencies,—constituencies where the Leftists were most likely to win with very large majorities in any free and fair election. Leftist workers, active supporters of Leftist parties; and the people in general were under attack on a massive scale in these areas. There were the usual police raids, detention without trial, beatings and torture in police lock-ups, and outright killings by the police; these were accompanied by gangster raids, assassination, and forced eviction of people from their residences and places of employment.

5. The Congress(R) had been using the so-called Naxalites throughout 1970-71. They were used for committing murders, arson, and robbery, and for creating a situation of widespread panic which would provide the ruling party with pretexts not only for importation of large numbers of the Central Reserve Police, and the posting of the Army throughout West Bengal, but also for employment of criminal gangs as so-called “Pratirodh Vahini” (Resistance Groups) openly brandishing fire-arms and lethal weapons with licence to kill. Most of the so-called Naxalites dropped their masks and joined the killing squads of the Congress(R). Those who were recalcitrant had to be eliminated; and a demonstration had to be given of the Congress(R)’s power to kill with impunity. A massacre of so-called Naxalites was therefore organized in the Cossipore-Baranagar area, about three miles in the North from the State Government and Police Headquarters in Calcutta. A horrible orgy of slaughter was seen by the people there on 12 August, 1971 with the police keeping away from the scene according to plan. It is not known how many were killed; according to a muffled and half-uttered police report at least 17 persons were

killed in this orgy which went on for 12 hours or more. Unofficial estimates put the number of dead around 25; and the number of persons who suffered injury and mutilations is anybody's guess. Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the present Chief Minister of West Bengal, who was at that time the Union Minister in charge of West Bengal (—this itself was a strange appointment), whilst refusing to accept the recommendation of 28 parties (including the Congress) to suspend the police officers concerned and to appoint a Committee of Enquiry with representatives of political parties, promised that he would appoint a judicial inquiry commission to inquire into the incident, he, however, did not honour this public pledge; no inquiry has been held. Along with this massacre at Cossipore-Baranagar, there have been countless instances of killing of prisoners in police custody; prisoners in jails have been beaten to death. All such incidents have been followed by official stories of "encounters" with the police, or attempts to "escape"—remarkable echoes of Nazi concentration camps.

6. Apart from this drive for "recruitment or annihilation" of so-called Naxalites, the Congress(R) party and its allies as well as the police and the administration carried on another systematic drive for physical annihilation of Leftists and forced eviction of Leftist supporters from many areas. Hundreds of complaints, memoranda, representations, deputations etc., to the top administrative officers including the Governor failed to evoke the slightest response. There are hundreds of instances where the police bluntly refused to record any complaint; and in some cases the complainants were themselves taken into custody and beaten up. Ultimately, a deputation of Leftist leaders and MPs saw the Prime Minister on the 31st January, 1972. The Prime Minister, without even making a pretence of an impartial inquiry, brushed aside the extremely grave complaints, and called them "blatant lies". She left no room for any doubt about her knowledge and approval of the fascist methods being employed. Her attitude, as reported in the newspapers, became a virtual directive to the administration and the police in West Bengal to carry on the plan of annihilation and eviction of Leftists.

7. Urgent appeals to the Election Commissioner of India, which is required to be impartial and non-partisan, bore no results either. There were repeated requests to the Election Commissioner that conditions be created to ensure a free and fair election. He did not go beyond the routine requests to the administration. The Election Commissioner met representatives of political parties of West Bengal in Calcutta on the 14th February 1972. His object was to secure a formal acceptance of a Model Code of Conduct drafted by him, which was to be adhered to by the political parties in their election campaign. This document had become utterly meaningless, and even ludicrous, in the face of the incidents already described and the open partisanship of the administration which was entrusted with the running of the election. All parties, however, accepted the Code. But at this very meeting the Election Commissioner was told of the grave obstacles being created to a free and fair election. He was given many specific details of obstructions, intimidation, murders and attempts to murder, eviction, and partisan conduct of the administration. Almost all parties, save and except the Congress(R) came forward with innumerable complaints. During the two following days, the Election Commissioner made a show of going round only a few of the constituencies to see the situation for himself. He did not visit many other constituencies although requested to do so. But even in the few constituencies which he visited, he saw large evidences of a grave situation. He saw houses and party offices that had been burnt down; he saw hundreds of people who had been forced to leave their residences; he met former Members of the Legislative Assembly who were also candidates for election again, who had been forced to leave their residences and even electoral areas under attacks and threats to their lives. There was at least one area in Beliaghata in the eastern part of Calcutta which the Election Commissioner was scheduled to visit but could not visit, because the police told him that they would not be responsible for his safety and security if he went there. Yet, after all this, the Election Commissioner ended his duty by declaring that conditions were 'normal' ; this was in

effect a clearance certificate for the administration and the police who were thus doubly assured that they could go on with their diabolic plans. In fact, conditions worsened after this visit of the Election Commissioner.

8. Even after this, the Leftists continued to believe that the Congress(R) and the administration would not go much further. However, this was a fond belief. The picture obtaining a couple of weeks before the polling was that terror and repression were by and large in evidence in about 34 constituencies which are traditionally Leftist strongholds. It was certain that the people in these areas, victims of Congress(R) terror and police repression, would vote for the Leftists in even larger numbers than before; the question was, would they be allowed to vote? This question, asked by people many times before the polling, could not be answered definitely. The Leftists had no alternative to facing the situation, going through the whole process, and let the people learn through their own experiences. The position was the same in respect of other constituencies, where the question was whether the Congress(R) plans would be extended in these areas, and what would be the nature of the operations in these areas.

9. As the polling day approached, the operations began to be intensified and extended. A few days before the polling a fresh series of massive attacks were launched by the Congress(R)-CPI in combination with the police. Twelve (12) persons were killed in Dum Dum on the northern side of Calcutta on the 6th March, 1972, the entire area of Dum Dum was held as 'occupied territory' by the Congress(R) gangs, and Leftists had to vacate the area in large numbers; the Leftist candidate, Sri Tarun Sengupta, who had always won in this constituency by a large and convincing majority, had to leave his residence and the constituency; all his election offices were burnt down or taken possession of by the armed gangs of the Congress(R). Sonarpur, a few miles from Calcutta in the South 24-Parganas District, suffered attacks everyday; the CPI(M) office was burnt down. Similar attacks were launched in Tollygunge, Dhakuria, Jadavpur in the south of Calcutta; in

Baranagar, Panihati, Khardah, Noapara, Titagarh in north 24-Parganas; in many constituencies in Burdwan District and elsewhere. Intimidation was spreading, and there were innumerable reports that from house to house voters were being threatened with dire consequences if they went to cast their votes on the polling day. Many police officers were openly asking Leftist workers to work for the Congress(R) or face the consequences.

10. There were also attempts to kill Leftist candidates. Sri Prasanta Sur, the Leftist candidate in Tollygunage Constituency, was shot at from a rifle when he was going round his constituency on the 22nd February; the bullet missed him, but hit a young Party worker who had tried to push Prasanta Sur away, and killed him on the spot; this happened while the police was standing by; no one is known to have been arrested, and the police did not make any effort to seize the rifle. Earlier, Sri Haridas Malakar, who had contested from the Dhakuria constituency in earlier elections and was likely to be the candidate this time, too, had been kidnapped and fired upon; they could not kill him, but he had been severely injured. Sri Jatin Chakrabarty who became the Leftist candidate in Dhakuria also was not spared; an attempt was made to kill him on the 27th February. He narrowly escaped the bomb thrown at him, but four of his election workers were injured, one of them being hit in eye with a splinter. Sri Probodh Purkait, Left candidate of Kultali, was kidnapped by Congress volunteers on the eve of the poll. The police had strict orders not to arrest Congress(R) hoodlums or to entertain any complaints against them.

11. Within the six weeks from the date of the announcement of the election to the announcement of results twenty-six leftist workers and supporters lost their lives; dead bodies of Leftist workers kidnapped on the polling day were being found even several days after the polling. The number of Leftist workers held in detention without trial or detained as undertrial prisoners on various charges at the time of the election would exceed ten thousand.

12. These are only a few of the many glaring facts of the situation that was being built up by the Congress party in collaboration with the police and administration. The administration went on with their bland assurances that the situation was "normal", and that the election would be peaceful, free and fair. There was every indication, however, that the election would be loaded with violence, threats and manipulation. Sri Jyoti Basu saw the Governor again on the 1st March 1972, and asked (a) whether people would be allowed to vote, and (b) whether polling agents would be allowed to proceed to the polling stations and to do their duty on the polling day. The Governor said that presence of the polling agents inside the polling station on the polling day and the safety of the voters were the only safeguards for a candidate, and he would make every arrangement for ensuring these rights. This was only one more promise on the part of the Governor in the infinite series of false assurances. For, on the actual polling day, in 51 constituencies including that of Sri Jyoti Basu's polling agents were not allowed to enter or thrown out or held at the point of the gun by Congress and CPI hoodlums. The police refused to take any steps for their protection.

13. The Left Front had underestimated the actual volume and nature of interference, obstruction, and downright rigging that they would have to face. They had fondly trusted that administration would try to maintain a show of impartiality on the polling day at least; and that the interferences with the candidates' and electors' rights may be interfered with in about the 34 constituencies that they had already listed. The Left Front had various suspicions. But they had no knowledge of the conspiratorial arrangements that were being finalized at the highest levels of the administration at this stage. The ruling party and Government of India had specially posted their nominee for the Chief Ministership of West Bengal as the Central Minister in charge of West Bengal to supervise the policy of unprecedented terror and repression through the Congress gangsters and police, and to gear up a fabricating machinery with a number of officers formally entrusted with

the task of conducting the election. A large number of Congress(R) supporters were suddenly inducted into Government and other offices posted for election duty on the polling day. A similarly large number of old employees of the Government who had been earlier given appointments for these posts, but could not be relied upon to act as servants of the Congress party, found their appointments peremptorily cancelled. Some of these appointments were cancelled on the 10th March, the eve of the polling day.

14. Instructions to Presiding Officers from Returning Officers this time included two astonishing paragraphs which were gross departures from the procedure followed in the past. We quote these two paragraphs :

“VII. As ballot papers will be supplied to you in bundles of 50 or less, it will not be possible to shuffle individual ballot papers as used to be done hitherto. It would be enough if the first three or four bundles of ballot papers are shuffled and the bundles used at random and not in consecutive serial order.

VIII. You should take special care to hand over the packets containing the ballot paper account and the paper seal account separately to the officer-in-charge at the receiving centre. The packet containing the ballot paper account and the packet containing the paper seal account should not be sealed. In the room in which the sealed ballot boxes are kept in safe custody before counting, the ballot paper account and the paper seal account of each station should be kept on top of the ballot box or boxes from that station and so these accounts should be delivered separately.”

The point to be noticed here is that official instructions were given not to shuffle ballot papers as they should be shuffled, not to use ballot-papers in consecutive serial order, and not to seal ballot paper accounts and paper seal accounts. Further, contrary to practice, counting of votes did not start till 13th (except in 3 constituencies) although the election was over on 11th. It is clear that all these were meant for fabrication of

votes, replacing of ballot paper accounts and paper seal accounts, changing of ballot boxes, etc.

15. The total plan of the Congress(R)-CPI combine can now be described as a plan of "combined operations". The routine methods of bribery and corruption, eve of election promises etc., always followed by the Congress party, had not been given up altogether. Congress(R) workers were promised jobs after the election; as in 1967 and earlier, so-called primary schools were suddenly sanctioned by the Government a few weeks before to provide employment to Congress supporters, a large number of permits for taxis and buses were issued, all to Congress(R) supporters; cash rewards were lavishly distributed in many cases; crores of rupees must have been spent on propaganda for the Congress(R) party, some of this money coming from secret sources who were promised various benefits after a Congress victory. The All India Radio was shamelessly used for one-sided Congress propaganda. The Prime Minister promised to sanction Rs. 143 crores for West Bengal, to reopen the Martin Light Railway, etc., if the Congress was voted to power. But these though highly objectionable were routine measures, and could not have affected the election in any substantial manner. What was really decisive was this plan of "combined operations" consisting of four parts as follows :—

- I. Terror and repression in selected areas. Objective: assassination, elimination, or eviction of Leftist workers and supporters; silencing and immobilization of all opposition; paralysation of administrative officers and employees who might try to be impartial and who might try to do their duty of protecting the rights of candidates and electors; clearing the streets and localities for the polling-day operations, liquidating all possibilities of resistance; spreading of fear and panic in other adjacent areas for the same purposes.
- II. Polling day operations : (A) Murder, arson, and armed attacks in some cases; demonstration of lethal weapons including a very large number of fire-arms in possession of Congress(R) "volunteers" in hundreds of jeeps, trucks,

and cars; virtual withdrawal of police and Army patrols from streets except where the Leftists were strong. (B) Shooting, stabbing, kidnapping of Leftist workers and voters. (C) Continuous demonstration of police support and administrative support for Congress(R)-CPI “volunteers”; (D) Occupation of polling stations by armed groups of Congress(R)-CPI “volunteers”, the numbers of which were swelled in many areas by armed plain clothes policemen. This was carried out in some cases during the previous evening and night. (E) Preventing voters from approaching near the polling stations, dispersing voters who had gathered in queues for voting; in many cases voters were told that their votes had already been “cast”,— and even some known supporters of the Congress(R) party were prevented in this manner, the Congress(R)-CPI “volunteers” leaving nothing to chance. (F) Seizure of ballot papers, stamping of ballot papers fabricating votes for Congress(R)-CPI, with the help or connivance or forced inactivity of Presiding Officers; intimidation or virtual detention of Presiding Officers who refused to comply with the orders of the “volunteers” or who were suspected of having scruples; eviction of polling agents of Leftist candidates, or holding them as captives until the end of the operations.

- III. Large-scale tampering with ballot boxes and ballot papers, substitution of prefabricated ballot papers and ballot boxes, etc.; at least a part of this operation had been carried out on the 10th March, or even earlier; another part might have been carried out after the polling, on the 11th March evening and the 12th March.
- IV. Crude and blatant manipulations during the so-called “counting of votes”; these included (a) double-stamping on Left votes so as to render them invalid, (b) loot of bundles of ballot papers containing majority of Leftist votes, (c) counting of ballot-papers in bundles as Congress(R) votes, with one or two Congress(R) votes on top and over 40 or more Left votes inside, (d)

downright undercounting of Leftist votes and overcount of Congress(R)-CPI votes etc. etc.

16. Part I of the above plan had become evident long before the polling day, although its connection with Part II and the rest of the plan had not become quite clear. On the polling day itself it did not take long for the Left Front to learn what was happening. Sri Jyoti Basu's letter to the Returning Officer of Baranagar constituency, complaining against the occupation of nearly 100 polling stations out of the 135 stations in that constituency by Congress(R)-CPI gangs with the support of the police and demanding that polling be stopped, was sent at 11 A.M. This being big news was almost immediately known. But very similar things were happening in about 50 other constituencies. By 4 P.M. on that date, while polling was still in progress, definite reports from 18 other constituencies in and around Calcutta reached the CPI(M) State Committee office in Calcutta. Sri Promod Dasgupta, the West Bengal Secretary of the CPI(M), sent his telegram to the Election Commissioner in New Delhi about these 18 constituencies a few minutes after 4 P.M. By 8 P.M. that evening it became clear that more than 30 constituencies had been similarly "taken over" by the Congress(R)-CPI-police-administration network. Reports from polling-agents, election agents and candidates in other places had not yet arrived; these began pouring in throughout day and night during the next two days, revealing the outlines of the entire picture, and confirming the worst suspicions. It became clear that apart from open gangsterism in 51 constituencies, large-scale rigging operations had also been carried out in a far larger number of constituencies, the total number exceeding 200 out of 280.

17. On the 12th March, along with reports of rigging in a larger number of constituencies, the Left Front received information that the rigging operations would continue even during the counting of votes. The Left Front instructed their counting agents to be very vigilant and to note and protest against all irregularities. At the same time, the question of safety and security of Leftist counting agents, election agents,

and candidates became a very serious question in view of the mobilization of armed criminal gangs under the Congress(R)-CPI banner.

18. The counting of votes on the 13th March did prove that the results were being rigged without the slightest pretention of fairness. All masks were down, and the officers openly declared their inability to do otherwise than as directed by the Congress(R)-CPI crowd. Objections raised by Leftist counting agents and election agents against irregular ballot boxes, irregular ballot papers, ballot papers without signatures of presiding officers (the presiding officer is required to put his signature on the reverse of a ballot paper before it is issued to a voter), ballot boxes without proper seals, ballot boxes with wrong kind of seals, ballot papers with wrong kind of stamping marks, several ballot papers found folded together in bunches (clear evidence that these ballot papers were not put into the ballot box one by one voters, but stamped in a bunch and put in as a bunch ; in some cases the number of such bunch ballot papers was 30 or 40 in a bunch), ballot papers carrying obviously forged signatures or signatures of persons other than the presiding officer or the duly authorized polling officer, ballot papers in excess of the total number of votes recorded as polled in a polling station, stamped ballot papers from other constituencies, ballot-papers found lying on the streets near the counting stations—all objections were brushed aside by the Returning Officers in every case. Armed groups of Congress(R)-CPI rowdies freely entered and moved about inside the counting stations in menacing manner, handling ballot papers, looting ballot papers, substituting ballot papers, although none but the candidates, their election agents and duly authorized counting agents are entitled to enter the counting stations, and the number of such persons is fixed in every case. In more than one instance, although the counting of votes showed the Leftist candidate victorious, the Returning Officer declared the Congress(R) candidate elected. The results obtained by this kind of counting also confirmed the suspicions that ballot-boxes and ballot

papers had been tampered with, and large-scale substitutions had also taken place.

19. On the 13th March evening the CPI(M) decided that no useful purpose would be served any longer by sending counting agents to counting stations; these had all been practically transformed into vote-manufacturing workshops of the Congress(R)-CPI combination. Similar decisions were taken by the constituents of the Left Front; in some cases, however, a few counting agents were sent merely to observe what was happening. An instance of what was happening could be seen in the counting of vote of the Kamarhaty constituency, where in 1971, the CPI(M) candidate was elected with a 29,000 majority. While this so-called counting going on, some persons were given the job of putting an additional stamp-mark on ballot papers carrying votes for the Leftist candidate; 16,000 leftist votes were thus rendered invalid, and rejected and the Congress(R) candidate was declared elected by a margin of about 6,000 votes. Of the many "records" achieved by the Congress(R) in this election in West Bengal this certainly is one of the most remarkable; there is no known instance of nearly 25% of votes polled being rejected in any constituency.

20. Employing these methods in accordance with the "Combined-Operations" plan prepared at the top levels in New Delhi and Calcutta, and virtually destroying all confidence of the people of West Bengal in the fairness of any election in future, the Congress(R) has secured 216 seats out of 280 in West Bengal, and its CPI-adjunct has secured 35 seats too. Various attempts are being made by the mouthpieces of the Congress(R)-CPI combination to explain this result. They stand condemned by the fact that they feel compelled to offer explanations, by the shamefaced uncomfortable manner of their explanations, by their studied evasion of certain important questions and finally, by their maladroit jugglery with facts and figures even when pretending to explain this "phenomenon".

21. The most ready-at-hand of these explanations is the famous "Indira-Wave". According to this theory, there was a

great “swing” of the electorate in favour of the Congress(R) in West Bengal as a result of a tremendous magical attraction exerted by the Prime Minister’s personality and programme. Of course it is not explained why in 1971 elections, when the Leftists were divided, the Congress could not emerge victorious and in fact the CPI(M) became the first party. Let us examine the facts, however.

(a) A “swing” in election terminology means a movement of voters from one side to another. The gains made by one side are accounted for by the losses suffered by another. It is the obligation of the advocates of this “Swing-due-to-Indira-Wave” theory to prove this movement of the voters from constituency-wise figures of voting. They cannot do this even with the figures obtained through so much rigging. Even these rigged figures show that the Left vote decreased, in fantastic quantities, only in about 50 constituencies, precisely those constituencies which were “taken over” by open gangsterism; the Leftist leaders had, about six weeks before the polling, listed 34 of them as constituencies where the Left parties were practically ‘banned’, and where elections would not be free and fair; this list had been submitted to the Prime Minister herself on the 31st January. Leaving aside these 50 ‘special’ constituencies, which received ‘special’ attention from the openly active gangsters, the Left vote cannot be shown to have decreased to any appreciable extent; the figures rather show some appreciable increase in Left votes; and also some appreciable decrease in Congress votes in at least 43 constituencies.

(b) The phenomenal decrease in Left votes in the 50 constituencies mentioned above do not prove any “swing”; they only confirm the Leftist charge of rigging by gangsterism. Here we cite only three instances to illustrate the point. In Kalna the Leftist vote is recorded as having decreased from 31,890 in 1971 to 929 only in this election a year later; in Nadanghat the decrease is from 34,288 to 2,621; and in Manteswar the Left vote fell from 29,750 to 5,159. This by itself constitutes a damning evidence of the large-scale rigging and gangster operations that have already been described.

(c) The “swing”-theory also cannot explain why the Left won the election in Garden Reach constituency, a Congress-CPI stronghold, while losing in Kabitirtha, a Leftist stronghold. These two are adjacent constituencies, and the composition of the electorate is very similar in two areas. The only plausible explanation is that in Garden Reach the Congress(R)-CPI combine, which had secured about 13,000 more votes than the CPI(M) in 1971, was cocksure of an easy victory this time, and did not think it necessary to employ any extra-ordinary rigging operation here; whereas for Kabitirtha a large-scale rigging operation was necessary in their view and was employed, because the total Left vote—CPI(M) plus Forward Bloc—in 1971 was about 5000 more than the Congress(R) vote. As a result of the rigging operation in Kabitirtha the Congress(R) vote jumped up to 28,565 from 19,372, while the Left vote increased to 27,685 from 24,991. In Garden Reach, however, the Congress(R)-CPI vote declined from 28,231 to 24,245, whereas the Left vote increased from 15,493 to 25,625. The same pattern of results can be seen in a number of constituencies in the districts of Purulia, Midnapore, and Birbhum. In Purulia District, Hura, Kashipur, Manbazar, Harihar Pur, and Raghunathpur are adjacent constituencies; the first three of these had been won by the Congress in 1971, and the combined votes of Congress(R), CPI and the Ajoy Mukherjee group could be estimated as very much larger than the Left vote; no special rigging was felt to be necessary in these three; in the result, therefore, Congress(R)-CPI-Ajoy Mukherjee vote declined in all three constituencies (in Hura from 19,905 to 15,127; in Kashipur from 20,417 to 14,220; and in Manbazar from 22,014 to 19,920); the Left vote increased in all three (in Hura from 8,994 to 11,560; in Kashipur, from 6,492 to 9,949; and in Manbazar, from 15,000 to 18,487). In the other three close-by constituencies where the Left was very likely to win, the Indira magic inevitably worked and Left votes were reduced by thousands and Congress votes increased by thousands. Similar figures are seen in Midnapur, where the Congress(R)-CPI-Ajoy Mukherjee votes declined substantially, while the Left vote

increased appreciably in at least 15 constituencies; these were "sure seats" for the Congress(R) and its allies, and no special rigging operations were employed. In Birbhum District, Mayureswar and Labpur are adjacent constituencies; they show the Garden Reach-Kabirirtha pattern of voting trend; in Mayureswar, the Congress(R)-CPI alliance had obtained a majority of nearly 13,000 over the CPI(M) in 1971, and therefore were "sure" of a comfortable margin in 1972, and employed no large-scale rigging; their votes declined from 21,699 to 15,089, and the Left vote increased from 8,723 to 13,936. But in Labpur, which the CPI(M) had won in 1971 by a majority of over three thousand votes, large-scale rigging operations were, of course, carried out; as a result, while the Left vote was reduced from 15,536 to 14,976, the main effort produced an increase in Congress(R) votes from 12,267 to 15,304. It must be a curious "swing" indeed which operated against the Leftists only in Leftist strongholds, and reduced Congress(R)-CPI votes in at least some of their own strongholds. The Indira-Wave must also be considered a very wild lawless wave, of which even the most sophisticated wave-mechanics of modern physics is unaware.

(d) There is no explanation of the Left victory in Hariharpara according to the "Swing-due-to-Indira-Wave" theory. The Prime Minister herself addressed an election meeting here a few days before the polling. There was the full paraphernalia of aeroplanes, helicopters, Army and police mobilization, and all the rest of the ceremony that accompanied her throughout her election campaign at the expense of the Government. Curiously, Hariharpara remained unaffected by the magic wave emanating from the Prime Minister. The back-room boys of the Congress(R) could not foresee this egregious failure of the Wave, and Hariharpara escaped the rigging-net. There is also no explanation why when in 1972 the Congress(R) percentage of votes had decreased in most of the strong Congress States in India compared to 1971, only in West Bengal the Congress registered such a phenomenal increase. In Andhra it has declined from 55 to 52%; in Maharashtra it has fallen from 63.8% to 56.62% ;

In Haryana from 53 to 46.9%, in Mysore from 71% to 53%, in Delhi from 64% to 48% as against this in West Bengal the Congress votes have risen from about 27.3 to 49.4%. No 'wave' theory will convince anyone.

22. Unable to establish the "swing"-theory, some of the apologists of the Congress(R) shift to another plank on occasions; at least one radio commentator offered this alternative theory. According to this alternative theory, although the Leftists retained their votes by and large or even increased their votes in quite a number of constituencies, and therefore one cannot speak of a 'swing', yet the Congress(R) was able to mobilize a very large number of 'new' voters, voters who generally remain inert and had never exercised their franchise on any previous occasions; these voters, according to this theory, voted en bloc in favour of the Congress(R) this one time in their life. This theory, these apologists feel, is required also to explain the incredibly heavy polling in polling stations occupied by the Congress(R)-CPI combine; such stations, almost invariably, show 90% and even 98% polling, while the general average varies from 50% to 60% at the most; the picture becomes truly fantastic when one looks at the voting figures for Baranagar and Dum Dum, for example; in Baranagar, as a result of the occupation of 100 polling stations by the Congress(R)-CPI gangs, the total number of ballot papers used as votes rose to 86% of the total electorate; in Dum Dum the corresponding figure was 79.7%.

(a) This theory also finds no support from evidence. Had this been true, such 'activization of inert voters' or mobilization of new voters should have been most perceptible in areas where the Congress(R)-CPI combine could exert the maximum influence. Midnapore District is obviously such an area, being a traditional stronghold of Congress(R)-CPI-Ajoy Mukherjee combination. As has already been stated, in at least 15 constituencies in this District the Congress(R)-CPI combine suffered a decline in the number of votes, and the Left votes increased. But, what is more, the total vote polled also decreased. There was neither a "swing" nor any sudden urge on the part

of the 'inert voters' or 'new voters' to cast their votes. (b) The inventors of this theory have to explain why this sudden 'activization of inert voters or new voters' took place only in those constituencies which were Leftist strongholds but were occupied by the Congress(R) with police support: and, moreover, they have to explain, why in even these constituencies there was no general pattern of 'activization', but only the polling stations under occupation on the polling day showed the fantastic polling of 90% and more of the electorate. The ghostly inert voters, who presumably appeared from nowhere as a result of the Indira-Wave, must have been gifted with supernatural powers too, for in most of these polling stations the greater bulk of the "votes" were cast in two or three hours' time. One must remember that this time a novel procedure was introduced by the Election Commissioner, according to which every voter was required to put his signature or thumb-impression on a counterfoil attached to the ballot paper, and this increased the time needed for casting a vote; on an average it took about one minute to cast a genuine vote, and not very much more than 600 votes could be cast in one polling station within the ten hours fixed as polling hours. The results, however, show that 900 and more, and in some cases even more than 1000 "votes" had been cast in most of these "special" polling stations in a few hours whereas in the very same constituencies other polling-stations showed 45% to 60% polling, the votes cast numbering around 600 or much less.

23. Sri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, the present Chief Minister of West Bengal, apparently felt that his apologists were failing to convince anybody, and so, in a press conference held in New Delhi on the 28th March, produced his own "explanation". As reported in *The Statesman of Calcutta* in the front page on the 29th March, Sri Ray "told a press conference that the CPI(M) allegation that the election had been rigged was totally unfounded, 'even on the basis of pure arithmetic' (quotation-marks in *The Statesman*), because the party had secured nearly 29% of the votes this time, as against nearly 32% in the 1971 elections. It had received only 3% less votes. If elections were

rigged this would not have been possible. On the other hand, his party had gained 3% votes.”

(a) This performance of Sri Ray must be counted as another world record, a record in downright falsehood. It is an attempt to buttress up the crumbling “swing” theory by falsification of figures. The official records show that the CPI(M) vote fell from 31.98% in 1971 to 27.46% in 1972, and to that extent Sri Ray is approximately correct; but the Congress(R) vote did not increase by approximately 3% only as Sri Ray wanted his listeners in New Delhi to believe. The Congress(R) vote rose from 28.20% in 1971 to 49.08% in 1972, an increase of 20.88% according to Sri Ray’s method of computation, and an actual increase of 75 per cent of the previous vote. Sri Ray’s claim that the Congress merely gained what the CPI(M) lost is based on very impure arithmetic, and can be paralleled only by the rural usurer’s arithmetic used to cheat illiterate poor peasants.

(b) Sri Ray appears to claim that rigging could be suspected only in the CPI(M) vote had been reduced to zero. In so far as the objective of any rigging is merely to ensure the ‘victory’ of the ruling party’s candidates in a majority of constituencies, no rigging-expert would ever go to the extent of making the opposition vote disappear altogether. As it is, the Congress(R) “experts” overshot their mark, and by over-fulfilling their target, have thoroughly exposed themselves in the eyes of the people. Even according to Sri Ray’s mode of ‘reasoning’, he has to explain how the CPI(M) vote was reduced to 2% at Kalna, to less than 5% at Nadanghat, to less than 10% at Manteswar, to less than 12% at Dum Dum constituencies which the CPI(M) won by very large majorities in 1971. Would he agree that there is some basis for the Leftist charge of rigging in these constituencies, for example, and therefore, the allegation is not ‘totally unfounded’ ?

(c) But this is not the whole of this remarkable performance in “pure arithmetic”. Sri Ray is reported to have said further, “The reason that made a big difference in the number of the seats won was that there was little opposition this time from the Congress(O), Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc, Muslim League,

the PSP, the SSP, Gorkha League and the Lok Sevak Sangha. 'We got all their seats and if you add their seats up with ours, you will see why we got the number that we have got.....' (—The Statesman, Calcutta, 29th March; the quotation-mark within the report is in the newspaper).

The number of seats won by the parties named by Sri Ray in 1971 elections are : Congress(O)—2 ; Bangla Congress—5 ; Forward Bloc—3 ; Muslim League—7 ; PSP—3 ; SSP—1 ; Gorkha League—2 ; and the Lok Sevak Sangha—nil. The total number of seats won by these parties in 1971 was therefore 23 and no more. Let us neglect the facts that tell against Sri Ray's premise; for example, that fact that the Forward Bloc was with the Left Front this time, and only a few defectors from the Forward Bloc went over to the Congress(R) ; or, the fact that while Ajoy Mukherjee and some of his followers went over to the Congress(R), the Bangla Congress led by Sri Sushil Dhara was opposed to the Congress(R) and have made serious allegations of rigging against the Congress(R). Let us neglect these facts, and merely add up these 23 seats to the 105 seats won by the Congress(R) in 1971, as the press was instructed to "add up" by Sri Ray in that refresher course in new arithmetic which was called to 'press-conference'. According to the old arithmetic the total would be 128. But according to Sri Ray that would be wrong ; we should see not 128 but 216 if we knew this new "Congress arithmetic" invented by Sri Ray.

24. Such being the performance of the chosen leader of the Congress(R) in West Bengal, we need not examine any other 'theory' or any permutation and combination of fragments of such 'theories' which try to explain the results. Nothing but rigging, at every stage and according to the plan of combined operations described by us can explain this ugly clownish grimace stamped on the face of democracy in West Bengal, the so-called results of a so-called election.

25. The Congress(R) mouthpieces, confronted with their over-fulfilled plan and the unmistakable public contempt aroused by it, are seeking to evade the major question by pointing to the Election Commission and the law courts. They assert that the

Leftists may seek redress through the Election Commission or the law courts. We have already described how the Election Commissioner responded to our complaints before the polling and in the day of the polling. He certainly did not do what he had powers to do. To go to him now, after he has given his sanction to all the misdeeds of the Congress(R), would be no more than a meaningless formality. Moreover, the Congress(R) mouthpieces cannot be unaware that the Election Commissioner has already pleaded that he has no powers of investigation and inquiry. The gratuitous advice regarding law courts is equally hypocritical. These mouthpieces of the Congress(R) must be aware that there can be no Election Petition covering 280 seats; the laws relating to elections do not provide for any remedy in a case like the one that we have described; these laws envisaged what may now be called very ordinary irregular and corrupt practices, and not the rigging of a total election, an operation in which administrative officers and officers with judicial and quasi-judicial powers would be involved as active agents of the ruling party. The nature of the case demands the setting up of a completely impartial tribunal which should have no connection with the Government or with the ruling party, and which should have full powers for a thorough and searching inquiry. Even such a tribunal can only ascertain the truth; it cannot give any remedy to the people of West Bengal, for existing laws preclude such remedies.

26. The Congress(R) party has thus secured a 'victory' in West Bengal. But in the process of winning this 'victory' it has destroyed the parliamentary democratic system in West Bengal. According to the Constitution of India, sovereignty belongs to people, and this sovereignty is to be exercised through the elected representatives of the people. By obstructing the people in their choice of representatives, the Congress(R) party have subverted the basic provision of the Constitution itself, and have subverted the sovereignty of the people. They have destroyed the people's confidence in the electoral procedure of parliamentary democracy, and they have destroyed all enthusiasm and interest of the people for any future election.

The Congress(R) party and its allies must bear full responsibility for all the consequences that are bound to follow.

27. What is happening in West Bengal today ? Is there any enthusiasm among the people who are supposed to have voted for the Congress(R) in such large numbers? Is there any respect and affection for the Government that has been set up ? Are the people feeling reassured and confident? Answers to all such questions, from any impartial observer, will be in the negative. The Congress(R) party, had it really won such a massive victory, should have been able to treat the opposition with indifference and neglect. But it knows how hollow its 'victory' is in reality. That is why, not content with virtual elimination of the opposition inside the legislature through rigging and terror, it is still carrying on and intensifying its operations to liquidate and eliminate the opposition even outside the legislature by sheer physical force. In addition to the thousands who had been driven out of their homes and residences and places of work up to the day of polling, a new stream of refugees is being swelled every day; Leftist workers and supporters are being beaten up, threatened, and murdered as before, and new areas are being 'taken over' by the Congress(R) gangs. Since the election till 28th March about 30 of our people have been murdered but none of the culprits have been arrested. Scores of offices of Leftist parties, mass-organizations, and trade unions are being forcibly seized and occupied. In almost every factory workers are being ordered to throw away the red flag, join Congress(R) unions, or simply hand over their trade unions to the Congress(R), or face dire consequences, including dismissal from employment. Employers are being peremptorily ordered to dismiss Leftist-minded workers and take in nominees of the Congress(R) in their places. Already several hundreds of workers have lost their employment in this process. College unions of Leftist students organizations are being taken over by force. A similar method is being applied to those municipal bodies in which the Leftists command a majority; the municipal commissioners including the chairmen are being physically prevented from attending their work; various other obstacles

and difficulties are being created, the unmistakable objective being to find pretexts for supersession of these bodies. Terror, intimidation, murder, and repression are weapons that the Congress(R) have not put aside even after the election. Their cry is the fascist slogan—"One country, one party, one leader"; their declared objective is to "make another Indonesia in India".

28. The people of West Bengal, however, show no signs of yielding to this fascist onslaught. People flock to the Leftist rallies in thousands and thousands, and there are signs of a growing determination to carry on the struggle for restoration of democratic conditions on higher levels and with greater strength than ever before. They appeal to the people of the rest of India to take note of this menace of fascism and build up a united struggle all over India against it. If Parliamentary democracy is not restored in West Bengal, is it safe anywhere in India?

Jyoti Basu [CPI (M)],
Asoke Ghosh (F.B)
Makhan Pal (RSPI)
Nihar Mukherjee (SUCI)
Sudhin Kumar (RCPI)
Jyoti Bhattacharjee (WPI)
Ram Chatterjee (MFB)
Nirmalendu Mukherjee (BBC)

Appendix (xi)

West Bengal : Left Front Leaders call for United Mass Action

Statement issued in Calcutta on April 27, 1972

Jyoti Basu (CPI-M), Nikhil Das (RSP), Nihar Mukherjee (SUC), Jyoti Bhattacharya (Workers' Party), Sudhin Kumar (RCPI), Ram Chatterjee (Marxist Forward Bloc), Bishnu Maity (Biplabi Bangla Congress) and Ashok Ghosh (Forward Bloc), in a statement issued on Calcutta on April 27, 1972, have called for developing a united mass movement in the face of the present enormous hardships and obstacles.

The statement reads : More than a month has passed since a Congress(R) party Government was installed in West Bengal through an election rigged on an unprecedented scale by means of brutal force and conspiracy at the topmost levels of the administration.

Attacks on people by criminal gangs enjoying active support from the police, which had formed a large part of the election operations of the ruling party, still continue.

Thousands of people, forcibly evicted from their residences and prevented from going to their places of employment, are still unable to return to their respective localities ; many people, including factory workers and school teachers, have been displaced from employment also by violence and intimidation.

Many trade union offices, and local party offices of Leftists are under forcible occupation of Congress (R)-CPI gangs. The Congress hoodlums totally oblivious of workers' interests are adversely affecting work in factories by their terror tactics.

Forcible eviction of poor peasants from their land, recapture of land distributed to poor peasants by the U.F. Government, and physical attacks on the kisan movement, are being intensified.

Such attacks are continuing, and reports of fresh attacks and threats are reaching us almost everyday. The ruling party's hypocritical protestations of innocence, clumsy attempts to disown criminal gangs, and hollow declarations of a desire to respect the Opposition delude nobody.

Anti-Democratic Legislations

In this one month and more, the people of West Bengal have already had further evidence of the anti-people and anti-democratic character of the Government. The two laws recently enacted by the Legislative Assembly are both directed against the people. The so-called Public Order Act provides for detention of citizens without trial and various other powers for curtailing and curbing of democratic rights and liberties. This is in addition to MISA and other existing repressive laws. The other law provides for suspension of labour laws in mills that the Government may take over.

The Government's activity so far has been seen only in the case of hawkers in Calcutta, who have been removed without any thought of alternative means of livelihood for them. Unemployment is increasing everyday. The Government's concern seems to be to fill up the few posts that are available with their own partymen violating all existing laws and rules for employment under the Government. In carrying out this objective also intra-party clashes have taken place.

Prices are rising—sugar has already gone beyond the reach of the common people, and the price of rice in the the rural areas has also risen alarmingly. Added to all this is the acute water scarcity in Purulia and Bankura, as well as in the Greater Calcutta area.

The Congress (R) party and its CPI followers claimed during the last election that the Centre has always been fair to West Bengal. It is now very curious to read in the newspapers that the State Government is worried about Central schemes regarding the Farakka Barrage, and also about inadequate allotment of railway wagons to West Bengal. The people have a right to

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know the real position in respect of these and other matters of vital importance to the economy of this State. A State Government pledged to be a mere agent of the Centre cannot be expected to take the people into confidence.

Only a united mass movement organised throughout the State and helped by support and sympathy of the people of other States can now find ways for establishing democratic norms and improvement of the conditions in West Bengal. We call upon our people to develop such a movement even in the face of the present enormous obstacles and hardships.

Real Face of West Bengal's New Land Reforms Act

Harekrishna Konar

The West Bengal Legislative Assembly, formed recently through rigged elections, has passed on April 29, 1972, a Land Reforms Amendment Act. The main provisions of this Act are: a ceiling of 12.36 to 17.22 acres of irrigated land and up to 24.22 acres of non-irrigated land for a family of five or more; partial restriction on certain exemptions and 75 per cent share for share-croppers.

Congress Ministers, Congress and allied MLAs and the bourgeois Press have all joined together to make out as if the Act is a *new and effective* Act, and is a big step in the direction of real land reforms. Some Congress spokesmen have even gone to the extent of calling it an "epoch-making" Act.

Neither New, Nor Effective

But in reality it is neither *new* nor *effective*. All the provisions regarding ceiling and share of share-croppers were enacted one year ago as two Ordinances (later President's Acts)—one before the 1971 elections and the other just after the fall of the Congress-League Ministry. Both these Acts were in operation for the last one year and more. Now the provisions of the two Acts have been incorporated almost in toto into the present Act and have been passed by the Legislature, as a compulsory legislative procedure.

Will this Act really bring any change for the better? Will landless peasants really get land? Will the share-croppers fare

better? The experience of the last one year shows that to expect any such thing is nothing but a fond hope. The provisions of this Act were in operation for the last one year, but still the peasants, instead of getting any new benefits, have received ferocious attacks on their existing rights and gains. The peasants have not got a single acre of additional land; the jotdars (landlords) have not lost a single acre; rather the peasants have been forcibly driven away by the joint operations of the police and armed gangsters, from a not very insignificant part of the land vested in the Government and benami lands held by jotdars that the peasants had recovered and distributed during the period of the U. F. Ministry.

The peasants could not be deprived of the major part of such land, not because of the new Acts, but because of the organised strength of the peasant movement. The peasants had to face inhuman brutalities and are still facing fiercer attacks in order to defend the gains.

Share of the Share-Croppers

In the original Land Reforms Act (passed in 1955), the share of the share-croppers was prescribed as 60 : 40 of the produce. Last year, it was increased to 75 : 25 by a new Ordinance. As a principle this is very just. But what is the reality? Except in a few small pockets of very strong kisan movement, the share-croppers do not get even the 60 : 40 share, they generally get 50 : 50. There has been no change for the better during the last one year, rather the eviction offensive has become fiercer.

In the Act itself there were provisions against forcible evictions since many years. But they are mostly treated as a dead letter to serve the interests of the jotdars. It does not need much intelligence to understand that for the poor tenants to demand the share stipulated by law is to invite more trouble if they are unable to fight back the ferocious eviction offensive of the jotdars who are helped by the Government with repression and terror against the peasants.

From all these facts, the most important thing that has come to the forefront on the question of land reforms is how the

provisions of the law will be implemented. Will it be left to the bureaucrats as before ? Or will the active intervention of the organised peasant movement be encouraged as was done during the period of the United Front Ministry ? It is primarily because the U. F. Ministry encouraged the peasant movement and in turn welcomed its active intervention that evictions could be totally stopped for the first time, surplus land could be distributed and benami land of jotdars could be recovered and occupied by the landless and land-poor peasants. During the whole period of Congress rule just the opposite had happened. Has there been any change in the attitude of the Congress Government in this vital respect ? No, not in the least.

Bureaucratic Implementation

The leader of the revisionist supporters of the ruling Congress, Sri Biswanath Mukherjee, seems to have not yet been able to completely forget his own past as well as the role of the peasant movement. He said on the floor of the Assembly that whatever may be the mistakes of the CPI(M) (this is the minimum that the Right Communists are bound to do to serve their new masters), the peasants really got much land during the U. F. period because of the strong mass movement, and the cause of land reforms advanced greatly. He had to, though indirectly, give credit to the CPI(M) for this.

But the Congress Minister, Janab Abdus Sattar, retorted then and there and in unambiguous terms that no such peasant movement would be tolerated under Congress rule. Whatever is to be done to implement the land legislation would be done by the Government from the top in the "legal" way. In clear language the new law will be "implemented" in the same way as the earlier law was implemented during the last one year, i.e., by brutally suppressing the peasants in the name of "law and order" to serve the landlords.

Abdus Sattar went a step further to ridicule the claim of the kisan movement about recovery of benami land. (Biswanath Mukherjee, of course, could not deny the claim.) Sattar said there was no such report in Government files. He did not forget

to refer to me by name and jokingly said that Sri Konar might have found the reports in the CPI(M) office files.

Regularise the Occupation

Sattar Sahib got visibly annoyed at the indirect justification of the CPI(M) in the speech of Biswanath Mukherjee. But he was being irrelevant in trying to hide the truth. As a Minister and a lawyer he is supposed to know that benami land means those surplus lands that the landlords have managed to keep under their *mala fide* possession by evading the provisions of the law, by partitions, transfers, etc.

Though in reality these lands were illegally held lands, the landlords held them quite "legally" on the strength of fake documents thanks to Congress rule. So long as the Government does not recover these lands through the legal process, their actual recovery by peasants cannot find a place in Government files. It is foolishness to expect any such report of recovery of benami land in Government files.

Janab Sattar has either exhibited much foolishness or has pleaded ignorance even after knowing it that during the U.F. period, the peasants distributed not only 250,000 acres of surplus land vested in the Government but also recovered about 400,000 acres of such benami land. The actual reports of such recovery can be found only from different peasant organisations who organised the mass struggles.

It is the duty of the Government to regularise the peasants' occupation of benami land by initiating legal procedures against the jotdars. The U. F. Government took measures in this direction. It is just for this reason that the Congress rulers and their agents became desperate and broke up the U. F. Government and since then they are trying their best for the last two years to restore the land to the landlords with the help of the police, CRP and armed gangsters on the plea of restoring the "rule of law".

While talking loud about new land reform laws, the Congress Government in practice is doing everything to sabotage land

reforms and will go on doing so in future also. The Congress Minister has made it quite clear in reply to Biswanath Mukherjee's meek appeals.

After being thus snubbed by the Congress Minister, the Right Communist leader has fallen in line and has tried to please his masters by issuing a press statement that he never meant to give any credit to the CPI(M). This has further exposed the Right Communists as servile agents of the ruling Congress.

Provisions on Ceiling

Now let us examine the main provisions of the new Act—the same provisions that were promulgated as Ordinances last year. The provisions regarding ceiling are as follows : 6.18 acres for a one-member family ; 12.36 acres of such land for a family of two to five and up to 17.22 acres of irrigated land and 140 equivalent of non-irrigated land, i.e., 24.22 acres for a bigger family. Irrigated land has been defined as land irrigated from Government sources.

The original Act passed in 1955 provided that a ryot was entitled to possess 25 acres of agricultural land. There was no difference between irrigated and non-irrigated land. Nor was the ceiling on family basis and as such the landlords had the opportunity of keeping more land by fake partitions among family members. From the formal legal point of view, the present provisions are no doubt better, but they are unlikely to improve the situation, because much water has flown down the Ganga since 1955.

The landlords for so many years have managed their lands in such a way by partitions, transfers, formation of religions or "charitable" trusts and have fortified their possession by such legal documents that a mere lowering of ceiling will not help much. Moreover, so many loopholes are still kept in the present Act and its method of implementation is such that the landlords will be able to take full advantage to evade even the new ceiling.

Serious Loopholes

The distinction between land irrigated from Government sources and private sources, about which a serious controversy is going on, has been kept. But in West Bengal this may not make much difference as private irrigation is still negligible. But there are other serious loopholes which will be taken full advantage of by landlords in West Bengal.

First, the law provides that transfers before August 1969 will not be taken into consideration in determining the ceiling. But most of the partitions and transfers were done before that. There is no provision for even enquiring into such transfers and declaring those transfers that will be proved to be *mala fide* as void.

Second, the family has been defined in such a way that adult sons will be considered as separate families. The U.F. Government defined a family that included adult sons also. The Congress Government has changed it. There are few landlords (jotdars) who have not two or three adult sons. Hence, according to the new Act, the same landlord family shall be legally entitled to retain 52 to 70 acres of irrigated land by posing as different families, whereas according to the U. F. Government's draft, it could in no way retain more than twenty acres of such land.

Exemptions Remain

Third, though the exemption regarding orchards has been restricted, it has been provided that a family can retain six acres of such land above the ceiling. Exemptions regarding religious or charitable lands have been retained. Only this much have been provided that the Government may fix a limit in individual cases. Exemptions regarding "fisheries" land against which there were powerful mass movements have not been touched at all. Similarly, every landlord will be able to retain up to twenty acres of land as non-agricultural land.

Fourth, the Government is making too much about a provision that the jurisdiction of civil courts has been barred. But it touches only a small fraction of the land held up by court

injunctions. The right of the landlords to go to High Courts is not touched at all and it is precisely this right that is misused by the landlords to frustrate land reforms. Even according to Government admission, more than 175,000 acres of surplus agricultural land is held up by such injunctions and the landlords are keeping these lands under their possession for years together. There is no doubt that the jotedars will utilise all these shortcomings and loopholes to successfully defend their land monopoly.

Another important provision of the Act is the 75 : 25 share for sharecroppers. As already stated, it is not new and it has been bodily lifted from the year-old Ordinance whose operation has not brought any change.

Sole Aim of Congress Govt.

The most important defect and anti-people aspect of the Government policy is the manner and method of implementation. The history of the last twenty years—the utter failure of land reform during Congress rule and significant advances during the period of the U.F. Ministry—has conclusively proved that no land reform measure can be implemented in the interest of the peasantry unless the active intervention of the organised and powerful peasant movement is assured in the matter of implementation and if it is left to the Government administrative machinery alone.

But the Congress Government had made it quite clear, both by words and deeds, that it will not countenance any such movement. Instead of welcoming any peasant movement, the Government has unleashed a ferocious semi-fascist attack on the peasants and is intensifying it day by day. Unless this policy is reversed, the new Act will not advance the cause of real land reforms.

The struggle of millions of peasants and agricultural labourers for land reforms during the U. F. period and their heroic resistance to defend their gains in the subsequent period have compelled the present upstart Government to pass this new legislation. The aim of the Congress Government is not to effect

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land reforms in the interests of the peasantry. Had it been so it would have stopped the semi-fascist terror and would have welcomed the help of the organised peasant movement.

The sole aim of the Congress Government is to create illusions among the peasants, deceive the people and to create disruption by evicting the fighting peasants from the land under their possession and giving the same land to some of their supporters. This is a policy corresponding to their semi-fascist methods of terror. But the fact that the Congress Government has been compelled to pass such a legislation proves the strength and a justification of the peasant movement.

In order to remove the defects and loopholes of the Act and implement its provisions in the interests of the peasantry, what is absolutely needed today is a still more united and powerful peasant movement. Such a united movement will have to be built up in face of the semi-fascist terror

Campaign in Tamil Nadu for Repatriation of West Bengal Detenus from Cuddalore Jail

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), along with the CITU and other mass organisations, in Tamil Nadu has launched a campaign for the transfer back to West Bengal of the detenus from that State who had been shifted to Cuddalore Jail a few months ago.

A number of telegrams have already been sent to the Tamil Nadu Government demanding the repatriation of the detenus back to their State as they are undergoing great difficulties because of language, food they are not accustomed to, etc

The South Arcot District Committees of the CPI(M) and CITU are planning a mammoth centralised demonstration from the whole district in Cuddalore town on May 14 to press the same demand. A similar demonstration to the State Government Secretariat is scheduled in Madras City on May 12.

Meanwhile, Comrade P. Ramamurti, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) and General Secretary of the CITU, has already met Chief Minister Karunanidhi and made the same demand.

Comrade Ramamurti has also met some of the detenus in the Cuddalore Jail. Fifteen of the CPI(M) detenus are placed in the "A" Division (the lowest) and 61 in "B" Division (the next higher).

Food is of the same standard for both the divisions.

The West Bengal detenus rules are applied to them and these rules do not provide for even personal purchase of books and periodicals as also newspapers by the detenus. Jail authorities in

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Cuddalore are giving *The Indian Express* to the detenus and Comrade Ramamurti has taken up the question of supply of newspapers to them with the Chief Minister. But the campaign for the change in the rules has to be conducted in West Bengal to force the riggers' Government to give political treatment to the detenus.

Another difficulty which the detenus have is that they are supplied with gingelly (til) oil while they have been accustomed to mustard oil. Comrade Ramamurti has brought this also to the notice of the Chief Minister.

Yet another problem is that no fish at all is supplied to the detenus due to scarcity of fish in Cuddalore. Comrade Ramamurti contacted the Director of Fisheries, Madras, immediately and fish has already been sanctioned on two days in the week from nearby Pondicherry. The number of days, it is hoped, will be increased soon.

Appendix (xiv)

Unveiled Terror

B. T. Ranadive

The developments in connection with the Sree Saraswaty Press Limited, 32, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Road, Calcutta, follow a pattern which is set by the ruling Congress party in other areas of West Bengal also. Gangster attacks on union leaders, police indifference, collusion and encouragement of the rowdies, unscrupulousness of the management to exploit all these to victimise the trade union leaders are now to be seen everywhere under the benign rule of Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray after the grand “democratic” victory of the Congress(R) against the people and working class of West Bengal.

What however distinguishes them is the utter crudity associated with them after the Press earned an unexpected all-India prominence in connection with the secret Goenka order of 8 lakhs posters to boost the Congress election efforts. It will be remembered that the Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd. (it is reported to be controlled by a Congress-man who was a Deputy Finance Minister at the Centre) had the dubious distinction of being mentioned on the floor of Parliament not for any patriotic performance nor for any outstanding printing performance of beauty, grace and all that, but for a mundane order for election posters valued at a few lakhs.

This was a Foreword written by Comrade B. T. Ranadive as President of C. I. T. U. to a booklet entitled “UNVEILED TERROR” which was a ‘Documentary presentation of the attacks on the employees of Sree Saraswaty Press Limited, Calcutta’ in 1972 when semi-fascistic terror was unleashed in this state after Assembly election was rigged to defeat CPI(M) and other Parties of the Left Front. The Foreword was dated August 4, 1972. The erstwhile Sree Saraswaty Press Limited is now a State Government Undertaking and its new name is SARASWATY PRESS LIMITED.

The Congress(R) leaders in Parliament including Shrimati Indira Gandhi could not give a satisfactory explanation of this order for a poster with Mrs. Gandhi's picture. They resorted to subterfuges, untruths and lies and attempted to conceal the fact that the order was placed by Shri Goenka, an industrial tycoon—C/o. Duncan Brothers ; with their public slogan of “Garibi Hatao” and socialism they were naturally shy of admitting this delicate tie between them and the millionaire.

The common man in India of course could be excused if he could not understand this charitable impulse of Goenka as due to other worldly spiritual consideration. Tongues began to wag and people traced this deal to very material interests involved, others attempting to evaluate the price in rupees or considerations.

In short, the deal which was exposed through photostat of these press orders published in a daily newspaper “Satyajug’ of West Bengal, became a first-rate political scandal. Its shadiness was surpassed only by the Rs. 6 million scandal connected with the Nagarwalla affair.

This same Congress Government had banned donations by Companies to political parties by an amendment to the Companies Act, 1956. It was considered that such contributions “tended to corrupt political life and to adversely affect the healthy growth of democracy in the country”. Before the ink was dry on the amendment, the Congress(R) and the tycoon were caught in a deal which can only be described as corrupting political life. Only the donation was secret and through posters.

Embarrassed and angry at being caught and publicly exposed, both the virtue pretending Congress(R) and the hardened businessman seem to have chided the management of the Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd. for this “inexcusable” leakage. The latter, facing loss of future business, and similar confidential deal on the one hand and loss of official patronage on the other, seem to be determined to tender its bonafides by wreaking vengeance on trade union leaders and helping the Congress to get rid of the recognised trade union affiliated to the CITU. The determination was all the stronger perhaps because a Congressman and an Ex-Deputy Finance Minister is reported to be controlling the press.

In serving its victimisation order on one of the typists, the authorities leave nothing unsaid and openly admit while falsely accusing the employee of leakage, that it has betrayed the confidence of a valuable customer. In the charge-sheet issued to Shri Bata Krishna Dhar, the management of Sree Saraswaty Press Limited writes, "As a result of publication of the photostat copy of the above letter in 'Satyajug', the secrecy of the order placed in this press by a reputable party was divulged and the reputation of the Company has been seriously undermined. As it is apparent that such publication in the above paper was possible as a result of your taking the initiative, you are hereby charged with committing an act which constitutes a major misdemeanour, etc."

While the employee has denied the charge, the management has exposed itself. Does the management realise that it is victimising the worker for exposing what may amount to a crime under the Companies Act?—for violating security for committing an illegal act—violation of the provision of the Companies Act?

The management talks about the secrecy of the order. Why should it be so secret and why should there be embarrassment for the party placing the order? Does Goenka or the Press management think that the printing of Congress posters or financing them is something to be ashamed of? The management says: "The Company's reputation has been undermined." Why should it be undermined for printing Congress posters, if it was a fair business deal? But the management, the millionaire and the Congress (R) realise that the deal was not above board, that perhaps it violated the Companies Act.

In reality, whosoever has been responsible for exposing this shady deal should be lauded as a fighter against attempts to corrupt political life. But the management being involved in this deal, at least as the printer and publisher, is unable to appreciate this. It is only afraid that it may not get such secret clandestine full-of-profit orders in future and to safeguard them, it is victimising the union leaders and by its attitude encouraging the Congress(R) rowdies to attack them.

The physical attacks on the leaders of the union which is affiliated to the CITU started before the exposure of the poster deal. They were part of the gangsterism started by the Congress(R) in industrial areas.

Shri Gopal Ghosh Dastider, General Secretary of the Union and a technician of Press was attacked on 17th March 1972. Shri Kalipada Das, President of the Union and a proof reader of the Press was assaulted on 2nd May 1972 and seriously injured. Both the General Secretary and President of the Union were threatened with murder by the rowdies of Congress(R) and prevented from reporting to their duties. Shri Sanat Sarkar, Vice-President of the union and two other workers are also forcibly prevented from resuming their work.

The rowdies who attacked and assaulted the President and General Secretary of the Union were given employment by the management of Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd.

The workers were terrorised inside the factory by the rowdies and anti-social elements. The leaders of CITU union were asked by the rowdies to hand over the funds of the union to them failing which the union leaders were threatened with grave consequence including murder. The office of Sree Saraswaty Press Employees' Union at 11 B. T. Road, was looted by the rowdies.

The Officer-in-Charge of Belgharia Police Station, the Supdt. of Police, 24-Parganas, the Inspector General of Police of West Bengal and the Home Secretary of West Bengal were informed of these developments by the union requesting them to ensure that the union leaders and workers were allowed to resume their duties and work with full safety and security. But no action was taken. The union also informed the Chief Minister and the Labour Minister of West Bengal of these developments and made representations to the President, the Prime Minister and Labour Minister of India.

The management of Sree Saraswaty Press. Ltd. disregarding the fact that the rowdies were threatening to murder the union leaders and forcibly preventing them from joining duty,

threatened disciplinary action unless the workers reported for duty within three days.

Shri Bata Krishna Dhar, a typist of Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd was dismissed most arbitrarily on the charge that he divulged the order placed by Shri R. P. Goenka, Managing Director of Duncan Brothers for printing election poster for Congress(R) While the leaders of Congress(R) including the Prime Minister denied this poster deal, the poor employee Shri Bata Krishna Dhar was dismissed and is out of employment.

This is how the management has been working in collusion with the rowdies outside. While the rowdies were threatening the union leaders with assault and murder and preventing them from joining work, the management started issuing notices to them to present themselves in the factory or lose their jobs. Not satisfied with this, it also offers employment to those who assault the workers.

The General Secretary of the Union Shri Gopal Ghosh Dastider, one of the workers served with notice, replied on 9th June to the management, drawing its attention to the gangsterism which prevented him from attending duties. He requested the management to extend his leave up to 30th June and make arrangements for his personal safety so that he could attend to his duties. He says, "I have already explained in detail the circumstances preventing me from reporting to my duties. The rowdies and gangsters of the area surrounding the factory, belonging to Congress (R) assaulted me on 17th March and this incident is known to you. Since then, they are chasing me and threatening to murder me. On the 2nd May 1972 the rowdies assaulted Sri Kalipada Das, President of Sree Saraswaty Press Employees' Union and they also came to murder me but I was fortunately saved. All these developments are known to you. From 3rd May I was not allowed to report to my duties by rowdies and as such, I was compelled to take leave from 3rd May 1972. I am afraid the rowdies and gangsters will murder me when I go to factory to report to my duties.

"You have given a notice in newspaper which appeared in today's 'Jugantar', Calcutta (9.6.1972) asking me to report to

my duties within three days, otherwise disciplinary action will be taken against me which means my services will be terminated on the plea of unauthorised absence.

“In the situation if I am to report to my duties, I will be murdered. You will appreciate my difficulties for taking leave without wage and I believe it is not your intention to drag an employee to a situation where he will be murdered.”

How did the management reply to this request ? The callous and vindictive management not only refused to respond and show any decency, but with indecent haste threatened Shri Ghosh Dastider with disciplinary action if he did not join duty within seven days.

It did not matter to the management that the employee would be endangering his life by presenting himself at the Press or at least would be physically assaulted. Out to victimise him for one reason or another, and restore the confidence of the millionaire customer the arrogant management did not take any step to report to the police the complaints of its employees and demand police protection to them.

It is the normal routine for all managements to call for police help when they find that their workers cannot attend because of riots or other social commotion or the activities of anti-social elements.

It is known to every one how they spend thousands of rupees during strikes to secure the police protection for their officers and strike-breakers even when the workers are peaceful. But now this management wanted to wash off its hands and callously stated : “At any event, it is not possible for the management of the company to guarantee personal safety of any employee. We are not in a position to extend your leave for an indefinite period for your alleged inability (mark the word “alleged”) to resume your duties...”

This reply, it seems, is now the stock-in trade of all hypocritical managements in West Bengal who connive at goonda attacks. The same reply is given by the Jay Engineering Works management and others when requested to arrange for protection against anti-social hirelings and the same threat of victimisation

is held over the workers if they do not present themselves in the factories risking their lives and limbs.

Perhaps nowhere in the world any decent employer absolves himself of all honest attempts to arrange for the security of employees. But in West Bengal, the employer in league with the ruling party have opened a vendatta against trade unions affiliated to the CITU and other democratic T.U. Centres—unions which have loyally fought for the workers and whose leaders have sacrificed so much to build them with their blood and sweat.

Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd.'s management besides non-challantly declared that the worker concerned was exaggerating the facts. This was nothing but giving an alibi to the gangsters. And why not after having given the employment ? The letter says, "We are not aware of any incident of assault or murder of our workmen in the vicinity of factory premises". Did it find out from the police whether complaints were lodged and investigations were made ?

To satisfy this callous management Shri Ghosh Dastider had to go through yet another physical assault. As directed by the company, to present himself on 11th July, he went to the factory but was prevented from joining duty. In his letter to the management, dated 11th July 1972 Shri Ghosh Dastider enclosed a copy of his letter to the O.C., Belgharia Police Station dated the same day, which gave the names of his assailants. The letter says :

"On 11th July 1972 at about 8.30 a.m. when I was going to report for duty at a few distance from the main gate of Sree Saraswaty Press Ltd,'s Belgharia factory, I was stopped by Sri Prolay Roy, Nikhil Chakravorty, Sankar Mukherjee, Kanu Dutta and others, surrounded and beaten and under threat I was forced to leave and come back. I tried to proceed towards the Thana to report the incident and make a diary when I was prevented to do so. I have received some injuries on my body. I am writing this letter and reporting the incident so that you can take necessary action".

It is not known what the management has to say after this evidence. But the fact is that Ghosh Dastider and his comrades have not been allowed to resume work by the goondas, the police is giving no protection and the management is not withdrawing its threat of termination of services.

If the hired goondas took a lead in preventing Shri Ghosh Dastider and others from resuming duty, the management has taken initiative in victimising Shri Bata Krishna Dhar charging him with having leaked the news of the clandestine Goenka order for election posters to the Press

The denial of Shri Bata Krishna Dhar was not accepted by the management. The management has no proof whatsoever that Shri Bata Krishna Dhar had sent the photostat to 'Satyajug', nor can it prove that he was responsible for typing the letter. It can neither be proved that he had access to the letter, and that he was in a position to give access to it to anyone else. But what does it matter? The management's men were prosecutor, and judge combined and Shri Bata Krishna Dhar had to be condemned anyhow to restore the reputation of the company for keeping secret clandestine deals involving Goenkas.

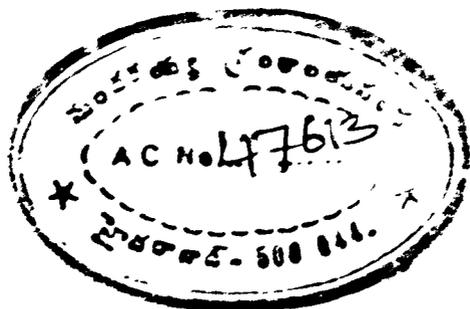
The police officials, as usual remain paralysed refusing to move against the rowdies or grant protection to the workers. The lawbreakers are supported by the guardians of law against the trade union leaders.

This open alliance of law and its breakers is the feature of the Congress rule in West Bengal which has justly earned notoriety for its semi-fascist terror. It is the duty of the entire trade union movement to fight against this collusion between the ruling party, the capitalists and the gangsters and ensure for the workers of this Press their basic rights. The trade union movement must demand an end to the gangster attacks on the workers so that (1) they can properly attend to their duties, (2) guarantee of safety and full protection of law to them, (3) withdrawal of all victimisation orders and (4) freedom for the employees' associations to function without interference

The issues involved in the high-handed action of the management in connivance with the anti-social elements and

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the police have for reaching consequences not only for T.U movement but for the entire democratic movement in the country. The CITU therefore appeals to all those who value democracy to see that individual liberties are not allowed to be trampled underfoot for protecting the underhand dealings of the ruling party and the unscrupulous big business houses. The Congress regime in West Bengal displays an unmistakable trend towards one-party dictatorship which all must combine to check and defeat.



Calcutta,
4th August, 1972

B. T. RANADIVE
President
C.I.T.U.

A

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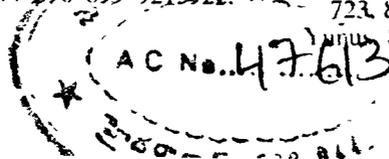
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ISBN: 81 - 7626 - 000 - 2 (set)
ISBN: 81 - 7626 - 010 - X (Vol. X-A)