

DOCUMENTS OF
THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT
IN INDIA

VOL. XVIII
(1978-1979)



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Members of the Editorial Board

Jyoti Basu, *Chief Editor*

Sailen Dasgupta

Buddhadev Bhattacharya

Anil Biswas

Shanti Shekhar Bose

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/Congress	—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	—Students Federation of India

DYFI	—Democratic Youth Federation of India
Govt.	—Government
UF	—United Front
RSS	—Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha
JP	—Janata Party
RSP	—Revolutionary Socialist Party
FB	—Forward Bloc
SP	—Socialist Party
EMS	—E.M.S. Namboodiripad
BTR	—B. T. Ranadive
PS	—P. Sundarayya
PR	—P. Ramamurti
MB	—M. Basavapunnaiiah

Introductory Note

The period 1978-79 covered by this Volume (Volume No. XVIII) is a most significant period in the political history of post-independence era in India. The formation of Janata Party which crystallised in the fight against authoritarianism under the National Emergency imposed by Smt. Indira Gandhi, was actually a combination of different political thoughts and aspirations and this was soon manifested in the functioning of Janata Party's Government in New Delhi under the Premiership of Morarji Desai.

The erstwhile Jana Sangha, which was formed by Shyama Prasad Mukherjee with the tacit support and approval of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha (RSS) was a major constituent of the Janata Party and its Government. The question soon arose as to whether the Jana Sangha elements and its leaders in the Janata Party would sever their connections with the RSS and commit themselves to the declared aim and objective of the Janata Party and its Government which, in fact, was then in a very formative stage. The leaders of the erstwhile Jana Sangha bluntly refused to disown their connections with and allegiance to the RSS and this was at the root of the disruptive developments that finally led to the resignation of the Prime Minister, Morarji Desai and brought an abrupt end of the Janata Government.

Chowdhury Charan Singh and his prodigy, Raj Narain, played a very disruptive role to break the unity in the Janata Party which compelled the Prime Minister, Morarji Desai to tender resignation in the face of a 'No-Confidence Motion'. This development is known in the contemporary Indian History as "July Crisis".

The stand taken by our Party, i.e., Communist Party of India (Marxist), on the "July Crisis" is given in the resolution of the Central Committee and statements of the Polit Bureau and these important documents are included in this Volume.

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Following resignation of the Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, Chowdhury Charan Singh formed a Government with the support of Indira Congress and the Congress led by Y.B. Chavan. Events proved that formation of this coalition Government was the result of a clever manoeuvre of Smt. Indira Gandhi who wanted fresh elections for Lok Sabha so that she could return to power. The disunity within the Janata Party was so very acute that no initiative could be taken by any of its leaders to form a coalition Government with the support of the Left and democratic parties. Chowdhury Charan Singh's coalition Government was short-lived as immediately after its formation Smt. Indira Gandhi withdrew her support and Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, the then President of India, dissolved the Lok Sabha and declared fresh election.

Thus an experimental move to run a non-Congress Government as an alternate to Congress-rule could not succeed.

Our Party, Communist Party of India (Marxist), took a consistent stand in exposing the weakness of the Janata Party with a view to extending its constructive cooperation and cautioned, time and again, about the harmful development in the Janata Party and its Government. A number of documents are given in this Volume which will give a clear idea about the role played by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in this perspective.

Our Party also exposed the role of the Right Communist Party during the National Emergency and its effort to whitewash the crimes of Indira Gandhi's regime during the Emergency. A number of documents on this issue are included in this Volume.

The 10th Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was held in Jullundur in April 1978. The Political Resolutions and the Review Report adopted by the 10th Congress along with other documents are included in this Volume. These documents will reveal how the leadership of the CPI(M) assessed the political situation in India before the National Emergency was imposed in June 1975 and also during the National Emergency and after formation of Janata Party's Government in New Delhi in 1977 and the steps taken by it to strengthen Left and democratic unity for an alternate path.

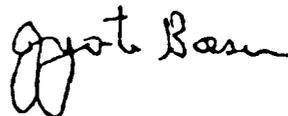
The decision was taken in the 10th Congress of the CPI(M) that an All India Party Plenum would be held in Salkia, West Bengal, in December 1978 for a thorough review of the Organisational Position of the Party with a view to streamlining the Party Organisation and strengthen it in order that it could perform its proper role in the coming days beset with far reaching political developments. The Report on Organisation and the Resolutions on Organisations adopted by the All India Plenum of CPI(M) in December 1978 are given in this Volume. These are most vital documents.

The stand taken by Acharya Vinoba Bhave on cow slaughter created a very sensitive situation and the CPI(M) leaders tactfully dealt with this matter. The statement issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) on this subject and the letters written by CPI(M) leaders to Acharya Vinoba Bhave are included in this Volume.

The Chinese attack on Vietnam was a very important development in International Communist Movement during this period. Our Party gave unstinted support to Vietnam and took an open stand urging upon the Chinese Communist Party and the Government of the People's Republic of China to desist from their move of armed intervention. A number of documents on these developments are included in this Volume.

This Volume also includes important documents on Centre State relations, on democratic decentralisation, on Shah Commission's Report and the move initiated by the CPI(M) for a united fight against authoritarian Congress(I) and RSS dominated Janata Party. Our Party consistently campaigned for emergence of a united front of all anti authoritarian, anti revivalist forces.

As stated at the outset the period 1978-79 was politically a very significant period in the post independence era of India. The documents given in this Volume will certainly help the readers to make an indepth study of the political situation prevailing in the country during this period and also evaluate the causes and effects of the major political developments that took place during this period.



(JYOTI BASU)

Chief Editor

May 4, 1998

Foreword

The question that was uppermost in the minds of the people was what would happen in the wake of events that were bringing to the fore growingly the weakness of the Janata Government. As time went on during the period 1978-79, it was becoming more and more apparent to Indian public opinion that even if the Janata Ministry could take pride in demolishing the framework of authoritarianism, Janata Party was showing its inability to transform itself from a conglomeration of few existing political parties into a fully integrated political party and to prevent its failures and weaknesses. On the other side the shattering blow to the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections and in Assembly elections thereafter, the revelations in the Shah Commission of Enquiry that branded the former Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi as guilty of all possible crimes against the people and democracy put the Congress Party in disarray. Not only inside the country, democracy inside the Congress was also suppressed, any kind of dissent was disallowed in the Congress for long. Avadi and Bhubaneswar socialisms, garibi hatao, etc., had ultimately ended up in the Emergency, the compelling factor being its obvious inability to surmount the economic crises arisen out of its bourgeois landlord policy. Of course, there was some criticism of the Emergency within the party, but there was no attempt to make a complete demarcation from the authors of the Emergency which Indira Gandhi and her caucus stuck to the platform of authoritarianism and continued to justify the Emergency. With this dismal state of affairs of the Congress, the record of the Janata Party on economic policies was also not something that could attract the people. The mini MISA enforced by the Janata Government in Madhya Pradesh, banning

of strikes in Uttar Pradesh, the attempt to deal with working class actions as law and order problems in the Janata ruled States did not mean a good augury for the party. After few months they seemed to be no more serious about the pledges they had made to the people. That was what was gradually engulfing them into a crisis.

That was why discontent started growing among the people. Further, the display of parades and strength by RSS had been creating feelings of revulsion and concern in the minds of the people. The Central Committee of our Party met from March 3 to 7, 1978 took note of these developments and stated, "Taking into consideration the wide apprehensions among the minority community, it will be disastrous if the Left and democratic forces do not counter this evil and prevent disruption of democratic unity. The effect on the Muslim minority especially has been calamitous and it was fully exploited by Indira Gandhi. All those who stand for democracy wish that the Janata Party puts its own house in order. For the democratic movement the situation is a complicated and difficult one. The main opponent of democracy and parliamentary norms has again reared its head by misleading lakhs of people into its ranks. Complacency, lack of vigilance, and failure to keep up popular resistance to dictatorship will mean disaster. All hands must pull together to fight the forces of authoritarian rule and vanquish them. Once again, the all important task is to mobilise the people for anti authoritarian struggle."

But as things stood in that period, the organised Left and democratic parties were weak and miserably divided. The Socialist Party and several other democratic groups and individuals had lost their identity and merged with the Janata Party. As early as 1969-70, the CPI found its ally with the Congress deserting the Left and democratic force. With the exception of some State based and region based Left and democratic parties and groups there existed no all India Left and democratic party except CPI(M) and its Left allies in West Bengal and Tripura, around which the Left and democratic forces was trying to unite and go ahead. Such was the difficult and complex task that history placed on the shoulders of our Party at a time when the international Communist movement was badly divided. It, however, stood to the credit of our Party that

it pursued a correct line both at the national and international level and, that it refused to get provoked and fall a victim to the enemy's provocation. We played a significant role during pre Emergency and Emergency days. It was our Party in West Bengal, and to a lesser extent in Kerala that bore the full brunt of repression and terror under the Congress rule. In the review report adopted at the Tenth Congress of our Party held in Jullundur, April 28, 1978 we, however, self criticized ourselves for being extremely hesitant till October 1976, even on the issue of civil liberties to associate ourselves with the emerging nationwide movement. The review pointed out, "correct line of approach would surely have placed our Party as one that stands in the forefront of the struggle for civil liberties and democratic rights. It, certainly, would have helped to rouse more wider circles of the people, than were already under our Party's influence, for the struggle in defence of the civil liberties and democratic rights—an integral part of the bigger struggle in defence of parliamentary democracy and against dictatorship"

We tried to learn lessons from the mistakes as the review report stated further, "The study of the phenomenon of developing differences and divisions among the bourgeois landlord parties, in the background of deepening economic crisis was ignored. The question of utilising the conflicts and divisions for the advancement of democratic movement did not arise as a serious proposition. Such a lag in our Party's thinking and understanding was partly due to the mistaken notion prevailing in sections of our Party at different levels, the PB and C C in particular, that the restoration of bourgeois democratic rights and freedoms was well nigh impossible and the establishment of People's Democracy was the only way out"

The political resolution of Tenth Congress emphasised the need for building the front of the Left and democratic forces in view of the polarization that was taking place round the two bourgeois landlord combinations. The continuing struggle against the forces representing authoritarianism and dictatorship made it all the more necessary at that time to have a broad platform to fight them, the resolution stressed. It was evaluated that "anti Emergency struggle and electoral victory have not led to a shift in the balance of forces

in favour of the working class, i.e., the masses have not moved away from the influence of bourgeois parties and started rallying round an alternative leadership” To be with the people, to lead them, to raise their consciousness was the task of the Party entrusted by the Tenth Congress. Even though the Party Congress adopted correct political tactical line, much hinged on how this was put into practice by the concrete application of the science of Marxism-Leninism in concrete conditions from time to time and from place to place. Thus the Party arrived at broadly correct decisions on all the turbulent questions that had confronted the Party until then.

Meanwhile the Left Front Government in Tripura took office on January 5, 1978 with a massive mandate and our Party secured an absolute majority. It created a unique example of tribal-non tribal unity despite cruel instigation from the Congress and other reactionary elements to the separatist forces. Besides the resounding success of the Left Front in West Bengal, the Left Front Government of Tripura fighting back the deep-seated conspiracies had undertaken a lot of steps to provide maximum relief to the people and implement land reform measures. In Kerala, surplus land struggle intensified which was a tremendous success. Strike struggles were going in other parts of the country too.

In order to discharge this responsibility of building the front of Left and democratic forces and of bringing about a realignment of political forces in the country, the Tenth Congress underlined the pressing need of expanding the Party organisation so as to weather any eventuality and to remove the lags, weakness and shortcomings as well.

As such, the Party met in a Plenum held at Salkia in Howrah District of West Bengal from December 27 to 31, 1978 and called for building a mass revolutionary Party. At the same time the resolution on organisation adopted at the Plenum cautioned that the efforts to build such a Party would bear no fruit if earnest efforts were not made to raise the level of the Party members and new entrants. “In essence still the problem is”, as pointed out in the resolution, “one of converting the elementary consciousness of the daily struggle into political and socialist consciousness, which demands intense and increased political activity of the Party among

the masses and, above all, a persistent ideological struggle against all feudal, semi feudal, anti Marxist bourgeois ideologies” The Salkia Plenum self critically reviewed the entire course of political organisational efforts and after mature deliberations, provided a concrete direction to renew and revamp the organisation to meet the challenge in the new context as well as to streamline the Party, to nail down erroneous concepts of Party organisation and deviations and distortion accumulating in its functioning over a period of years As J V Stalin said, “A correct political line is not needed as a declaration, but as something to be carried into effect But in order to carry a correct political line into effect, we must have cadres, people who understand the political line of the Party, who accept it as their own line, who are prepared to carry it into effect, who are able to put it into practice and are capable of answering for it, defending it and fighting for it Failing this, a correct political line runs the risk of being purely nominal”

Twenty years after the adoption of Salkia Plenum resolution, we are still far away from building a Party that can meet the current challenges After 20 years of Salkia Plenum we are yet to renew the organisation on that basis, rather better to say, we are lagging far behind

These initiatives on the part of our Party in the political and organisational field was all the more necessary in a situation full of perils arising out of consistent failures of the Janata Government and growing estrangement of the ruling party from the people which encouraged problem ridden Congress Party to launch a counter offensive in diffidence of the Emergency and Congress brand of authoritarianism The unseemly wranglings of the Janata Party which were limited to the State legislatures and lower ranks were started gripping the topmost level with Charan Singh resigning from the parliamentary party Raj Narain demanding removal of party president and, Jagjivan Ram, Charan Singh engaged in mud slinging against each other, and questions hovering round to the Prime Minister and his son This was the sorry state of affairs with a party that was reposed faith by the people to smash all traces of authoritarianism and restore democratic rights

In the foreign policy too, serious concern had been raised that the anti imperialist base of India's policy of non alignment was getting more and more diluted, that while the existing relations with the Socialist countries were maintained, efforts by the Prime Minister Morarji Desai and Foreign Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, now heading the BJP Government at the Centre, were on to take India close to US imperialism and the West as manifest by a series of events

By the way, it is to be noted that while the US imperialism intensified in that period its aggressive policy in Africa and West Asia, a critical situation had arisen in the Communist movement because of invasion by China's troops of the territory of Vietnam on the absurd plea of punishing Vietnam. They however met later in ending conflicts between the two Socialist countries through peaceful negotiations. Our ideological struggle with the Chinese and Soviet Communist Party was going on all through

Another menacing factor that caused concern was frequent occurrences of communal disturbances and atrocities of Harijans, reminiscent of despotic Congress rule. I had had the opportunity to represent my Party in a conference of Chief Ministers and leaders of political parties at the close of 1978 convened by the Prime Minister in the wake of Aligarh riots to discuss the communal situation. It would not be out of place to mention some salient points that I had the occasion to explain. "Not a single month passes when there are no communal disturbances. It is no use comparing numbers whether they were more during the Congress regime or less under the Janata regime. The reality is that the continuance of communal disturbances is weakening the secular foundation of our society

"In the days of British rule, communal riots were used to divide the toiling people to weaken the common national movement against foreign rule. Provincialism, communalism, casteism all were being used consciously by the reactionary forces to stem the tide of the working class and democratic movements. One is forced to say that the same situation is allowed to be developed today in the wake of the deepening economic crisis

“No commission of enquiry or any institution set up by the Government can help in overcoming the situation unless we are clear as to why these things continue to happen which are the forces actively working behind this menace Why is the Government failing to uproot this evil?

“In our view to sidetrack attention from the rising social problems, reactionary forces fan communalism, incite violence against the minorities and rouse the most backward obscurantist sentiments Even prominent leaders of the Government do not hesitate to openly associate and fraternise with these reactionary forces In spite of the declarations of secularism spokesmen of the Government yield to the pressure of communal reactionary elements It will not be wrong to say that many leaders of the ruling parties have become prisoners of Hindu communalism and are afraid of attacking this worst manifestation

“I do not mean to say that feelings of casteism and communalism do not persist in the minority communities, but as the reports go to prove, the communal problem manifested in the Hindu Muslim riots is mainly created by communal Hindu elements Who can ignore the ideology which continues to mix up their religious beliefs with the country’s democratic structure? In most of the riots, the initiative comes from these elements and the minority community becomes the worst sufferer

“The Preamble of our Constitution states that India is a secular democratic and socialist State But where is that secularism so far as the protection and defence of minorities is concerned? The religious and other rights are ignored This is one of the tests of democracy and the Governments have been failing to discharge them

“We have to look into this problem from two aspects One is the situation created by the riots engineered by the communal elements This can be dealt with only if the Government shows courage to fix up responsibility in the proper quarters and smash their designs, which form a conspiracy against national unity and the country’s democratic advance

“The second aspect is that riots take place in the background of an obscurantist outlook prevailing among the people towards the suffering minority Sometimes only a weak resistance is put up to

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the conspirators This shows the total failure on the part of the Government to educate the people in the ideas of secularism The fake secularism has only strengthened the obscurantist religious outlook because the Government has been pandering to every backward sentiment in the name of secularism The leaders of the Government could not find time to immediately show sympathy to the riot affected minorities or to the Harijans groaning under the atrocities of the landlords But they could spare time to attend functions of all the obscurantist institutions

“Therefore I would say that the major responsibility for the deteriorating situation and deplorable communal affairs rests on the Government whether led by the Congress Party or led by other bourgeois landlord parties Notwithstanding the repeated declarations denouncing communalism and upholding secularism and democracy by the leaders of the Government and the ruling parties and even taking certain diastic steps at times, when things threaten to go out of hand I cannot but observe that a sort of patronising lenient and escapist attitude is adopted by them towards communalism and in particular, majority communalism which is more menacing in the situation

“I would suggest that in case the Government is serious to meet the present situation it should take a clear out stand to defend the ideas of secularism and democracy and should not allow the association of its leaders with obscurantist institutions In so far as meeting the concrete situation is concerned, there should be adequate representation to the minorities in the police and other administrative services

“As for atrocities on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, they have been mainly due to the issues of land and house sites, wages of agricultural workers and social oppression The solution lies in genuine Land reform”

The economic policies and measures adopted by the Government were becoming more and more anti people As for land reforms, which alone can solve the rural unemployment on a big scale and provide a big market for consumer durables, the Janata Government proved to be in no way different if not worse Promises of establishing an effective public distribution system had remained

paper declarations Initiated by the Congress regime the economic independence of the country was being further bartered away with the open door policy to multinationals after the visit of the Prime Minister to U S

With this balance sheet of the Janata Government, crisis in the Janata Party, riven by dissensions, deepened, one of the main issues being 'dual membership' The attempts of the communal RSS Jan Sangh to dominate the party and infiltrate into the administration and its role in whipping up and igniting the communal riots were facing resistance from among a substantial section of the Janata Party who were demanding that the 'dual role' of the RSS leaders immediately be put an end to once and for all

The Janata leaders were ignoring our repeated warnings against relaxing the struggle against forces of authoritarianism, the menacing domination of the RSS Jan Sangh over the party and against pursuance of the anti people economic policies In July, 1979 the question of dual membership came to forefront in the backdrop of series of communal riots which were mostly instigated by RSS

It culminated in the revolt of nearly one third of the Janata members of Parliament against the Hindu chauvinist domination over the party which lost its credibility and the Government and led to the resignation of the Morarji Government before the no confidence motion was put to vote The CPI(M) had decided to lend support to the no confidence motion against Morarji Government Our Party offered its co operation to political parties which were trying to form a Government which would not be dependent for its existence on either the Congress(I) or the Jana Sangh RSS combination The Party called upon all Left and democratic and secular forces to fight the twin dangers of authoritarianism and communalism It was at that time the Congress was divided into two—the stronger one, the Congress(Indira) was led by Indira Gandhi, the other one was the Congress(S) In the developments that took place in quick succession, the President of India asked Charan Singh, leader of the Janata(S), a breakaway faction of the Janata Party to form the government and prove its majority The Janata(S) and the Congress(S) formed the government

with the support of Congress(I) The Central Committee of our Party met on August 15 16 at this critical hour and after a long discussion decided that "In this delicate situation, the C C is of the opinion that all democratic forces should make every effort to help the Ministry to disentangle itself from dependence on the Congress(I) and enable it to struggle both against authoritarianism and communalism In order to prevent the Jana Sangh dominated Janata Party from coming back and Congress(I) exploiting the situation, the CPI(M), while being in opposition, is prepared to support the Charan Singh Ministry in the coming vote of confidence though it has not yet freed itself from the support of the Congress(I) and is yet to give specific assurances to the masses The CPI(M) will decide its attitude to the government from issue to issue on the basis of its policies in relation to masses and towards the struggle against authoritarianism and communalism " Before the issue came up in the Parliament, the President announced to dissolve the Lok Sabha and order fresh elections that was welcomed by CPI(M) and all Left parties The Congress(I) was compelled to join its voice as well

The President's decisions came in the backdrop of the manoeuvres and conspiracies that were going on behind the curtain to install a RSS Jana Sangh dominated government and Jagjivan Ram led Janata Party which was already wooing the Congress(I) for support And Charan Singh alliance and its different partners were providing grist to the mill of both the Congress(I) and RSS dominated Janata Party All the non Janata parties had earlier demanded the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and a fresh election, ultimately the Congress(I), too, joined its voice It was quite obvious that differences inside our Party overtaking the stand arose All these were settled in the Eleventh Congress of the Party held in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

The rest of the year witnessed intense battle of electioneering by all the political forces and combinations

Did the Party do the right thing in first supporting the Janata Party and later on withdrawing it and becoming part of the effort to pull it down? Was it right on our part to extend support to forces known for their rightist leanings? These questions can be answered only keeping in mind the historical perspective in which these issues cropped up They cannot be detached from that particular movement in history and viewed

In 1969 we had supported the candidature of V V Giri for the office of the President of India, though he was the candidate of Indira Gandhi. Indira Gandhi's anti Communist proclivities were revealed, it may be recalled, as early as 1959-60 when she was instrumental in undemocratically dislodging the duly elected E M S Namboodiripad ministry in Kerala. We had to choose between Indira Gandhi's candidate and Sanjeeva Reddy of the Congress(O). Finally the Party chose to support V V Giri. It was class issues that weighed in favour of taking such a decision. The Congress(O) had adopted a totally rightist policy, opposed to the abolition of privy purses, hostility to bank nationalisation and open opposition to implementation of land ceilings etc.

What was the compelling situation in 1977 that forced us to support the Janata Party which comprised both forces that we had opposed in 1969 as well as an avowedly communal outfit like the Jana Sangh? In 1977 we had to fight against an even greater danger to the very democratic foundations of the republic, from authoritarianism represented by Indira Gandhi. Once the Emergency framework was dismantled and the Janata Party started getting divided on the issue of dual membership of both the Janata Party and the RSS, we withdrew support.

Our tactics, therefore, in a given situation, was an answer to questions posed in a particular historical context, which in quite another situation may seem wrong. Therefore, it does not automatically apply to all situations.

This Volume is of great importance which contains our decisions and their wide explanations on successive turning points of rapid political developments of this period.

Harkishan Singh Surjeet

(Harkishan Singh Surjeet)

General Secretary

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

May 21, 1998

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The Role of Right C.P. during Emergency*

Statement Issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on December 31, 1977

Nine months after the Congress was toppled from power for its Emergency rule, and after revelations of its bizzare orgies before the Shah Commission, the leadership of the Right Communist Party, in its National Council resolution, has deigned to concede that its support to the Emergency was wrong

The admission coming so late in the day would not have attracted attention had it not been a result of the fight inside the party waged by sections who are keen to rectify the mistakes of the past in order to take their rightful place among the Left and democratic forces of the country

A perusal of the resolution is enough to show that the leadership has made only a verbal concession to justify the entire range of opportunist policies followed since the last Congress of their party. The same claim to have fought the reaction in company with the Congress, the same erroneous evaluation of the mass outburst of anger against the Congress misrule, and finally pompous and falsified claims to have fought the excesses of the Emergency are made to belittle the crime involved in supporting an authoritarian regime to suppress every vestige of democratic rights and civil liberties in the country

In particular it is preposterous to claim that the Right C P fought the attacks on the workers. They cooperated with the

*This statement was published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, dated January 8, 1978 with the caption 'NOT SELF CRITICISM, BUT SELF JUSTIFICATION'

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Government in the Apex Body from which all except the most loyal supporters of the Government were kept out and which was an instrument of thrusting official policies on the trade unions. The issue is presented as if everything was excellent so far as the Right C P's political line was concerned, only on one small issue—the Emergency—the party was wrong. This is not self criticism but self justification.

The support to Emergency was not only wrong, it was a crime against the people and the country, against democracy and civil liberties. The Right C P leaders not only supported the Emergency but blatantly described it as a fight against the forces of reaction. When the authoritarian features of the Emergency were clear, they called a World Anti Fascist Conference to support it and were guilty of misleading world opinion. When the Indira Gandhi Government was forced to release some of the arrested leaders, the Right C P leadership criticised it for "relaxing the fight against reaction". They fully supported the 42nd Amendment Act which institutionalised the Emergency and the authoritarian rule. They participated in a Coalition Government with the Congress Party in Kerala, in the police terror and crimes against the people. It was under their Chief Minister that the murder of Rajan and others took place in police custody.

To attempt to whitewash all these misdeeds by saying that the support to the Emergency was wrong, cannot be described as an honest attempt to rectify past mistakes. If the Right C P really intends to strike a new path, it must settle accounts with the past in an honest manner. What went wrong was not just support to the Emergency, but the entire outlook which saw in Indira Gandhi the progressive leader who must be supported against everyone else. What went wrong was the class-collaborationist outlook which relied on Congress Right C P unity as the driving force for democratic advance, what went wrong was the policy of disrupting the unity of Left forces and concentrating fire on the CPI(M) to suit the needs of Indira Gandhi and her reactionary partners. In short the Right C P, as predicted by us, not only tailed behind the bourgeois landlord leadership of the Congress, it became their

The Role of Right C P during Emergency 3

instrument, fighting those whom it wanted to fight, describing as reactionary those whom it called reactionaries. That is why it denounced the mass outburst of anger led by Jaya Prakash Narayan and others as nothing but reactionary and identified itself with those who repressed it. The support to the Emergency was born out of this policy and unless this outlook and policy is repudiated, the practice of the party will not change.

It is clear from the resolution itself. Even now the Right C P leaders put their faith in the Congress and underestimate the danger from the caucus, though now they cannot support Mrs. Gandhi. They ignore the importance of the defeat of authoritarian forces and restoration of parliamentary norms and democracy, while justifiably opposing many anti-democratic and anti-labour measures of the present Government. The starting point should be to see that the Emergency experience is never repeated and concentrate fire on all supporters of authoritarian rule. That will give the economic battle a political content and bring about the unity of Left and democratic forces.

The CPI(M) stands for the unity of all Left and democratic forces. It calls upon the ranks of the Right C P and the Right C P leadership to understand the issues at stake and unambiguously repudiate an outlook which dragged them into supporting authoritarianism and which hampers them from effectively participating in the struggle to build the unity of Left and democratic forces.

Scrap Preventive Detention Powers*

**CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution Adopted
In Its Vijayawada Session on
December 23-28, 1977**

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) expresses its strong disapproval of the policy adopted by the Janata Government at the Centre and the State Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir with regard to the legislation providing for preventive detention without trial

Like the rest of the democratic parties and organisations in the country, the Janata Party had raised its voice of protest against the former Congress Government's policy of using the MISA, the Preventive Detention Act and similar legislations to stifle all forms of protest against the undemocratic and anti popular policies of the Government. Its Election Manifesto had, in fact, given a solemn promise to the electorate that all such legislations would be removed from the Statute Book. The practice of the Government has, however, been the very opposite of this promise.

The Madhya Pradesh Government's 'mini MISA' was the first sign of the Janata Government's abandonment of the clear and unambiguous position adopted by it in the Election Manifesto. The State's Chief Minister openly stated that the Ordinance was aimed at suppressing the agitation of the State Electricity Board Employees. This has now been followed up by the proposal made by the Janata Government at the Centre formally annulling the Maintenance of Internal Security Act but incorporating most of the obnoxious provisions thereof in the normal law of the land. The amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code as now proposed would make the MISA an integral part of the normal law.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 8, 1978

The Central Committee cannot but note that the proposals for amending the Constitution, which are now under discussion between the Government and the Opposition in the Parliament, do not include the suggestion made by the Opposition that the enabling provision in the Constitution permitting the Government to enact legislation for detention without trial should be annulled.

Far from heeding the voice of protest raised by the Opposition, and even sections within the ruling party, the spokesmen of the Government including the Home Minister and the Prime Minister have been stoutly defending the continuation of this provision in the Constitution and the proposals for enacting legislation for detention without trial.

Promises that these provisions will not be used against the working class and democratic movement had been made by the previous Congress regime also but the practice was just the opposite. There is no reason to believe that it will be any different now, particularly after the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister's statement.

The C C, however, hopes that large sections within the Janata Party itself would join the rest of the democratic public opinion in the country in demanding that the Government should abandon this anti-democratic position. Let them not forget that it is one of the fundamental rights of the people that nobody's personal liberty should be restricted unless the person concerned is given full opportunity to defend himself or herself before a Court of law—a right for which freedom lovers and democrats have waged continuous struggles before and after Independence.

The C C calls upon all Party units and friends of the Party to join with all parties, groups, organisations and individuals in developing a powerful movement demanding that the Government retrace its steps in this regard.

Central Committee Resolution on Andhra Pradesh*

Adopted in its Vijayawada Session on
December 23-27, 1977

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its profound sense of grief at the colossal loss of lives and devastation suffered by the people of coastal Andhra Pradesh. The C C extends its heartfelt sympathy to the thousands of families, who have lost their kith and kin, and lakhs of people who have suffered immense losses.

According to all available figures, the cyclone affected about 2,300 villages, with a population of more than seven million. The tidal wave of 18 feet hit about 100 villages in Divi and Bander taluks of Krishna district. It has taken a death toll of about 12,000, crops were damaged on about 34 lakh acres, 2.4 lakh huts and dwellings collapsed or were badly damaged, rendering 34.6 lakh persons homeless. About 2,600 small scale industrial units have been damaged. The total loss is assessed at more than Rs 1,000 crores.

Thus the death and devastation caused by the cyclone and the tidal wave have been of unimaginable magnitude calling for the most urgent measures by the State. But it is deplorable to note that the Congress Government in the State dismally failed to do its duty to the people in distress while the Central Government acted more as a spectator than saviour.

As a result of such failures even the minimum steps that should have been promptly taken are still in default even though it is more than a month since the havoc took place.

Debris are not yet cleared in many places while corpses are still found here and there. Hundreds of carcasses were rotting all along

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 8, 1978

the Krishna River banks from Nachukunta to Edurumondi Island. The non metalled muddy roads are yet to be repaired in many places. Irrigation canals, even according to the official version will require many more weeks to be repaired thereby making impossible for washing of the salinity and raising the second crop. Power supply for agricultural purposes is promised only a few months hence. The promised Rs 1,000 per dead is not yet being paid in tidal wave affected areas. The compensation of Rs 150/ given for damaged and destroyed houses also is not distributed promptly while the supply of palmyra leaves and bamboos is scantily done.

Though any rehabilitation worth the name has not yet taken place, free supply of rice is altogether stopped even in the totally devastated areas. Thus the survivors are being starved for want of rice supply, while the cattle do not have fodder in many villages and even drinking water is scarce. Even supply of medicines has been stopped. Long term interest free loans which should have promptly been disbursed are not yet concretely worked out. Grant of tools for handicrafts men are not forthcoming. Even the remission of land revenue is not extended to all cyclone affected areas.

The Central Government has offered a niggardly amount of Rs 73 crores and that, too, as an advance from the Plan allotment of Andhra Pradesh, while the demand of all political parties including the Janata Party is for Rs 300 crores as outright grant.

Under these conditions the only consoling factor is the immense sympathy and solidarity shown by innumerable institutions and people not only from other States of the country but from abroad too. Volunteers from many Schools, Colleges and Universities and workers from distant places offered their services. Many institutions and people of innumerable villages from outside the affected areas as well as the State brought rice, clothes, utensils and provisions and supplied them to the sufferers. Doctors and medical squads from all over the country brought medicines and served the needy.

In this context, the Central Committee of the CPI(M) was able to get an idea of the devastation from the reports of

visits of leading members of the Party like General Secretary Comrade E M S Namboodiripad, Chief Minister of West Bengal and member of the Polit Bureau Comrade Jyoti Basu and a Parliamentary delegation of Comrades Ahilya Rangnekar, Sivaji Patnaik and S P Bhattacharya and the visit of Comrade Jyotirmoy Basu, Chief Whip of the Party in Parliament

The C C notes with satisfaction that Party units as well as the Party leadership in the State have tried to do their bit in most of the affected areas in general and the tidal wave affected areas in particular. It is gratifying to note that many of the Party doctors running People's Clinics and medical students could rush to the aid of the suffering people accompanied by the People's Volunteer Corps of our Party at the very first instance. Distribution of rice, clothes, utensils and provision collected by the Party and supplied by many institutions and individuals were promptly carried out by the Party's Volunteer Squads.

The Prajasakti Cyclone Relief Fund started by the Party's State Unit has come to Rs 1,50,000 and the C C notes and appreciates the manner in which the Party, mass organisations and the people of West Bengal have responded to the call by contributing more than Rs 40,000 by now. It is also a matter of gratification to find the Left Front Government of West Bengal taking the initiative both in sending a liberal donation and its Chief Minister in solidarity with the suffering people.

The relief work being carried on by the Party has to continue so as to give whatever relief is possible to the people. The C C calls on all Party members and units, friends and sympathisers, to vigorously continue collection of funds and materials like clothes and medicines and send it to the Prajasakti Cyclone Relief Fund.

As facts themselves speak, the State Government has utterly failed in discharging its duty to the people in distress. It took no concrete steps to evacuate the people from the coast. Its assessment of the damage was wrong and the steps it undertook to help the people recover from the shock and rehabilitate them were miserably inadequate. Its refusal to call for the help of the army in time was criminal. Its failure to seek the help and cooperation of all parties and forces in order to rush all necessary help to the

affected people by setting up an all party committee at the State level and similar committees lower down is born out of sheer partisanship and narrow minded electioneering tactics Its refusal to form such bodies and function them even after formal acceptance and commitment, goes to prove how crudely the Congress Government is intent upon making relief work a pawn in its electioneering campaign

Added to this the Congress Party itself is facing a deep political crisis The Congress Government is also engulfed in a serious crisis with seven Cabinet Ministers resigning and charging the State Government with failure in relief work

The Rehabilitation Minister himself is one who resigned Under such conditions of no confidence inside and outside, the Central Committee of the CPI(M) holds that there is no hope of most urgently needed relief and rehabilitation work being taken up seriously by this Government and therefore, demands its resignation In case the Vengal Rao Ministry refuses to do so, the Central Committee urges upon the Central Government to take immediate steps to dismiss it and carry out briskly the relief measures needed through the formation of a statutorily recognised all party relief committee in the State

At the same time the Central Committee regrets to note that despite repeated requests made by the public and the needs of the situation demanding it, the Central Government failed to intervene in time and do what was necessary in regard to instantly rescuing the people in distress in Andhra Pradesh by sending the army and in rendering adequate financial assistance for their rehabilitation and calls upon it to act effectively even now for the sake of saving the people

Support to State Employees' Strike*

**Resolution Adopted by the Central Committee of
CPI(M) In Its Vijayawada Session on
December 23-27, 1977**

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) extends its whole hearted support to the fighting nine lakh State Government employees of Maharashtra including Zila Parishad and Municipal employees whose strike has been continuing for over a fortnight

Together with their brethren in Assam who have been on strike for fifteen days, the employees in Maharashtra have given a lead to the middle class employees all over the country

The entire Local Government employees of Bihar are on strike while the village employees of the Kerala Government have been on strike since December 1

The organised working class and other sections of the democratic movement in the country will, the Central Committee hopes, stand solidly by the Government employees under the States as well as the Centre who have to solve many difficult problems which have accumulated over the decades of Congress rule and which have not been resolved by the nine month old Janata Government

Despite the Janata Government's promise to bring prices down, the middle class employees, like the industrial workers and other sections of the fixed income earners, are finding their real incomes eroded by the continuing rise in prices. The Janata Central Government as well as the State Governments have been unable to bring the prices down. The employees, therefore, have no other option but to register their protest through collective action

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 8, 1978

Support to State Employees' Strike 11

The C C expresses its strong disapproval of the attitude of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister of Maharashtra that no talks will be held with the employees unless the strike is withdrawn, and demands that all the State Governments concerned reach honourable settlements with their employees

The Central Committee calls upon all Party units and friends of the Party to join the rest of the democratic movement in organising a united movement of solidarity with the striking employees

CPI(M) Marches Forward in Kerala*

Report of The Tenth State Conference of Kerala State Committee of CPI(M)

The Tenth Kerala State Conference of the CPI(M), as a prelude to its Tenth Congress, surprised friends and foes alike by the impact it made on the people and the immense procession and rally held on the concluding day of the Conference. On that Sunday afternoon, Cannanore town looked as if under siege by the teeming humanity from various parts of Calicut and Cannanore districts. The Conference proved that the CPI(M) was the most powerful party in Kerala, throwing to the winds the reactionary propaganda that the CPI(M) had crumbled.

Cannanore had to face heavy repression even during pre Emergency days which reached its highest point during the Emergency days. But the Party overcame all such challenges and its strength continued to increase. This Conference proved beyond any doubt its sweep and influence.

Before the flag hoisting ceremony, the delegates went to Peralassery, native place of Comrade A K Gopalan, to pay homage to that indomitable revolutionary. From there they proceeded to Payyambalam to pay homage to Azhikkodan Raghavan who was murdered by a gang of extremists in Trichur in 1972. It is for the first time since its inception that a Conference of the Communist Party is taking place in Kerala in the absence of stalwarts like A K G and C H Kanaran, who was the State Secretary of the CPI(M) till October 1972. The delegates felt the void created by them and resolved to do their mite to fill it up.

After K R Gowri hoisted the Red Flag, the Conference started its work by passing resolutions paying homage to AKG,

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, February 19, 1978. This report was sent by C P Narayanan.

CH, Azhikkodan and numerous other comrades E M S Namboodiripad then inaugurated the Conference

Pointing out that the declaration of internal Emergency in June 1975 and the 1977 March elections were the most important political developments in India after the 9th Congress of the Party, EMS analysed the Indian political situation and underlined the need in the present political context to organise simultaneously a Left and democratic front and a front against dictatorial forces

EMS stressed that the meaning and importance of the change wrought by the two above mentioned events should be properly understood and remarked, "once this was done we would be compelled to do many things different from our earlier understanding"

Narrating the Party's fight to break the Congress monopoly of power and against its bid to retain it, he said that the Congress was in a bigger crisis than it ever had faced That was not all Anybody who takes a close look at the background of the Emergency and the 1977 elections will realise that what has now taken place is not merely the expulsion of a ruling party from power, but the Indian bourgeoisie as a whole falling into a deep crisis The Emergency cut at the roots of the Constitution and changed its lock, stock and barrel Now a return to the 1950 Constitution is being attempted The real depth of the crisis is borne out by these two facts

An interesting feature is that the attempt by Mrs Gandhi and the Congress and that by the bourgeois Opposition under the leadership of J P were both unconstitutional Both were trying to solve the crisis faced by them outside the ambit of the Constitution by which they were swearing till then

It has now been revealed that neither the Central Intelligence nor the Minister for Home Affairs nor the Law Minister had reported that there was any danger to National Security in 1975, that the Constitutional provision that the Cabinet, and not the Prime Minister, should recommend declaration of Emergency to the President had not been adhered to, and that the then President had committed a grave mistake in declaring the Emergency on the

Prime Minister's advice—all these show that the basis of the bourgeois system of Government had been shattered.

Only one Party in India had foreseen these developments the CPI(M) Its Madurai Congress Resolution had warned that the semi fascist terror let loose in West Bengal would not be confined either to that State or that Party and that nobody was going to escape from its clutches But no other opposition party heeded this warning till the Emergency was clamped

But the Madurai Resolution was incomplete in certain aspects A crisis is created not only by the conflicts between the revolutionary forces and the ruling classes, but also by contradictions among the parties representing the ruling classes A revolutionary crisis is created when all the basic contradictions in the society deepen Sometimes, contradictions within the ruling classes will be crucial For instance, the Second World War broke out not due to the contradictions between the Socialist world and imperialism, but due to the internal contradictions between the fascist and non fascist powers among the imperialist Powers

The Party believed that the Emergency would continue for long So it was as surprised when the elections were declared in January 1977 as when the Emergency was declared It did not expect that the bourgeois parties would resist to the extent they actually did This was the reason why the Party could not foresee that Mrs Gandhi would be compelled to hold elections

The Janata Party is not a Left and democratic force nor is it a party of dictatorship This is what distinguishes it from the Congress though both represent the same classes The Right C P does not recognise this cardinal point and hence it is caught in a cobweb of contradictions As long as it does not join the democratic front against the forces of dictatorship, it will not have a place in the Left and democratic front This is true for all Left and democratic parties

If the crisis that has enveloped the bourgeois feudal system is to be averted the policies adopted by the Congress and Janata should be basically changed The Left and democratic front is for that purpose Our main task in this period is to build and strengthen

this front But to maintain this front a broader front of all those against the forces of dictatorship is necessary This broader front cannot exist unless the other front is strong

In conclusion EMS said that experience had confirmed the correctness of the Party's approach to the international situation Not to align with anybody, to stand on one's own ground, not to pawn one's intellect to anybody, to develop one's own policies and programme and to be proud of the gains made by all the Socialist countries are the main aspects of this approach

E K Nayanar, the State Secretary, placed the report of the six years since December 1971 which gave a detailed account of the Party's multifarious activities and the numerous struggles to which the Party and the allied mass organisations gave leadership The report showed that the membership and activities of the Party and allied mass organisations had appreciably increased to the extent that the ruling front had to ally one by one with the Kerala Congress, communal organisations like the NDP and SRP and all reactionary forces in order to face the resistance put up by the Party While pointing out the big strides, the Party had taken in the face of gruesome attacks which took a toll of 255 comrades and sympathisers and the resistance, however meagre, it put up to the Emergency it also underlined its weaknesses that are to be corrected The Right C P's role since 1969 when it broke the united front was also discussed in detail A lively and fruitful discussion followed for two days at the end of which the report was adopted with minor changes

Delegates to the Party Congress were elected as also the new State Committee consisting of 47 members E K Nayanar was re elected Secretary of the State Committee

Addressing the delegates at the concluding session of the Conference, Jyoti Basu said that in the developing new situation new problems have arisen, that even in areas where the Party is weak, people look to it for solving their problems and that all these things would be discussed at the Congress

Speaking at length on West Bengal since 1972 he explained what had happened between 1972 and 1977, during the Emergency period and after it was withdrawn, the principled

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stand the Party took both in the March and June elections and the unreasonable stand of the State leadership of the Janata Party, particularly during the June elections which isolated it from the people

He pointed out that people from other States and other sections are looking upon the West Bengal and Tripura Left Front Governments. The two Governments are trying to live up to the people's expectations and to this end are keeping constant contact with the people, mass organisations and political parties.

That all the powers are vested with the Centre creates numerous problems to the States. It was for this reason that the West Bengal Government suggested a re-distribution of power in a note circulated among all State Governments and people. A dialogue is expected to grow on this issue at the national level.

He then listed certain things his Government had done so far which include a change in the irregular practice of appointments in public undertakings, an attempt to change the practice and approach of the officials, attempts, not so far successful, to re-open closed mills, over 150 in number, attempt to distribute certain essential commodities at subsidised rates, release of most of the political prisoners, reinstatement of dismissed Government employees including 150 policemen, disbursing Rs 100 as bonus to all Government employees, bonus payment to more than 90 per cent of the working class, legislation to safeguard the sharecroppers, food for work schemes, etc.

Jyoti Basu said that the whole Party should help and guide the West Bengal Government as the enemies are trying to use every opportunity against it.

People's Hopes Belied*

CPI(M) Polit Bureau on the Central Budget for the year 1978-79

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on March 1, 1978 on the Central Budget of the Union Government

The Budget presented by the Finance Minister completely belies the hopes of the common people who relied on the promises of the Janata Party made in its Election Manifesto. The party thundered against deficit financing of the previous Congress Government as being the main cause of inflation and rise in prices. And yet, the Budget has provided for over a thousand crores of rupees of deficit financing. This massive dose of deficit financing coupled with a savage increase of Excise duties on all articles of over Rs 500 crores, will push up the prices of cloth, sugar, kerosene, matches, in fact, on all articles of consumption of the common people.

Only a few days ago the Finance Minister bemoaned that despite all concessions he had made, no new investments in industries were taking place. The stark reality is that with the purchasing power of the common people being continuously depressed, industries are in doldrums. This fact is highlighted by the Finance Minister's own statement in the Budget speech that export demand has sustained to a significant extent industries like engineering, leather, iron and steel, textiles and sugar. These exports have been made possible by huge subsidies. People of this country have to go without cloth, sugar, foot wear, etc. And they have to subsidise the consumption of such commodities by the people of more affluent countries.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, March 5, 1978

That a good part of the limited production of steel, coal and engineering goods has to be exported instead of going into industrial development of the country is the biggest indictment of the policies so far pursued of catering to the insatiable greed of the monopolists and other parasitic sections and impoverishing the people. The present Budget does not depart from this beaten track.

There is no justification for increasing the defence budget, which has reached nearly Rs 3000 crores in the present Budget, in the context of improved relations with our neighbours. The need is to actively pursue those steps for improving the relations with our neighbours and considerably reduce the defence expenditure.

The Finance Minister states, "while the legitimate demands for additional emoluments should be met, these have to be appraised against the socio economic realities of the country. It is, therefore, important to have guidelines to determine the wages, incomes and prices policy." The income disparities in the country are mainly the yawning disparities in the incomes of monopoly and Big Business houses and their collaborators and the class of big landlords, usurious moneylenders and speculative traders on the one hand and the peasants, agricultural labourers, workers, middle class employees and other common people on the other. Without putting an end to this yawning disparity no industrial and agricultural development of any significant nature can take place. The Government, despite all the talk of reducing income disparities, only talks of additional emoluments being determined in the context of the "socio economic realities of the country." No attempt is made to change these "socio economic realities." This is a warning to the working class and other wage earners of the lot they will have to face in the days to come.

Our Party stands for a massive investment in the rural sector for tackling the problems of poverty and unemployment. But such investment will have the desired results only if steps are taken to free the peasants and agricultural labourers from the economic and social grip of landlords, kulaks and moneylenders. Otherwise, the benefits of such investment will in the main go to further enrich these affluent sections in the rural areas, as happened in the case

of the so called "green revolution" of the Congress Government. There is no indication in the Budget that the same fate will not befall the new increased investments for rural development.

In the final analysis without shattering the basis of the present socio economic order and ending the dependence on foreign aid all talk of development of the economy, lessening of unemployment and improving the lot of the people will end in fiasco. The Janata Party Government has learnt no lesson from the performance of the Congress Government for the last thirty years.

Authoritarian Forces Rear Their Head Again*

Statement of the Central Committee of CPI(M)

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), after its meeting held in New Delhi from March 3 to 7, 1978 issued the following statement to the Press on March 5, 1978

The election results, especially in the two States of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, have once more focussed attention on the fact that the forces justifying Emergency and dictatorship have yet to be isolated from the people and the battle against them has not yet been won. The Indira Congress is now in a position to establish its Ministry in the two States. In Maharashtra also, the two Congresses together are very near securing a majority of seats and their total strength exceeds that of the Janata Party. These developments have once more shown that the isolation of the Congress organisation from the people has only been half done and vast sections are still unaware of the great harm done by Congress policies during the Emergency and before it.

That this development should take place eleven months after the electoral rout of the Congress in March last year and its subsequent defeat in the June elections, only underlines the many weaknesses in the functioning of the Janata Party Government at the Centre and in the various States. It is obvious that large sections of the masses in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh could hardly feel any difference since the Janata Government assumed power at the Centre.

Anti People Policies

Even though parliamentary norms and liberties were restored, the MISA continues to disfigure the Statute Book to this day

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, March 12, 1978

In the various States ruled by the Janata Party, strikes were being suppressed, ordinances were being passed and a mini MISA was enacted to suppress the electricity workers' strike in Madhya Pradesh. In several places police opened fire on striking workers, teachers, doctors and engineers had to undergo the humiliation of incarceration and beatings at the hands of the police and in many places the landlords as if armed with a new mandate mercilessly attacked the agricultural labourers and Harijans.

Besides, an additional weakness in Andhra Pradesh was that the Janata Government at the Centre failed to dismiss the notorious Vengal Rao Ministry under whose regime a large number of Naxalites were murdered by the police and the people were repressed. The Janata Party in the State also failed to strike roots among the people championing the democratic rights and economic demands of the common man. It has at the same time to be noted that in Andhra Pradesh many Indira Congress candidates used enormous money power to secure electoral gains.

Disappointing Performance

The economic performance of the Government was not only disappointing, it badly affected the interests of the people.

The Government has failed to bring down prices and give relief to the people. The workers' and employees' demands met with growing resistance. As regards the peasantry, liquidation of earlier Land Reforms Acts was advocated to bolster the interests of the big holders. There was hardly any attempt to implement sincerely the minimum wages Act for the agricultural labourers. The promise to tackle the unemployment problem remained enclosed in the election manifesto.

If the Janata Party remained blind to this misperformance, the Indira Congress and Reddy Congress fully utilised these weaknesses in their agitation among the people. Indira Gandhi in particular laid stress on the attacks on Harijans and Muslim minorities, the failure to hold the price line and the stagnant condition of the economy. The argument that for thirty years she herself had pursued the same policies could only be a debating retort but not a convincing answer to an electorate which was

suffering extreme hardship from the ever rising prices and which expected the Janata Party to bring at least partial relief to them

Hindi Fanaticism

The situation was further worsened by the fanatical advocacy of Hindi on the floor of Parliament by many adherents of the Janata Party and the open opposition of its leaders to any democratic change in the Centre State relations under the Indian Constitution. The Prime Minister even opposed a national debate on the question.

Not satisfied with this, some Central leaders of the Janata Party took an openly anti strike and anti working class attitude on many occasions and supported the Maharashtra Government of the Congress Party in its denial of the basically just demands of the State Government employees who were on strike.

It would, therefore, be erroneous to think that the policies pursued by the Janata Party have nothing to do with the big victory of the Indira Congress in the two States and its near victory in the State of Maharashtra. Any one who misses the link between the performance of the Janata Party and the victory of the Congress only lives in a world of self complacency and unreality. It is for the Janata Party leaders and members to understand that they are at least partially responsible for the reinforcement of the forces that openly and brazenly not only stand for dictatorship but justify it as an electoral platform.

The election results would certainly have been very different if the Central and State Governments of the Janata Party had firmly stood, like the West Bengal Left Front Government, by the democratic rights of the people, refusing to deploy the police against popular movements and determinedly carried out a policy of giving immediate and direct relief to the rural and urban poverty stricken masses. Such a performance would have been an eloquent testimony to the sincerity of the Janata Government regarding its electoral promises. It would have meant a new glow of hope to the weaker sections who in a large measure voted for the Indira Congress in the two States.

It was thought that the split in the Congress ranks, the division of the parent organisation into two rival organisations would offer an easy victory to the Janata Party. It is now clear that in the two States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka a substantially major portion of the Congress following has supported Indira Gandhi, even in Maharashtra she has won an almost equal number of seats with the Reddy Congress. In Assam the Indira Congress appears to be a much smaller force than the other wing. The fact, however, is that large sections have shown their preference for the Indira Congress which attacked the Reddy Chavan Congress for pursuing a compromising policy and presented itself as uncompromisingly opposed to the Janata Party. It only bespeaks of a sharper process of polarisation between the two parties, a polarisation which does not admit easily of a compromise.

Urgency For Measures

The fact has to be noted that the Indira Congress was able to secure big majorities in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and a very big vote in Maharashtra despite the exposures of the crimes of her administration before the Shah Commission. It only shows that the mass of the rural people are yet unaware of the enormity of these misdeeds and she was able to appear successfully before them in the two States as the champion of the Harijans and the downtrodden. It also shows the urgency of the Central and State Governments taking quick ameliorative measures to do justice to the Harijans and the weaker sections. Failure in this direction in the last eleven months has enabled Indira Gandhi to exploit it for electoral purposes.

Accentuation Of Struggle

The electoral developments leading to the formation of two Indira Congress Ministries are bound to accentuate the struggle between the forces of dictatorship and democracy and more so between the party in power and the party out of power. The electoral battle is not the end of this conflict but the conflict will now again appear in sharper and sharper form on issues of policy,

on issues of Centre State relations and several other questions, affecting the lives of the people

This conflict will again involve large sections of the people one way or the other with the Indira Congress trying to consolidate its hold and gaining additional following to discredit the Janata Party and its programme. For the people as a whole this battle will be a part of the battle of the democratic forces against dictatorship, a part of the battle to isolate the Indira Congress and its platform, a task which can be discharged only if the Janata Party fulfils its democratic commitments and does not allow the initiative to pass into opposite hands

In present day conditions, democratic commitments cannot be fulfilled until and unless the present economic policies undergo a very important change. It has been found again and again that political democracy without minimum economic democracy and equality remains just a word, a list of formal rights which have very little basis in actual practice. For thirty years the Congress served the interests of the upper classes and in the end had to demolish democracy guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. This will be the fate of every party which, whatever its professions about protecting democracy, succumbs to the economic influence of the vested interests. The Janata Party, therefore, has to reassess not only its democratic performance but its economic policies also.

It is an amazing thing to see the leaders of the Janata Party even now advocating the retention of Preventive Detention on the Statute Book. It is equally shocking to find that the latest budget of the Janata Government is nothing but a carbon copy of the many infamous budgets prepared by the previous Congress Government.

The electoral reverses of the Janata Party—in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka—were partly due to its failure to mobilise all anti dictatorial forces.

Our Party has consistently worked for unity of the democratic forces, for electoral understanding between them to inflict a defeat, on the forces of dictatorship represented by the Congress. Concentrating on the defeat of these forces is the most important

task of the moment Our Party had offered majority of seats to the Janata Party during the West Bengal Assembly elections, despite our unassailable strength

In Tripura also our Party endeavoured to maintain the unity of the democratic forces and protect the immediate interests of the masses by agreeing to work in a coalition Ministry with the Janata Party

Partisan Aims

Recent elections again reveal that some leaders of the Janata Party at the Centre and in the States are totally oblivious of the importance of all in unity to defeat the Congress and behave as if they are in monopolist possession of the masses, and recklessly pursue partisan aims

In Assam they refused to have any understanding with our Party, dividing the anti dictatorial vote But for this break the Janata Party and its allies would have been in a completely dominating position in the Assembly

Break with PWP

In Maharashtra the short sighted and partisan behaviour of some Janata Party leaders from the centre broke the understanding with the Peasants' and Workers' Party which led to loss of not less than thirty seats, depriving the Janata Party and its allies of a comfortable majority It is clear that such behaviour endangered the fight against authoritarian dictatorship

Our Party played an important role in bringing an understanding between the Janata and Peasants' and Workers' Party The Janata leader, Sri S M Joshi, understood the urgent need for unity and agreed to our proposal to give eighty seats to the PWP For no reason this arrangement was torpedoed by some Central Ministers who must bear the responsibility for the huge success of the two Congresses

Our Party, however, continued its efforts for unity and reached an understanding with the Janata in Andhra Pradesh and Mahasashtra Unfortunately, the blind and grabbing attitude of Karnataka Janata leaders prevented an understanding in that

State It is time that the Janata leaders put a curb on these disruptive tendencies in their party and call on all to put the interests of the anti dictatorial struggle above everything

Taking into consideration the need of fighting the reactionary forces of dictatorship, our Party has announced its support to the formation of Janata Ministries in Maharashtra and Assam Our Party is, of course, unable to participate in the Ministry but will lend its support to all measures which help democratic advance, rebuff dictatorship and protect the economic interests of the masses

CPI(M)'s Advance

The Central Committee congratulates the State Committees of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Assam on their electoral advance In Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, the Party fought the battle in co operation with the Janata Party In Assam, the Party had not only to fight the two Congresses but also the Janata Party, and we carried on the contest in co operation with other Left parties Our gains in Assam, therefore, earned under very difficult conditions, reveals the consolidated strength that the Party has developed Our Party's growth in these three States will be of great help in the struggle for maintaining democratic unity and carrying on an uncompromising fight against the forces of authoritarianism

The wholesale importation by the Janata of the most discredited elements in the Congress as the new champions of democracy created a feeling of revulsion among the more intelligent sections of the people Wishing to secure easy electoral victory, former Chief Ministers, defectors, ardent supporters of the Emergency, corrupt elements, everyone who was prepared to accept the Janata ticket was pressed into service to fight the Congress In the rural areas, landlords and the vested interests who distinguished themselves by their harassment of the common man and oppression of the Harijans figured as the new knights defending democracy The Janata Party had promised to the people a clean administration and yet it was supporting compromising elements, who as Congress leaders and Ministers

had amassed huge fortunes. This spectacle of corrupt and discredited Congressmen occupying a permanent place on the Janata side certainly neutralised a section of the electorate.

Image Compromised

The image of the Janata Party is being compromised by the egregious attempts of the RSS leaders to put their stamp on the organisation and their efforts to secure all the vantage points in the Government. This fact has been noted by the democratic elements in the Party who have started rousing the members to this danger. It is no use the Party leaders assuring the people that no such moves are afoot and everything is alright within the Party.

RSS Menace

The struggle for getting RSS nominees in State Ministries, the display of parades and RSS strength have created feelings of revulsion and concern in the minds of large sections of our people. Very few know that some Janata candidates belonging to the RSS carried on openly Hindu chauvinist propaganda ending their speeches with "Jai Janata, Jai Hindu". Taking into consideration the wide apprehensions among the minority community, it will be disastrous if the Left and democratic forces do not counter this evil and prevent disruption of democratic unity. The effect on the Muslim minority especially has been calamitous and it was fully exploited by Indira Gandhi.

All those who stand for democracy wish that the Janata Party puts its own house in order.

For the democratic movement the situation is a complicated and difficult one. The main opponent of democracy and parliamentary norms has again reared its head by misleading lakhs of people into its camp. Complacency, lack of vigilance, and failure to keep up popular resistance to dictatorship will mean disaster. All hands must pull together to fight the forces of authoritarian rule and vanquish them. Once again, the all important task is to mobilise the people for anti authoritarian struggle.

Nine Point Programme

It is necessary to take quick steps to see that the dictatorial forces are not able to utilise their ministerial positions as a jumping off ground for launching conspiracies against democracy. Against the platform of Indira Gandhi with its justification of Emergency the democratic forces must put forward their democratic platform for immediate action. They must demand (1) withdrawal of MISA, and all provisions for preventive detention from the Constitution, withdrawal of the Government's proposal to make preventive detention a part of the ordinary law, (2) withdrawal of 42nd Amendment Act, (3) abolition of RAW, (4) provision in the Constitution to put all fundamental rights beyond the mischief of any Government or party, (5) electoral reforms with proportional representation, reducing voting age to 18 and right to recall to assert the supremacy of the people over their representatives, (6) dialogue on Centre State relations, (7) equality of all Indian languages—no imposition of Hindi, (8) amendment of provisions regarding declaration of Emergency, (9) amelioration of the conditions of the people.

Immediate Task

To work ceaselessly for the realisation of these demands is the responsibility of all the Left and democratic forces. These forces which understand the weakness of the Janata Party's policies and understand the importance of defending the economic interests of the masses must join together to stop this drift in the ruling party's policies, exert their pressure for fulfilling its democratic commitments and create a viable force which will attract more and more people towards itself. This task has to be done and discharged, otherwise there will be a tendency towards further drift.

Against Vacillations

The compromising elements in the Janata Party will take advantage of the Congress strength to go slow with democratic and economic reforms and there will be an attempt to isolate the

Left and democratic forces in the country. It is, therefore, more than necessary to mobilise all the Left and democratic elements in all parties for the firm implementation of a policy consistently defending democracy and evoking the support and sympathies of the masses. Our Party once again calls upon all these elements to join together and wage continuous criticism and struggle against all vacillations and drift.

Our Party considers that the role played by the Right C P leadership in the recent elections once more demarcates them as collaborators with the Congress. In Karnataka, they allied themselves with the Indira Congress. In Andhra Pradesh they allied themselves with the Reddy Congress, and in certain constituencies, they worked for the Indira Congress refusing to direct the electoral battle against the architects and supporters of Emergency.

Objectively they once again became the allies of the forces of dictatorship, going against the interests of the people. Besides their entire understanding and plea that the forces of dictatorship were already routed has proved to be bankrupt. It was only a plea to divert attention from a fight against the main culprit.

Our Party wants the Right C P ranks to join the mainstream of the democratic movement and welcomes their growing resistance to the revisionist and reactionary policies of the leadership. The leaders are again going wrong because they seek to justify their entire past and do not have the courage to admit that the support to the authoritarian Emergency logically followed from their policies of class collaboration.

There is now a panicky trend inside the Chavan Reddy Congress to join the Indira Congress and present a solid front against the Janata. The advocates of this trend will only consolidate the forces of dictatorship and install Indira Gandhi as their supreme leader. Bewildered by this, some Left and democratic elements in this organisation are likely to lose their firmness not knowing which way to turn. The same thing is likely to happen to the Left and democratic elements in the Janata Party. The rising menace of the Congress will be used as a plea for stopping all inner party discussions, i.e., for blind acceptance of the policies of the leadership.

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Our Party warns against these likely developments and calls upon these elements to stand firm on the basis of mass support. Today, the united trade union movement and the strength of the mass organisations mostly led by Left and democratic parties is a factor influencing the policies of the Government and if these forces rely on this mass strength they will have no reason to retreat or vacillate.

With the election results foreshadowing an intensified struggle for democracy and against the forces of authoritarian dictatorship, the CPI(M) appeals to all Left and democratic forces to stand together and be ready to mobilise all popular forces to give a rebuff to the upholders of Emergency, ruthlessly fight against all compromises and overcome the weakness in policies and performance.

Reception Committee's Welcome Address*

**Delivered by Satwant Singh on April 2, 1978
At Jullundur Inaugurating the Tenth Congress
of The Communist Party of India (Marxist)**

I heartily welcome all the delegates and observers to the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) who have gathered here from all parts of the country. This is the second time in twenty years, after the Amritsar Congress in 1958, that Punjab has been given the opportunity to host the Party Congress. Not only do we feel honoured to have been given this privilege, we are also hoping to learn a great deal from the discussions in the Congress where leading comrades of the Party will take part. Meeting after six years since the 1972 Madurai Congress we hope that this Congress would prove to be a great occasion in the life both of our Party in particular and the country in general.

Difficult Period

The six year period since Madurai has been one of the most difficult in the history of our Party. In West Bengal a reign of semi fascist terror had been imposed, which led to the killing of 1,200 of our comrades and caused immense sufferings, torture and imprisonment to thousands of others. Similarly, severe repression was launched against our Party and its mass organisations in Kerala and Tripura. The repression reached its peak and assumed national scale during the period of Emergency, when all democratic rights were taken away and a ruthless, authoritarian regime was installed.

As always, our Party was the first to identify and raise its voice against this trend towards authoritarianism and one party dictatorial rule. In the Political Resolution of the Madurai

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, April 16, 1978. The Tenth Party Congress of CPI(M) was held at Jullundur on April 2-8, 1978.

Congress, the Party gave a call for the broadest possible democratic unity in order to fight this menace. And since then, particularly during the Emergency, we left no stone unturned to build such unity. The traumatic experience of the dark days of 1975-77 has vindicated our political position, while it goes to the credit of the entire Party—from the leadership at the top to every ordinary member—that we have survived the vicious offensive of the Government to destroy the Party and have emerged once again as a major factor in the politics of the country. For this we should also remain grateful forever to the Indian people, who gave our comrades shelter, food, security and courage and through many protests—both open and silent—eventually defeated the forces of authoritarianism in the Lok Sabha elections in March 1977.

The Punjab Movement

Since the Congress is taking place in Punjab perhaps you might wish to know something about the Communist movement in this State. The movement has a long history in Punjab. It began almost immediately after the Great October Revolution in 1917, at the same time when it began in Calcutta and Bombay. The inspiration and cadres for the building of the Party in Punjab came principally from three sources.

The first group comprised those who were initially inspired by the Khilafat, and joined the Muhajareens and then left for Turkey via Afghanistan. Many of them, after failing to go to Turkey, decided instead to go to the Soviet Union to fight the forces of reaction and imperialism and in defence of Socialism. One of them was Mohammad Ali, who came from this district and eventually became one of the founder members of the Communist Party of India which was formed in Tashkent in 1920-21. This great revolutionary died a martyr's death at the hands of Hitler soldiers during the Second World War. Another Muhajar who subsequently became an important leader of our Party was Ferozuddin Mansur. He was arrested after crossing the Pamir and became one of the accused in the famous Peshawar Conspiracy Case, the first major trial of Communists in this country. Mansur contributed a great deal to the popularisation of the ideals of

Socialism and after the partition of the country, he became the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Pakistan Like Mohammad Ali, Mansur died a martyr's death from inhuman torture in Pakistani prisons Another Muhajar to mention is Ghulam Hussain who after returning to India started the Urdu weekly INQILAB (Revolution) There were many others, who gave their brain and muscle to building the Party and Socialist consciousness after their return from Moscow

The second source was those associated with the Gadar Party Punjab being an agricultural State, life here has always been profoundly influenced by the performance of the agricultural sector and weather conditions Land relations, years of bad weather and harvest have tended to push people out of land in search of job, food and shelter into other areas, including other States of India and even across the international frontiers One such agricultural crisis in 1901-1905 led to a large migratory flow, many going to Canada and the United States It is those Indians abroad who formed the Gadar Party in 1913 with the objective of liberating India When their attempt to liberate the country from outside failed, many of them came to realise the need for organising the masses in anti imperialist struggle After the Revolution of 1917 many of them came under the influence of Marxism, and these leaders of the Gadar Party played an important role in the birth and development of the Communist movement in Punjab

Let me mention in particular two Gadar leaders who helped in the initial stage—Bhai Rattan Singh and Bhai Santokh Singh—both of whom went to Moscow and had the privilege of meeting Comrade Lenin Both of them were highly impressed by what they saw in the Soviet Union, and became convinced of the need to transform their organisation into one committed to Socialist revolution Bhai Rattan Singh began touring various countries in order to mobilise overseas Indians and to select students for the Moscow University of the Toilers of the East, while Bhai Santokh Singh returned to India for work here Bhai Rattan Singh eventually had the honour of attending the Third Congress of the Communist International and of replacing Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on

the Executive of the League Against Imperialism in 1931. He died in 1943 in Italy after prolonged illness, working till his last breath for the cause of Indian Independence and Socialist revolution. Bhai Santokh Singh was instrumental in propagating the ideals of Socialism among the members of the Akali and Congress parties, and in 1926 began publishing from Amritsar a monthly paper called *KIRTI* (worker). With the help of Baba Karam Singh Cheema and Bhag Singh Canadian, two other prominent leaders who contributed a great deal to the establishment of the Communist movement in Punjab. Later the two leaders took initiative to form in December 1927 the Peasants' and Workers' Party in Punjab. Their efforts were supplemented by many erstwhile members of the Gadar Party who returned to India after studying at the Moscow University of Toilers of the East.

The third source was the militant elements among the Akalis and Congressmen who became disillusioned with the national movement led by Gandhi, and particularly after the success of the Bolshevik Revolution, they now found the path of salvation of the Indian people. Later on they formed a militant youth organisation called *Nau Jawan Bharat Sabha*. This Sabha included those who came from the working class and peasant movement of that time.

With time, along with the organisations of workers and peasants grew the organisations of students and youth. Although the peasant organisations were banned several times, every time they reappeared under a different name. When the All India Kisan Sabha was formed in 1935, Punjab became its strongest unit. All these formed the basis of the growth and success of the Communist movement in the State, which represented the glorious revolutionary tradition of Punjab, a tradition created among others by the Muhajarees, members of the Gadar Party, Babar Akalis and Bhagat Singh and his associates.

Growing Influence

In the famous Meerut Conspiracy Case three of the accused were from Punjab. The Conspiracy Case contributed considerably to the propagation of the ideals of scientific Socialism in the State.

The growing influence of the illegal Party was also reflected in the elections held in 1937 under the 1935 Government of India Act, which returned seven Communists to the State Assembly. The influence even spread among the Congress and the Communists became an effective political force in the pre-Independence Congress Party. The Communist movement was further strengthened when many Babar Akalis, including most of the colleagues of Bhagat Singh, joined the Party after their release from long imprisonment. Another landmark in the history of the Party was reached at the time of the partition of the country, when the Party fought with conviction and courage the evil forces of communalism, and its members risked their lives to protect the minorities on both sides.

As under British colonial rule, the Communists in Punjab had to face many attacks and repressive measures from the ruling Congress Party. Not only did the Party survive those, it successfully led many movements of the workers, peasants and students. A major struggle of the post-Independence period was on the issue of Betterment Levy in 1959, which united all sections of the peasantry and was sustained in solid defiance of all kinds of intimidation and repression, lathi charges and firings. This struggle forced the State Government to withdraw the Betterment Levy to the tune of Rs. 136 crores. The place where we are holding the Congress was an important centre of this historic struggle.

No less significant has been the role of the Punjab State unit of the Party in its fight against the dual challenge of revisionism and adventurism. We are proud that not only the vast majority of the Party membership rallied behind the CPI(M), more than 70 per cent of the leadership of the united Party at the district and State levels rejected revisionism and joined us. Moreover more than 80 per cent of those whose membership dated from the days of the illegal Party decided to join our Party.

Our Party today represents the best of the traditions of the revolutionary movement in the State. As in the pre-Independence days our commitment to anti-imperialist struggle continues. During the fifties, Comrade Karnail Singh died at the hands of the

Portuguese imperialists in the fight for the liberation of Goa. Similarly, the other major aspects of the tradition—consistent, uncompromising fight against bourgeois landlord rule—is being intensified through many struggles of workers, peasants, landless and middle class

All these should not imply that we claim to be a very strong party. We are aware that our Party is still weak. We have been analysing both the subjective and the objective factors which explain our weaknesses, and the tasks which should be implemented in order to make the Party stronger. Punjab still remains very much an agricultural State, with very few big industries and a working class which is numerically quite small. Furthermore, until recently a major weakness of our activities was that we concentrated more on the issues affecting the entire peasantry than the issues which directly concern the poor peasants and the agricultural labourers. Our organisation among the agricultural labourers was weak. But recently in certain areas we seem to have succeeded in making a breakthrough among the poorest sections of the rural people. And in future years we hope to give this task a high priority. The Party has also made some headway among the students and youth. Our influence is growing everywhere and it is no exaggeration to say that a large section of the democratic minded people look towards us for leadership. No less significant is the fact that in the preparation for the Party Congress we got fullest cooperation from all sections of people—workers, agricultural labourers, peasants, middle class—all of whom enthusiastically helped financially and otherwise. The Party Congress also gave impetus to the comrades and sympathisers to spread the message of the Party throughout the length and breadth of the State. We are sincerely hoping that the holding of the Congress here would make a considerable impact on the development of the Party in Punjab.

Before I conclude, I sincerely hope that you will enjoy your stay here. The people of Punjab are known for their hospitality—and we hope to maintain that tradition of the State's culture too. Although we have tried to the best of our ability to do whatever we thought was necessary for the success of the Congress, there

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might still be many shortcomings in the preparations. I hope that the delegates and observers would not hesitate to point to us our mistakes, and we on our part promise full cooperation in meeting your needs.

In the end, I again welcome you all, members of the Central Committee, delegates to the Party Congress and observers, to the Tenth Congress of our Party, the Party of the working class representing the interests of the Indian people, the Party which is committed to fight against the forces of authoritarianism and dictatorship, the Party which will lead the country to building a Left and democratic alternative as a real alternative, the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

**LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
(MARXIST)!**

**LONG LIVE UNITY OF WORKERS AND PEASANTS!
DOWN WITH THE FORCES OF AUTHORITARIANISM
AND DICTATORSHIP!**

LONG LIVE LEFT AND DEMOCRATIC UNITY!

Political Resolution*

**Adopted by The Tenth Congress of
The Communist Party of India (Marxist)
Held at Jullundur on April 28, 1978**

The period since the last Congress of our Party witnessed the most profound crisis of capitalism since the end of the Second World War leading to the aggravation of all the contradictions of the period

The most outstanding historic achievement of the period was the victory of the people of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and the defeat in the battlefield of the powerful U S military forces. It is the fourth biggest defeat of world imperialism since the Great October Revolution, a common victory of the Socialist Camp, the world working class and the national liberation movement. The three victorious peoples broke away from the world of capitalism and imperialism, reminding the working class that ours was an epoch of transition from capitalism to Socialism.

The liberation of Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Angola marked the downfall of the piratical Portuguese empire supported by the imperialist forces.

The armed struggle of the people of Zimbabwe continues unabated, despite the honeyed diplomacy and false promises of the imperialists. The attempts to inveigle the freedom fighters in endless discussion with the usurper Ian Smith have failed. The people of Namibia are continuing their armed struggle against the illegal occupation of their territory by South Africa.

Racist South Africa witnesses an unprecedented revolutionary upsurge in which hundreds are killed by the South African regime. The shock waves of this raw inhuman repression compel the imperialists to protest, sometimes even support resolutions against South Africa in the U N. But their tactics get exposed and their capacity to befool the fighting people has been reduced to nil.

*Published as a booklet in May 1978

With the old colonialist system crumbling before their eyes, the imperialists try to regain their lost influence and control through puppets, agents and adventurers. In Chile, their agents brought about the downfall of the Allende Government and installed fascism, in Indonesia, they finance and support the outright fascist regime of Suharto, in Bangladesh, they brought about the murder of Mujibur Rahman, in Thailand their agents are busy supporting one coup after another. And yet on the morrow of their success in several countries, they again face opposition and confrontation from the people.

A fierce battle is still on, with the imperialists on the losing side.

World Capitalist Crisis

The period witnessed the most profound crisis of capitalism since the end of the Second World War. This was the first post war crisis which simultaneously affected all capitalist countries. Its profound character was fully seen in the fact that it engulfed not only spheres of production and consumption, but also the monetary and credit spheres.

If in the earlier periodical crises after the Second World War, there were only declines in the rate of growth of production, now there was sharp decline in absolute production in two successive years, 1974 and 1975.

It was also reflected in the tremendous growth of unemployment which, according to the International Labour Organisation, reached 16 million in 23 countries surveyed. According to the same source there were seven million unemployed in the U.S.A. and 5.5 million in the EEC countries. Figures for other capitalist countries were equally alarming.

The crisis broke out in the midst of unprecedented inflation which multiplied the miseries of the working class.

Since then fear of stagnation on the one hand and inflation on the other has been haunting the minds of bourgeois administrators.

All these have led to profound socio-political consequences.

The myth sought to be created by bourgeois economists that monopoly capitalism in a number of leading capitalist countries which had built a huge military-industrial complex by inflationary

financing was in a position to 'regulate' capitalism, that a new 'people's capitalism' has now emerged, etc , has been exploded forever

Apart from transferring the burdens of the crisis to the working class and people of their own countries, the imperialists also transferred a considerable part of the crisis to the Third World countries

This they did by increasing the prices of the goods they exported to these countries and paying considerably less to the primary commodities they imported from them, by increasing the rate of interest on the borrowings from the International Development Agency which was supposed to be the soft loan window of the World Bank to help the developing countries

The retaliatory measures taken by the oil producing countries by raising the price of oil sharpened the severity of the crisis

The intensity of the general crisis of capitalism is seen in the fact that even a modest rate of recovery of around five per cent has alarmed the capitalists of the concerned countries They fear that an accentuated growth rate would lead to unmanageable inflation, increase of unemployment, and breakdown of the system

Thus the general crisis has reached a stage where capitalism cannot attain even the pre crisis equilibrium in the spheres of production, prices and employment The technological revolution, which should enable maximising production and removing want and misery, has the opposite effect under the rule of monopoly capital The fundamental laws of capitalism assert themselves with greater force People are enabled to see the superiority of the socialist system over capitalism more clearly day by day

All these developments tremendously accentuate all the contradictions of our epoch which, in turn, accentuate the general crisis of capitalism.

Contradiction Between Working Class and the Capitalist Class

This contradiction expresses itself in the increased number of prolonged strikes since 1973 1974 The U S A, Britain, France,

West Germany, Italy saw repeated strike waves, strikes often breaking over the heads of the reformist leadership to resist the attempts of the capitalist ruling classes to pass on the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of the working class

On the continent of Europe, besides, the crisis saw the liquidation of the fascist rule in Spain and Portugal with the Communist Parties occupying a prominent place among the democratic forces. In the same period, the military junta in Greece was overthrown

The Communist Parties of France and Italy have become stronger parties, the former increasing its electoral strength still further in the recent elections

All these are big advances for the working class of Europe and mark a growing radicalisation of the working class and democratic forces in these important capitalist countries, within the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism

This period had seen growing working class actions in the U S A, U K, France, Italy, Japan and other developed capitalist countries although most of these actions were confined to economic demands

Inter Imperialist Contradictions

The intensification of inter imperialist contradictions was seen in a series of economic questions and policies—monetary reform, tariff measures against imports from other countries, role of gold in the international payments system, special drawing rights, attitude to oil producing countries and the immediate questions concerning military alliances

The world market having shrunk due to the crisis, economic rivalries between advanced capitalist countries have sharpened as never before. The conflict between Japan and the U S A, between West Germany and the USA, is leading to threats of protectionism in the U S A. The export of West German and especially Japanese goods to the U S A has evoked protests and there have been strong U S pressures against both these countries to lower their trade balance, open their countries to U S goods and to raise the value of their currency to facilitate U S imports

Both on questions of economic and political policies, the conflict often takes the form of sharp differences between the U S and its other partners

They are unable to take joint measures against the sharpened economic crisis, and work at cross purposes Military alliances have been weakened and SEATO has been dissolved On several questions compromises have been struck, with the U S A being forced to withdraw from its original dominating position Some refuse to fall in line with U S A 's intransigent position on the demands of the Third World countries and want to accommodate them, particularly their former colonies, to some extent

The EEC has become a powerful centre of rivalry to the U S economic domination, with West Germany, France, Italy and Britain accounting for 44 per cent of world exports of manufactures (excluding military hardware and armaments) as against the U S A 's share of 16.9 per cent

On the question of sale of nuclear processing plants, serious conflicts have developed between France and West Germany determined to break the U S monopoly in this sphere, and the U S A

Intensification of the Contradictions Between Imperialism and Third World Countries

Despite the collapse of the colonial system, the contradictions between imperialism and the Third World countries including their ruling classes have intensified with the acute crisis of capitalism

The debt burdens of these countries to the imperialists mounted up to 120 billion dollars by 1973 and has been rising at the rate of 20 billion dollars per annum The mounting debt charges together with the price of unequal trade drain away the resources required for development In consequence, economic growth is extremely low or stagnant

Faced by this reality, the ruling classes of these countries make joint demands on the imperialists at the U N and World Bank gatherings and conferences A new world order, ending of unequal trade, removal of tariff barriers for import of commodities from these countries, rescheduling of debt payments, easing of the terms

of aid, transfer of technology, right to dispose of their natural resources in accordance with their national interests, including the right to nationalise the foreign companies who exploit these resources, etc —such have been the demands

The non aligned movement has become strengthened with the sharpened contradiction between imperialism and the under developed countries In the non aligned conferences, U S and other imperialists are openly attacked for their military and other forms of support to forces fighting against national liberation Multinationals and neo colonialists are unreservedly condemned In all these they are supported by the countries of the socialist world In the U N also the non aligned countries constitute a powerful force exposing and defeating many imperialist machinations and conspiracies The united opposition to South Africa and Rhodesia forced the imperialists to give up their naked support to racial rule and verbally accept the principle of majority rule The existence of the socialist world and the growth of its might embolden these countries to take up positions of opposition to imperialism as detailed above

The U S imperialists have encouraged Somalia to attack Ethiopia But the massive aid from the USSR and the military advisers from Cuba played a significant role in rebuffing the aggression And recently, after the successful disruption of Arab unity, the U S imperialists have encouraged Israel to attack the forces of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in Lebanon

In Latin America also, the U S imperialists met with severe reverses Apart from the rise in mass resistances, the special committee of the Organisation of American States (OAS) was dissolved, thus ending the blockade of socialist Cuba The OAS condemned the military junta in Chile in scathing terms for its terror against the democrats and demanded an end to the lawlessness and the restoration of human rights

While welcoming these developments, the class limitations of the Governments of the Third World countries have to be kept in mind Only the strength of the democratic movements inside these countries can make non alignment a consistent policy Weakness in the internal democratic movement leads to inconsistencies,

instability and reversal as have been recently witnessed in Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc

The rulers of a number of these countries have allied themselves with U S imperialism. Among the rest, a big number have embarked upon the path of developing capitalism without destroying the pre capitalist socio economic relations in their countries and rely to a large extent on all types of aid from the imperialists for development. This policy and the growth of contradictions between the ruling classes and the peoples of these countries constitute the fertile breeding ground for the emergence of dictatorship. The weaknesses of the working class and its inability to rally together all the democratic forces seriously hamper the struggle against the forces of dictatorship.

The U S imperialist diplomacy has recently recorded a Machiavellian triumph in securing the services of Sadat to split the united Arab front and open negotiations with Israel. This was preceded by anti Soviet steps on the part of Sadat and a U S conspiracy to end the influence of socialist countries in the Middle East. Never before was the class selfishness of the ruling classes of some of these countries seen in this gross fashion. The oil money of Saudi Arabia, the strongest friend of the U S A, has played a big role in these nefarious dealings.

A huge part of the wealth accumulated by the oil price hike has been used by the Governments of a number of these countries for importing luxury goods from the imperialist countries. Only a small part is being utilised for developing some industrial complexes in these countries and an insignificant part is being offered as aid to the Third World countries. No wonder that President Castro of Cuba declared recently that the worst sufferers of the oil price hike were the developing countries.

Neo Colonialism and the Third World

Of particular importance to our people and the peoples of the Third World countries are the new methods that imperialism has resorted to in view of the rise in anti imperialist feelings in these countries.

Utilising the reliance of the ruling classes in Third World countries on economic aid from the imperialist countries, the imperialists offer to help them in building their industries. They seek to appease them by aiding to a certain extent development of certain type of industries which require low technique and which can produce 'industrial' raw material needed by the new type of industries that have arisen, as a result of the technological revolution in the advanced capitalist countries.

The aim of the scheme is to seek collaboration with local bourgeoisie for new opening for foreign monopoly capital. The foreign monopolists offer to invest in these countries by promising urgently needed capital goods and technical know-how. Their aim is to transfer to these countries industry with outmoded technology, which is profitable to them because of the cheap labour available in the Third World countries. They intend to monopolise the most technically developed modern industries for their own countries.

Through these means imperialism seeks to secure a new social support for itself in these countries, while at the same time creating a feeling among the people that it is assisting in the industrialisation of these countries. For this purpose, even multinationals who have their subsidiaries in these countries are prepared to modify their agreements from time to time. They are prepared to dilute their shares and sell a percentage of these shares to the local capitalists. The main strings, of course, they keep in their hands.

All this helps the imperialists to keep these countries tied to the world capitalist market. This kind of collaboration also enables them to sell their machines, spare parts, etc. at inflated prices to these countries thereby increasing their control through underhand means.

In the case of the industrially advanced countries of the Third World like India, they are prepared to open the markets to some extent for export of products of ancillary industries certain type of engineering goods, machine-tools, etc. Also the bait is given to junior partnership in the projects they build in other Third World countries or sub-contracts in these projects.

In this process of various types of collaboration, the imperialists are forging link with the bureaucrats, politicians and even the management personnel of public sector undertakings

Imperialism Versus Socialist World

In the period since the last Congress, the socialist world was immensely strengthened by the resounding victories of the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea

The further steady and uninterrupted economic growth of the USSR, China and all the Socialist countries stood in good contrast to the deepening crisis of the capitalist world

Apart from these outstanding successés, this period also witnessed many important victories for the Socialist world over the imperialists

Taiwan was expelled from the United Nations and the People's Republic of China took its rightful place in the U N and became a permanent member of the Security Council

As noted earlier, the U S instigated blockade of socialist Cuba by the South American States had to be lifted

Another important development was the acceptance of detente by the imperialists, and the successful conclusion of the Helsinki Conference on Peace and Co operation among European countries, which was attended by the U S A The Final Act of the Conference, as the declaration adopted at the conclusion of the conference has come to be known, accepted many fundamental principles like peaceful coexistence, non interference in the internal affairs of other states, inviolability of the frontiers and territorial integrity of states

As a result, the German Democratic Republic has received international recognition and a large number of states have normalised their relations with the GDR The Oder Neisse western frontier of Poland, the frontiers of the GDR and Czechoslovakia have been internationally confirmed Thus the Munich diktat has been invalidated once for all in legal terms

This important advance of the socialist world and the retreat of the imperialists was made possible by the shift in the balance of forces on a world scale, the intensity of the desire for peace of the

peoples of Europe, and above all, the growing industrial and military might of the socialist countries, particularly of the USSR

The rapid development of socialist economies enables them to render economic aid to the underdeveloped countries and end the imperialist monopoly in supply of capital goods and technology. The military strength of the socialist countries often helps the underdeveloped nations to defeat imperialist machinations backed by arms. These developments add to the intensity of the conflicts between the two worlds.

Only the most gullible could have believed that the formal acceptance of detente by the imperialists would solve important problems. On the morrow of the signing of the Helsinki agreement, the imperialists started repudiating it in various ways. They refused to give it publicity. They raised a howl over the alleged violation of human rights in the USSR to stall the implementation of the agreement. They sought open interference in the internal affairs of the socialist countries, shamelessly screening the violations of human rights in their territories.

They not only stalled negotiations on Strategic Arms Limitation but have now produced a diabolical weapon of destruction, the Neutron Bomb, which specialises in killing people while keeping property intact for the occupiers of a country. And this nuclear weapon is presented as a conventional weapon so that it can be used freely in any conflict.

The overthrow of the Allende Government, increase of U.S. military strength in South Korea, its military conspiracy to dismember Cyprus with a view to having its military bases in that strategic island, the conclusion of an agreement with the Government of Greece to have 26 bases for surveillance against the USSR through installation of electronic devices further underline the intensity of the conflict between the two camps.

The contradictions have become more intense in the Arab world, where the U.S. succeeded in breaking the unity of the Arab countries and weaning away the Sadat and some other Governments from friendship with the Soviet Union, thus weakening the struggle of the Palestinians against Israel. It has massively armed Iran and Saudi Arabia.

In Southern Africa, it continues its conspiracy with the Smith regime in Rhodesia and the racist regime of South Africa to block a settlement on African majority rule

In South East Africa, it is determined to keep its armed presence. It is the presence of U S armed forces and military bases in the southern part of Korea that is perpetuating tensions in the region and preventing the peaceful reunification of Korea. It has succeeded in netting Australia and New Zealand for its strategy to 'contain Communism'. Nearer home it is militarising the Indian Ocean building bases in Diego Garcia and threatening all littoral countries including India

The military coup in Thailand and the invitation by the new military junta to the U S to bring back its military personnel show how, despite its stunning defeat in Vietnam, it is still conspiring against Vietnam

Despite the Helsinki Agreement not to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, the imperialists seek to isolate the Communist Party in Portugal and openly intervened in the Italian elections against the Communist Party

They attempt to break up the unity of the non aligned movement which the socialist countries support

All these testify to the intensification of the contradictions between socialism and imperialism

Balance Sheet of Developments

The international developments reveal that while U S imperialism is being put on the retreat, while the strength of the socialist world, the national liberation movement, the working class movement in the capitalist countries and the movement for peace, democracy and socialism is expanding, imperialism is making efforts to reorganise its forces and counter attack the forces of progress, freedom and socialism. Utmost vigilance is necessary to fight the imperialist machinations as is again demonstrated by the experience of Bangladesh and Chile

The forces of peace, democracy and socialism would have registered a spectacular advance had the socialist camp not been divided, and the world communist movement not plagued by deviations from the Right and Left

Revisionism and dogmatism have done incalculable harm to the unity of the world communist movement, shattering its united will and cohesiveness to organise the forces of revolution

The sharp divergence between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China have been and are being utilised by the imperialists. The combined military and economic strength of the two would have been the biggest deterrent to the imperialist powers and would have been instrumental in bringing about radical changes in the world situation

The policy pursued by these two ruling parties of subordinating the development of the revolutionary forces in underdeveloped countries to the opportunist needs of their Government's foreign policy has greatly harmed the democratic struggle of the people in newly liberated countries. Despite the setbacks in a number of countries as a result of these policies, they have not learnt the lesson and pursue the same opportunist course

Nevertheless, the economic advance of the socialist countries, the great strides they have made in rearing a new society free from unemployment and other evils of capitalism continue to attract new millions to the banner of socialism. Notwithstanding the many mistakes and deviations, the socialist system is acquiring new prestige

Under these conditions the fight for principled unity of the international communist movement—unity based on the imperishable principles of Marxism Leninism—is the imperative duty of all adherents of Marxism Leninism

While complacency and rosy pictures about a peaceful end to imperialism have to be avoided, the fact cannot be forgotten that all the progressive forces have penned their judgement on imperialism, that nations and peoples are trying in a big way to end the epoch of imperialism, exploitation, war and economic misery

The developments of the last five years show, do what ever it could, U S imperialism and its allies are unable to regain the initiative that they lost at the end of the Second World War

National Situation

The traumatic experience of the Emergency which established an authoritarian dictatorship of one party over the whole country recalls to our mind the warning given by the Ninth Congress of our Party at Madurai

"The inability to appease large sections of masses through significant concessions, the dire need to thrust further burdens and the use of weapons of repression combined with the weakness of the Left opposition, the weakening of other bourgeois parties, the impatience and intolerance of the ruling party towards all opposition, foreshadow 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 " (Para 70)

"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 constitutional liberties, including the right to vote, are no longer secure under Congress rule. *This calls for the widest possible front of all democratic parties, groups and individuals to resist the march to one party dictatorship* " (Para 119—Emphasis added)

And further in connection with the West Bengal developments

"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

"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*' " (Para 74)

The warning and outlook are quite clear. However as events proved, we underestimated the sharpened contradictions between bourgeois landlord parties themselves

The Allahabad High Court judgement hastened the process and the Congress Party clamped its authoritarian dictatorship on the entire country through the Emergency rule. The successive defeats of the Congress in Parliamentary and Assembly elections constitute a big victory of India's democratic forces over the forces of authoritarian rule.

Angered by the dictatorial rule under the Emergency, the abolition of basic rights, the imprisonments and tortures, the forcible sterilisation and uprooting from the cities and the unprecedented economic suffering, the people voted against the Congress and routed it at the polls, ending its three decades' monopoly rule.

The sweeping victory was made possible by the intensified contradiction between the Congress and opposition bourgeois landlord parties, which by now united into a single party to avenge the infliction of Emergency and get into seats of power.

The authoritarian leader had to order election for several reasons. The democratic resistance in the country was growing, people from all walks of life were expressing themselves against the Emergency and against the Constitution amendments.

There was pressure from outside the country with strong criticism of the Emergency rule from many quarters. Adverse international opinion made it necessary to show that the Congress Party and its Emergency rule had the mandate of the people.

The economic situation, besides, was rapidly worsening.

In ordering the elections, Mrs Gandhi calculated on securing a majority in Parliament for the Congress and a popular verdict in her favour. With the opposition parties, still in disarray, she thought that the time was ripe for a snap election.

However, for her, the election was only to complete the process of establishment of authoritarian rule. The election process was not to be a return to democracy but a confirmation of dictatorship. She hopelessly miscalculated. The storm released by the elections took the ruling party by surprise, and to escape its consequences its leader called for army rule. But the army leaders, taking into consideration the mood of the masses, did not oblige.

The fact, however, remains that the leader of this bourgeois landlord party seriously thought of calling the army to take over to frustrate the people's verdict

The Meaning of Congress Defeat

The victory of the people against the Congress and its political meaning should not be underestimated. It was not just an electoral change over from one bourgeois party to another. In between lay a period of blood and travail and enslavement of the whole people, with tens of thousands of politicals in jails.

The Emergency rule had changed the political landscape of India. All the vaunted rights under bourgeois democracy under the Constitution were suppressed. Freedom of the press, assembly, organisation, strike, etc., all were done away with. The judiciary was turned into a subservient instrument of the executive. The worst type of censorship compelling the press to praise the Government was introduced. An unprecedented effort in the chequered history of India to introduce thought control through modern media was blatantly embarked upon. The fundamental rights lay in ruins. The cabinet system lay in a shambles. This Constitution was subverted and changed to suit the authoritarian designs of the ruling party. Never since the medieval days did the bureaucracy have such absolute rights to jail, maim, torture or murder a citizen with impunity.

But the democratic resistance could not be stalled. Neither the torture camps nor the jails could break the spirit of the people. Satyagraha, defiance of law, and illegal activities went on increasing. In Kerala, the working class led by our Party organised statewide and districtwide strikes against the imposition of Emergency and the repression of the Congress Government. These political actions unleashed further resistance among the people. The bureaucracy got divided, and sections of the police became suspect. Pitched battles were fought by the masses in several places or over sterilisation or slum clearance, battles in which scores were killed outright. Jurists, intellectuals, and judges raised their voice in protest. The movement for civil liberties and against the enactment of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act in which our

Party played a notable role got wide response despite banning of meetings Sections of industrialists financed the movement led by the bourgeois opposition parties Traders, merchants and retailers who were victims of Congress blackmail secretly gave all the help to the opposition forces Democratic resistance continued to increase and was waiting only for a chance to explode The election supplied the opportunity The electoral victory was the fruit of this resistance against dictatorship

To conserve and strengthen this broad based resistance to the forces of dictatorship is an urgent and important task in the present situation

Crisis of the Bourgeois Landlord System

The declaration of Emergency and the installation of authoritarian rule uncovered the deepest crisis of the bourgeois landlord system

It was a sign that the economic crisis had invaded the political parliamentary system, it revealed that the most well established party of the bourgeois landlord classes was afraid of parliamentary democracy and norms and was repudiating them

For the masses and the working class this meant open dictatorship to thrust the burdens of the crisis on them and suppress their resistance The crisis of the system is now all pervading

It has not only seized parliamentary institutions, it has invaded every sphere of bourgeois society

The bourgeois landlord parties are unable to maintain their unity and are riven by dissensions

The Congress Party is already split into two sections, with Indira Gandhi forming a separate organisation and leaders of rival groups expelling each other This will further undermine the capacity of this bourgeois landlord party to act together, with possible defections and walkouts to Janata or to the rival grouping

The ruling Janata Party has still to develop a cohesive ideology and organisation The ideological and organisational skirmishes in the party, the open play of former loyalties and the conflicting traditions and heritage of its constituents—all speak of divided counsels

The tales of corruption, jobbery, murder, nepotism, unscrupulous use of state power for personal benefit, rapes and sexual offences in the highest quarters show the collapse of almost every norm that holds the bourgeois parties and society together. The flood of scandals and the domination over the nation by a caucus of adventurers and individuals mark the invasion of the crisis in all spheres of life. No bourgeois party can be immune to it, and the Janata Party is no exception. The wranglings in election, the manipulation for places in the ministry, the struggle for tickets and the open appeal to former loyalties—all are the first symptoms of the disease.

Intensified Conflicts Between the Bourgeois Landlord Parties

The crisis further revealed itself in the sharpest ever conflict between the ruling and the opposition bourgeois landlord parties

The deep seated economic crisis and the intensified contradiction between the ruling classes and the mass of people were no doubt the basis of the Emergency rule. But as the Central Committee resolution on the Emergency stated, the immediate cause of the Emergency was not the direct challenge of the revolution, of the mass of people to the political power of the bourgeois landlord alliance but of the rival bourgeois landlord parties which threatened to take over the government exploiting the mass discontent generated by the economic crisis.

The conflict between rival bourgeois landlord parties was getting accentuated for a long time but did not reach this intensity before. The pre Emergency period saw its rapid growth reflecting the determination of the rival combinations to seize hold of the governmental machine by all possible means. Both groups were now prepared to violate their cherished parliamentary norms and dogmas in their fight with each other throwing the system into crisis.

The opposition bourgeois landlord parties chose extra parliamentary activity and not only appealed to the masses for direct action but also appealed to the police and the military to disobey illegal orders.

The ruling party was determined to use fully the apparatus of repression to terrorise the opposition into submission. It cynically threw to the winds the vaunted principles of parliamentary democracy—freedom of opposition parties, of the press, the independence of judiciary and the freedom of the individual.

These conflicts weakened the forces of dictatorship and helped the resisting forces of democracy. The opposition bourgeois landlord parties which were victims of the Emergency rule opposed one party dictatorship and supported the return to democratic rule. They supported democracy against dictatorship in the electoral struggle.

Conflicts Will Continue

These conflicts made it possible to develop broad and wide resistance to the Emergency and dictatorial rule. They have an important role to play in the present situation also.

The fight against imposition of open dictatorship will be a continuing fight because the electoral defeat of the Congress has not led to the defeat of the classes which generate the climate for dictatorship. The interests of the monopolists and the landlords demand a curtailment of people's rights to the point of dictatorship, especially when recession is intense, the capacity to make concessions the least and the masses are in a rebellious mood. The growing dependence of the economy on western imperialist aid and the world capitalist market, and the invitation to multinationals strengthen the forces of dictatorship. So long as the domination of the monopolists, big bourgeois and landlords continues to hold Indian economy in its grip, attempts will be made by one combination or another to instal dictatorship to make its rule viable.

It will be erroneous to ascribe loyalty to democracy and commitment to resist dictatorship to a particular group or party. The struggle against dictatorship will see many vacillations and change overs from one camp to another, groups and sections changing their positions quickly under the pressure of the economic

crisis and the developing mass struggles and the need to protect their own interests against the rival combination. The main question for them is to secure possession of state machinery and that decides their attitude.

Today, the main vehicle of this challenge is the Congress led by Indira Gandhi and her cohorts who openly justify the Emergency and are not ashamed to advocate the "gains" of the Emergency. In the Janata Party also, authoritarian elements and trends are manifesting themselves. This is natural in view of the character of the party and the urgent need to hold on to governmental power.

The Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections showed that the Congress which had imposed Emergency on the country had considerable strength among the people. The loss of seats by the Congress in Lok Sabha elections was out of proportion to its electoral strength. Even then it secured 150 seats in the Lok Sabha.

The result of the recent elections to some of the State Assemblies have enabled the Indira Congress to establish its Ministries in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. In Maharashtra also, it has been able to form a Ministry in coalition with the Congress led by Swaran Singh. All these have once more focussed attention on the fact that the forces justifying the Emergency and dictatorship have yet to be isolated from the people and the battle against them has not yet been won.

The split in the Congress engineered by Indira Gandhi divides this strength and no longer places at her disposal, in the service of the caucus, the entire strength of the parent organisation.

Nonetheless Indira Gandhi continues to be the main focus of authoritarianism though with denuded strength. The other wing will not be able to disarm the Emergency heritage of the Congress completely, and dangers of a parliamentary compromise over the dismantling of the dictatorial framework are inherent in the situation.

Broad Platform

The continuing struggle against the forces representing dictatorship makes it necessary to have a broad platform to fight them. The sharp conflicts among the bourgeois landlord parties themselves reveal the possibilities of developing it. This broad platform should have the immediate objective of completely dismantling the framework created by the authoritarian dictatorship, expanding democracy and introducing new clauses in the Constitution putting the fundamental rights of the people beyond the mischief of any ruling party or Government.

The programme for this broad mobilisation should consist of (i) withdrawal of MISA, deletion of the existing provision in the Constitution providing for preventive detention, disbandment of the Research and Analysis Wing—the main weapons of dictatorship, full civil liberties, (ii) rescinding of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, (iii) Article 352 which arms the President with the power to declare Emergency to be amended so that Emergency can be proclaimed only in case of actual war, (iv) Articles 356 to 360 dealing with President's rule in States to be deleted, (v) right to recall to be provided for in the Constitution, (vi) so also proportional representation, (vii) voting age to be brought down to eighteen years.

This is a very broad platform arising out of the direct need to fight the authoritarian forces. It is a platform acceptable to all who had suffered under the jackboot of the Emergency rule, and all who are opposed to its repetition to whichever party they might belong.

The Party must make every endeavour to mobilise the broadest possible support for these demands so that the full strength of democratic resistance is pitted against the authoritarian forces. The elements, groups, sections and individuals supporting these democratic changes may not support the economic programme either of the Party or the Left and democratic front. Nonetheless, in so far as they throw their weight in favour of this platform, they will be contributing to the democratic fight against the forces of dictatorship.

Their political support may be varying and vacillating, in the struggle against the forces of dictatorship, it is essential to draw elements even from the ruling classes and their parties who are prepared to take an anti authoritarian stand so that the struggle for democracy reaches the widest sections of the people

As the C C document of May 1977 puts it, "Such understanding etc " have been the constant tactics of the international communist movement when the drive for one party dictatorship suppresses the rights of the people. Defence of democratic rights with whatever classes and parties that can be rallied constitutes Marxist tactics

Correlation of Class Forces

While legitimately concerned with the immediate task of uniting the people against the forces of authoritarianism, the Party cannot forget the correlation of class forces obtaining at present and the weaknesses in the political situation favourable though it is

Our fight for the people's democratic revolution depends on how in the course of the struggle, we succeed in changing this correlation

Our Programme states, "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 (Marxist) 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 " (Para 100) "The core and 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, etc " (Para 101)

The present situation is characterised by the following features, the authoritarian dictatorship has been removed with the electoral defeat of the Congress and the restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights But the anti Emergency struggle and the electoral victory have not led to a shift in the balance of forces in favour of the working class, i e , the masses have not moved away from the influence of bourgeois parties and started rallying round an alternative leadership

As in 1971, in the recent election also polarisation took place round the two bourgeois landlord combinations—the Congress and the Janata. The people shifted their support from the former to the latter whose constituents were widely repressed, led the anti-Emergency struggle, and took up the cause of democracy against dictatorship in the elections. The Gujarat and Bihar struggles followed by the huge Delhi demonstrations made a telling impression on the people.

Our Party no doubt played a significant role during the pre-Emergency and Emergency days. Our Party stood in the forefront in the political struggle against Emergency in Kerala and some other places. The working class of Kerala under our leadership played a significant role and organised statewide and districtwide strikes to protest against the Emergency. It wielded the strike weapon in defence of democratic rights. On an all India plane, the Party took initiative and succeeded in co-ordinating the activities of several organisations in defence of civil liberties and for opposing the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act.

Struggles against the withdrawal of bonus and victimisation were carried out in West Bengal, Kerala, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and many other states. Land and wage struggles were carried out in many states. Students and teachers alike launched many struggles against repression, the most outstanding among them being the struggles of JNU students. A large number of such struggles led by the CITU, Kisan Sabha, SFI and women's organisations added to the prestige of our mass organisations.

All these enhanced the political prestige and influence of the Party and raised its image among all fighting sections. But this was not enough to change the balance of class forces.

The CPI(M) and the working class have not succeeded in bringing about any appreciable change in the existing correlation of class forces—this is the key point in the situation. The future of the revolutionary struggle depends on how we succeed in changing it, in seizing initiative in the struggle against the forces of dictatorship, initiative and leadership of the struggle and conflicts that are in the offing, how, in fact, we succeed in building a front of Left and democratic forces.

As part of the struggle to build a people's democratic front, the CPI(M) has been concentrating immediately on building a front of Left and democratic forces against the bourgeois landlord rule

But despite the biggest upheaval since independence which frustrated the Congress designs to impose an authoritarian dictatorship on the country, the Left and democratic forces which constitute at present the only progressive alternative to the bourgeois landlord parties, have not emerged as a viable force. On the contrary, except in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, they are very weak, leaving the bourgeois landlord parties in virtual monopoly of the people

This also shows the importance of the role of Left forces in West Bengal headed by our Party. As the C C statement of June 1977 stated "This spectacular success of the people of West Bengal rallied behind the united Left and democratic forces spearheaded by our Party constitutes the most vital link in the country's fight for democracy, its expansion and the economic amelioration of the masses. Our Party has always held that only the Left and democratic forces can offer a real alternative in the present situation and the West Bengal victory immensely strengthens these forces throughout India "

To change the existing political relationship and bring about a viable alternative force to lead the masses must be the constant aim of the political activity of the Party, and the organised strength of the Left forces in West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala must play a leading role in this

Perennial Danger

The danger of dictatorship arises from the domination of the monopolists, big capitalists and landlords and the growing influence of foreign monopoly capital

Therefore, while utilising the present possibilities of broad based resistance the Party and the working class must concentrate on weakening, undermining and eliminating the power of these classes. The economic situation as well as our programme demands immediate and urgent attention to it

Economic Crisis

During the last decade, especially the last six years, the Indian economy has been experiencing crisis after crisis. Poverty, unemployment and misery of people have increased beyond measure. The rural areas have become a vast ocean of destitutes. Simultaneously, the economic power and strength of the monopolists, big capitalists, the landlords and big traders have increased beyond measure, with rapid concentration of money and wealth in their hands. At the same time, the dependence of the country on foreign imperialists and the world capitalist market has increased very much. The Congress Government had to accept the economic programme laid down by the World Bank, though it was presented as a voluntary national programme adopted by the Government. This led to increased exploitation of the people. The limitations of the capitalist path further circumscribed the capacity to give concessions and led to the unprecedented repression on the people. The critical economic situation was the basis of the Emergency though conflicts between the bourgeois landlord parties supplied the immediate cause for authoritarian rule.

The economic crisis engendered by the capitalist path, not only sharpened the contradiction between the masses and the ruling classes, it led to a sharpening of all other contradictions also.

The contradiction between the small and medium bourgeoisie and the big bourgeoisie got further accentuated. It manifested itself in the ruin of thousands of small concerns during the progress of the crisis, with the big bourgeoisie grabbing the market.

The shrinking of the internal market also sharpened the conflict between the foreign monopoly interests and the Indian big bourgeoisie. It manifested itself in the propaganda against multinational drug companies, the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, pressurising foreign companies to concentrate on exports and dilute the foreign equity holdings and the take over of oil companies with heavy compensation. Because of the already heavy dependence of the economy on foreign aid these efforts resulted in compromises and a desire for a share for Indian capital in foreign concerns and for larger export outlet.

And finally the crisis has sharpened the struggle among the bourgeois landlord parties to seize control of the Government

In the background of the shrinking home market, export subsidies, their withdrawal or expansion, price fixation, tax relief or enhancement, imports liberalisation or restriction have become extremely vital matters calling for direct control over the administration

Attack on the People

Increased taxation of the Congress Government, foreign loans and deficit financing resulted in growing attacks on the purchasing power of all sections of the people

As in western countries, in the new phase of the crisis, stagnation was accompanied by inflation and the people had a double barrellled gun pointed at their earnings

The years of crisis and Emergency saw a further accentuation of the agrarian crisis. The forcible maintenance of semi feudal land relations with landlord domination had already created a situation in which the mass of the toiling peasantry could hardly get any relief, whether it was good or bad harvest year. The 20-point programme of the Congress Government with its promise of land distribution, etc. was an attempt to allay the gathering rural discontent while the Government was busy with the cities. The actual implementation of the programme showed that the peasant was again cheated, land relations remained the same and the landlords and rural rich accumulated huge wealth. Simultaneously, the peasant was robbed through the mechanism of inflation, manipulation of procurement prices, the agricultural worker was denied not only minimum wage but also house sites and even waste land. All these further intensified the crisis of the market.

The Congress Government launched a frontal attack on the income of the working class and the employees by withdrawing bonus, imposing the compulsory deposit ordinance and imposing of wage and salary freeze. By this method, it impounded not less than Rs 1,500 crores of the purchasing power of the workers and employees, once again restricting the home market.

The terrible shrinkage of the home market following these measures imposed further under utilisation of the industrial capacity and stagnation of the economy

All this meant terrible suffering for the workers, the employees, for the rural masses. More than five lakh people lost their jobs at one time or another during the Emergency, due to lay offs, retrenchment, lockouts. Thousands of Government employees in the states and at the Centre were removed from service, dismissed during the Emergency, to economise on government expenditure. Notwithstanding advertisement of rural employment schemes under the 20 point programme, rural unemployment and destitution increased by leaps and bounds. The number of educated unemployed exceeded four million.

While the misery of the masses increased, enormous concentration of wealth and capital took place in the hands of the monopolists, big traders, capitalists and landlords. The assets of the Tatas, Birlas, Mafatlals, enormously increased during the years of the crisis. The big traders, smugglers, black marketeers, whose parallel economy continued to flourish, and who were able to bribe and control bourgeois politicians and interfere with the state machinery, intensified their hold over the economy. The landlords with their strong influence over the State and Central Governments enriched themselves beyond measure and strengthened their grip over the economy and the administrative apparatus.

These conditions continue today after the election of the Janata Government. The crisis has not abated.

More than a hundred textile mills are sick, many of them being operated by the National Textile Corporation, often as a relief measure. The Corporation decided that at least ten per cent of the staff is surplus and has already retrenched a sizable number.

The jute mills are pleading sickness. In West Bengal, more than a hundred concerns have closed affecting the employment of thousands. A number of tea gardens have been closed. The handloom workers continue to be the worst sufferers with accumulation of stocks. Closed concerns are being offered on a platter to the workers by certain ministers. And so large is the number of closures that the Janata Government has officially declared its opposition to taking over any closed unit.

The situation in the rural areas has not changed. The atrocities against Harijans continue as before. They are committed when the untouchable agricultural workers demand a better wage, waste land or house site and social equality.

The minorities, especially the Muslim minority, expected an end to the raw deal they were getting under the Congress rulers. But discrimination against them continues in regard to education, employment and services.

Increased Role of the World Bank

Emboldened by its growing influence, the World Bank demanded in October 1975 that India should reshape its industrial development programme, lean away from capital goods and heavy industries and go in for massive exports production during the rest of the decade. Exports and massive foreign aid should form the major part of the savings and investment growth to boost India's flagging industrial growth rate, the emphasis should be on "India's agricultural export and energy capabilities".

The Bank further warned against concessions to the masses. It said that the possibility of linkage of mass consumption market with the industrial revival was limited, other outlets for additional industrial production should be developed. In other words, concessions to the masses should not be given. Production and savings should be earmarked for exports.

Here was a blue print of a reactionary programme to denude the masses and draw the Indian economy closer to the world capitalist market and make it more dependent on imperialist aid.

The inspiration behind "priority for agriculture", attacks on bonus and D A, increased productivity for existing concerns and exports at all costs is seen clearly here. The Indira Gandhi Government accepted all these demands and cleverly presented them as the Government's policy. The 20 point programme more or less conformed to these requirements with its complete silence about industry and the working class and its advertisement about rural welfare programme. It is pertinent to note that the World Bank's priority for agricultural programme excludes land reforms.

Sterilisation and family planning were also demanded. It is known that the USA and the World Bank were urging effective family planning for a long time.

This time the insistence was so strong that the Government agreed to compulsory sterilisation to secure 'aid' from the Bank.

It is not surprising at all that this development should take place despite the valuable aid from the socialist countries—aid in key industries which are vital both for our economy and defence. It was stated in the Programme, "With the emergence of the world socialist system, while utilising socialist aid for building certain heavy industries, it (the big bourgeoisie) actually uses it as an extremely useful bargaining counter to strike more favourable deals with the imperialist monopolists" (Para 14) "Despite assistance of key importance from the socialist countries 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 " (Para 26)

Despite big increase in trade with the socialist countries, despite the rupee agreements which removed foreign exchange difficulties in the trade with them, the economy got more involved with the World Bank and the west.

The World Bank offers the bait of exports to the sagging Indian economy to further integrate it with the world capitalist market. The markets of many countries now accessible to India are controlled by the big western powers and the World Bank. With its growing reliance on exports the Indian economy has become extremely vulnerable to their pressures.

For the Indian economy, or rather the big capitalists and monopolists, faced with the shrinkage of the home market, the export outlet was an immediate weapon of maintaining their profits and the viability of their industries. It offered an easy manoeuvre against the crisis though it increased the dependence of the economy on foreign market.

The country and the common people have had to pay an enormous price for financing this dependence, rendered necessary by the payment of foreign debts and the shrinkage of the home market.

Grants and exports promotion schemes including cash subsidies amounted to Rs 274 crores according to the revised estimates of the 1975-76 budget. Under the 1976-77 budget the amount was estimated at Rs 290 crores—a subsidy of Rs 300 crores for the exporting capitalists. The Janata budget has by no means brought down the huge cost of exports promotion.

A New Dangerous Development

Naturally, this course is leading to greater freedom for private capital, collapse of the MRTP Act, greater demand for concession by multinationals and greater desire to accommodate them.

This is further leading to a new development—the striving by Indian big bourgeoisie for partnership in foreign capitalist concerns in India. The demand for dilution of foreign equity capital while it is intended to advance bourgeois interests is at the same time an offer of collaboration on the basis of a junior share for Indians, or on the basis of effective control in the hands of the foreigners. Instead of outright nationalisation, only share in equity is being asked for.

The desperate effort to secure a foothold in foreign market is leading to joint ventures with foreign monopoly firms in the hope of sub-contracting, etc., in Third World countries. This is creating new economic interests. The content of the entire process of exports and imports, of offering concessions at home and seeking them abroad is the striving for collaboration and partnership with foreign capital, to get a share of the market controlled by them.

This is not a one-sided process. Simultaneously there have been big joint deals, sub-contracts and joint ventures with the USSR and socialist countries. Many projects for joint ventures with the socialist countries in the Third World have been agreed to. They also involve costs running into hundreds of crores of rupees. While the big bourgeoisie is bargaining with both the worlds to have access to new markets for export of projects and commodities, the mainstay is its dealings with the capitalist world.

The trend for collaboration and partnership with multinationals is to be fought and eliminated. It will meet with resistance from within the bourgeois class itself as it can progress only by growingly invading the home market at the expense of indigenous industry.

It is the duty of the Party to rouse the people to this danger on all occasions and thwart the machinations of the multinationals and the World Bank and defeat policies which enable them to penetrate our economy

Janata Party's Economic Policy

The Janata Party Government reflecting the same interests as the previous Government cannot but adopt the same economic policies in relation to the masses

While the Government stands committed to the dismantling of the dictatorial framework, its economic policies announce their anti democratic content

In relation to the crisis, foreign aid, raising of finances—the Janata Party pursues the policies dictated by the class interests of the ruling classes

Deficit financing, high taxation on the people and foreign aid constitute the main sources of raising finances. Notwithstanding claims to the contrary, the deficit financing in the first budget of the Janata Government accounted to Rs 1,000 crores

The first budget of the Janata Government relied on external assistance of more than Rs 1,000 crores which accounts for 11 per cent of the finances raised through taxation

The second budget for 1978-79 while giving still more concessions to big business in the name of incentives, imposes a heavy taxation on all commodities of common consumption amounting to Rs 500 crores, and provides for deficit financing of over Rs 1,000 crores

It continues the policy of throwing one sided burdens on the people and giving concessions to the upper sections is followed

There is refusal to lower taxation on necessities of life while concessions amounting to Rs 200 crores were given to the capitalists through the extended investment incentive scheme in the budget

Naturally, with this policy, reliance on export as advised by the World Bank is inevitable. In H M Patel's words, "It is necessary that exports should continue to increase at the rate they have been growing in the past two years. Such an increase is essential for acquiring greater manoeuvrability with regard to economic management "

The Janata Party in its manifesto promises abolition of landlordism and land distribution. The first policy announcement of the Central Government shows that it does not want to go beyond the "limits set" by Congress legislations.

The new Government accepts the fraudulent surplus estimated under Congress rule by the landlord bureaucratic combination. It comes out with the same proposals that have been chewed over and over by the Congress. These proposals themselves could never be implemented because the initiative always lay with the landlords and the bureaucracy controlled by them. The grip of the vested interests, their land monopoly will not be broken considering the strong landlord lobby within the party. And some of the State Governments have announced their intention to go back on Congress land reforms, raise the ceilings limit and hold the Congress Acts in abeyance.

While the Janata Government has agreed to give bonus to industrial workers—large numbers are still denied it—it has refused to grant it to railway workers and Central and State Government employees and post and telegraph and defence workers. Its bonus statement constitutes a repudiation of its acceptance of bonus as a deferred wage. Its recent stand on wages and incomes policy as revealed in the terms of reference of the Boothalingam Committee, is again repudiation of all that the party has declared on this question in the election manifesto.

Under the Janata State Governments, strikes are being illegalised. Not less than six strikes have been illegalised in U P. Firings on workers have taken place in Bihar, U P and other States. And the Madhya Pradesh Government enacted an ordinance for preventive detention, specifically to suppress the struggle of the electricity workers. Another State Government has created a public scandal by the dismissal of its Labour Minister at the behest of a monopoly house.

The most patent failure of the Janata Party has been in relation to the price situation.

The installation of the Janata Government has meant no relaxation in the situation. On the other hand, it has become worse with the prices of necessities of life and other articles of daily consumption registering a sharp rise.

There could be no other result with the Janata Party Government continuing the policy of its predecessors in high taxation and deficit financing

Still immediate relief to people so far as prices of necessities of life was possible, had the Janata Party embarked upon nationalisation of wholesale trade in these commodities and taken possession of the available stocks Here its ideological commitment to the private sector, the strong pull of big traders on it, came in the way, leading to the sacrifice of people's interests and undermining of its influence

It is therefore not surprising that the Janata Party Government has moved in the direction of removing the restraints on free trade and opening the people to the full machinations of the big traders

This is followed by open declarations to dismantle planning in the name of making it more flexible and realisable The rolling plan monstrosity is nothing but a crude device to repudiate planning

Further, under the pressure of the World Bank, and with the excuse of utilising the foreign exchange reserves, the Indian capital goods industry is being thrown open to competition from abroad with the removal of many import restrictions though a large section of the industry is not able to utilise its full capacities

The Janata Party Government like the previous Congress Government believes in greater aid from the World Bank and accepts its prescription—greater freedom for private sector, more concessions and invitations to multi nationals, less role to the public sector, reliance on exports, liberalisation of competitive imports, acceptance of global tenders in India for Government projects, joint concerns with western monopolists in India and outside, in Third World countries Further, like the Congress Government the Janata Government has accepted the so called agricultural orientation called for by the World Bank and loans in foreign exchange to raise rupee finances for the agricultural programme The orientation called for by the Bank excludes land reforms and that suits the Janata Government leaders Such a programme, of course, cannot help rural regeneration

In pursuance of this line responsible ministers are now hunting for multinationals to come and invest in India

The World Bank's latest strategy is to supply funds for slum clearance and squatters' colonies or rural development. But it wants projects involving sophisticated technology, equipment and management expertise, to be financed through foreign private capital. Foreign exchange resources will not be made available for such projects.

All democratic forces interested in eliminating the danger of dictatorship must counter the economic policies of the Janata Party and see that the masses are not mulcted in the interest of the ruling classes.

These policies will only enhance and strengthen the forces of dictatorship, undermine the democratic unity of the masses forged in the anti Emergency struggle. Pursuance of these policies will only strengthen the authoritarian trends inside the Janata Party and the Government.

Language Policy

The Janata Party Government is pursuing a language policy which is both anti democratic and disruptive of national unity. In essence the policy amounts to surreptitiously foisting Hindi on non Hindi speaking people. Various devices available to the Government are used for this purpose. The illegal compulsion to study Hindi and refusal to accord equal status to all languages unleash the forces of national disintegration. Our Party's position in this respect is clear and principled, as explained in the C C resolution of September, 1975. While demanding equality for all Indian languages it leaves the question of link language to be decided voluntarily by the people in the course of social intercourse. Meanwhile the Nehru formula that English should continue along with Hindi as the official language till all non Hindi states voluntarily agree, should continue to operate.

Autonomy for States

The Emergency raised the question of the powers of the states in the sharpest possible manner. It showed that the Centre had

concentrated enormous powers in its hands making the states into mere appendages. The 42nd Amendment carried the process to its logical conclusion, claiming unilateral powers to the Central Government to despatch the CRP to the states, bringing all services under central control and putting education in the concurrent list.

To protect Indian democracy and maintain the unity of the country it is necessary that not only the provisions of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act are repealed but the power of the states are expanded and their autonomy fully guaranteed.

Statements of some Janata leaders create the impression that they are more for centralisation than for autonomy. This will be nothing but continuation of Congress policies. There should be no effort to retain any of the provisions of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act depriving the states of their powers.

Foreign Policy

Pursuance of a policy of non alignment in the global struggle against imperialism constitutes an integral part of the struggle for freedom, peace, democracy and socialism. A foreign policy based on anti imperialism and friendship with the socialist countries is of great importance for the country.

The policy of play between the two camps that the Government of India has been pursuing leads to vacillations, compromises and hinders the pursuit of a consistent policy of non alignment based on opposition to imperialism.

In line with this, the Government has been doing everything not to offend the susceptibilities of the imperialist world, of the USA, except when the imperialists directly threaten its interests or supply arms to neighbouring countries.

Today the contradiction between the world of imperialism and the Third World countries has sharpened beyond measure.

Many Governments of Third World countries have repeatedly raised the question of cancellation of debts, of stable and parity prices for the commodities exported by them, for a new economic order.

Vacillations and compromises are seen in the Government of India's attitude towards some of these important questions.

At the Nairobi Conference, D P Chattopadhyaya, Commerce Minister under Indira Gandhi, supported the notorious Kissinger plan for neo colonial exploitation which was rejected by the Third World countries. At the Colombo Conference Mrs Indira Gandhi pleaded that there should be no confrontation between the Third World and the dominant countries, though her delegation opposed the reactionary plan to dilute the character of the Non aligned Conference.

Notwithstanding these vacillations on some important issues, the Government of India has generally supported the claims and demands of the Third World countries against imperialism, lent its moral and political support to national liberation struggles and stood by the Arab and African peoples. At the U N it has voted with the socialist and Third World countries on important issues.

The Janata Government continues to pursue the same policy. This is no surprise as it represents the same class interests. The Janata Government continues to uphold the Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union. It also is prepared to restore normal and friendly relations with People's China. This is a welcome development.

Praising the new government and offering it more economic aid, extolling its pragmatism, the U S imperialists are attempting to enmesh India in an anti national, derogatory agreement on nuclear progress and use of nuclear devices for peaceful purposes. The unilateral declaration by the Prime Minister giving up explosion for peaceful purposes was detrimental and derogatory to national prestige. Encouraged by it, the U S President during his recent visit to India tried to pressurise the Government of India into accepting nuclear dependence and discriminatory control, but the Prime Minister rejected the proposal and called upon the nuclear powers to abolish all atomic weapons before imposing safeguards on others. The stand of the Government is in accord with the country's sovereignty and self respect. The new legislation on the anvil in the USA leaves no doubt that economic blackmail will be used to coerce India to accept dictated conditions on nuclear development.

The condition of the economy and the Government's reliance on World Bank aid create favourable ground for U S pressure and vacillations before it

The fight for a principled non aligned foreign policy has to be conducted with great vigour The Janata Government is under deep pressure from the USA and compromises are possible unless defeated by the people's united resistance

Vacillations on Democratic Rights and Changes

Notwithstanding the commitment of the Janata Party and its Government to restoration of democracy and the demolition of the authoritarian framework, its vacillations and weaknesses on these questions should also be taken into consideration

The Janata Party's victory led to the lifting of the internal Emergency It has restored parliamentary democracy and the fundamental rights of the people These are notable gains The Government at the same time is getting ready to withdraw the notorious 42nd Amendment Act Its main proposals and amendments in this connection meet the wishes of the democratic people However, it refuses to repeal the provisions of the Constitution empowering the Government to declare a state of Emergency for internal purposes It only offers to restrict these powers to declaring Emergency in those areas where the Government decides that there is "armed insurrection" It also refuses to repeal the provisions of the Constitution empowering the Government to enact preventive detention laws

Its Madhya Pradesh Government has already enacted a mini MISA measure The support extended by certain leaders to the notorious Jammu and Kashmir Ordinance also shows the rising anti democratic trend The illegalisation of strikes, the misuse of the Maintenance of Essential Services Act and several other measures show that before the demolition of the Emergency framework is complete, fresh erosion of democratic rights may be witnessed

In the Janata Party there are forces and individuals who would oppose this trend and erosion But the class policies pursued will repeatedly strengthen it, leading to vacillations and compromise

A Period of Mass Struggles

Therefore there should be no complacency that the programme for dismantling of the authoritarian framework and expansion of democratic rights will have an easy passage without popular pressure and vigilance, or that fresh erosion of rights can be avoided without popular struggle and unity of the people

Its economic policies, notwithstanding some concessions to the people under mass pressure and the pressure of its own radicals, are leading to conflicts and attacks on the living standards of the people. The all pervading economic crisis intensifies the situation further

The present period is therefore, not a period of comparative stability and peaceful and constitutional advance of democratic reforms. The Left alliance Ministry in West Bengal will not be allowed to function without resistance from the representatives of authoritarian forces and the vested interest

On the other hand, it is a period of growing mass battles, conflicts, which will have to be waged decisively and determinedly to protect the interests of the masses, resist official policies, curb the power of the reactionary classes and demand a change in the policies of the Government

This battle of the people, of workers, peasants, agricultural workers, employees, students, youth, for immediate advance has to be linked with the struggle for advance of democracy, for carrying forward the fight against the forces of dictatorship. To delink the former from the latter will be an act of crude economism. To delink the latter from the former will be to forget the main classes that stand for dictatorship and bypass the masses in the common fight for democracy

The combination of the two is absolutely essential. Mistakes on either side will once more hand over the masses to a rival bourgeois combination, and end in failure to bring about a change in the correlation of class forces

It should be recalled that the battle for defence and expansion of democratic rights plays a vital role in the struggle for people's democracy. Those who fail to identify the forces of dictatorship and rally the people against them play into the hands of the

representatives of authoritarianism. Success in this battle means opening the way to the people to look forward to a regime of people's democracy as a concrete goal and objective. Success here does not strengthen bourgeois democratic illusions but the desire to overcome the limitations of bourgeois democracy.

Left and Democratic Front

Our Party has been striving for building a powerful front of Left and democratic forces for a number of years. Our success in West Bengal has been outstanding, followed by our success in Kerala and Tripura. In these three states, the polarisation has taken place between the front led by us and the Congress (West Bengal and Tripura) or the front led by the Congress (Kerala). It is unlike in other states where the major division is between two rival bourgeois landlord combinations. This is a qualitative difference and it has been our endeavour to bring about this change all over India. It has been an equally persistent endeavour of Indira Gandhi to break the combination and she did it by winning over the Right C P for this treacherous course.

The struggle to build this front is part of our endeavour to bring about a change in the correlation of class forces, to end a situation in which the people can choose only between two bourgeois landlord parties, and get imprisoned within the framework of the present system. By gathering all Left and democratic forces together for further advance, the Party makes a beginning to consolidate those forces which in future will participate in shaping the alliance for people's democracy under the leadership of the working class. The Left and democratic front is not to be understood as only an alliance for elections or ministry, but a fighting alliance of the forces for immediate advance—economic and political—and for isolating the reactionary classes that hold the economy in their grip.

It is stated in our Programme, "The struggle to realise the aims of the people's democratic revolution, through the revolutionary unity of all patriotic and democratic forces with the worker peasant alliance as its core is a complicated and protracted one. It is to be waged in varying conditions in various phases. Different classes,

different strata within the same class, are bound to take different positions in these distinct phases of the revolutionary movement. The complexities arising out of the 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 " (Para 111)

And further, "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 the 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 " (Para 112). Transitional slogans and platforms have to be worked out at each stage to mobilise the people, and all this constitutes a preparation for heading towards the people's democratic front which is gradually realised through a series of struggles and stages.

The Programme further enjoined on us to defend parliamentary and democratic institutions against threats from the reactionaries. "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. When their interests demand 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 interests of the people against such threats and that such institutions are skilfully utilised in combination with extra parliamentary activities " (Para 72)

We have had many ups and downs in our efforts to force a united front of Left and democratic forces due to the class vacillations of many of our allies. The Madurai resolution of the Ninth Congress of our Party States

"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 1959" (Para 103). If the Right C.P. threw in its lot with the Congress in 1969, the Socialist Party joined the grand alliance completing the process of disruption of Left unity.

Our Party, however, continued its efforts to build Left and democratic unity. It found expression in ceaseless efforts to build trade union unity, develop joint mass actions and develop united front action on several issues affecting the masses.

With the rising mass movement there was growing response from several Left parties and their mass organisations. There were joint actions between unions affiliated to INTUC, AITUC, CITU, HMP, UTUC, between organisations of employees—all of which helped to radicalise wide sections. The formation and activities of UCTU helped the process of trade union unity.

The mass actions broke all previous records in their prolonged resistance and wider participation. The number of strikes and mandays lost reached a new record figure between 1972 and 1975. Most of the important industrial centres and industries were involved in joint actions. Militant actions were organised by students, State Government employees, teachers, professors, doctors and others.

The high-watermark of these activities was the historic strike of the railway workers, which was the result of unprecedented unity forged in the ranks of the workers following the united actions of several central organisations. It was followed by the gigantic all-India May 15 strike in support of the railway workers. Though the strike was brutally suppressed by the Indira Gandhi Government, it left an abiding impression of unity and common fight. This was further followed by an equally unprecedented anti-wage freeze convention drawing together lakhs of workers and employees. Once more the result was due to the united front of several mass organisations led by Left parties or under Left influence.

Our Party took the initiative for bringing together several Left parties in 1973. We opened talks with leaders of the Socialist Party which enabled several Left parties to come together to discuss

a common programme for agitation and implementation. The joint meeting of the Left parties, including the Right C.P. in early 1974 and the agreed platform were important landmarks in the struggle for Left and democratic unity. The success of the railway strike was ensured by this unity of Left parties. This was followed by the historic action of the working class on May 15 in support of the railway strike. The coming together of Left parties, our repeated approaches to these parties and leaders like J.P. for a common Left and democratic front were producing good results and through mass actions creating a movement under the leadership of these forces.

Unfortunately once again the unity was disrupted firstly through the defection of the Right C.P. which under Indira's pressure openly betrayed the railway strike. Since then the Right C.P. and AITUC would have no truck with any Left party and confined their united front activity only to the INTUC and Congress.

On the other side, the Socialist Party which had played a notable role in organising the railway strike and responding to the call for Left unity, joined the movement led by J.P. and abandoned the task of carrying forward the struggle for Left unity.

Today, once again, we have to shoulder the responsibility of building the unity of the Left and democratic forces.

The Role of the Left and Democratic Forces

The Left and democratic forces stand in the forefront of the fight against the forces of authoritarianism. They endeavour in all possible ways to organise the broadest possible resistance to the authoritarian danger at present mainly represented by those who openly justify the Emergency, and glorify the advantages of the Emergency rule—the Congress led by Indira Gandhi.

They lend their support to the platform for democratic reforms and advance which brings together all anti-authoritarian trends—even those that are opposed to the economic platform of the Left and democratic forces.

Realising the terrible suffering of the masses and the continuing danger of dictatorship from the domination of exploiting classes, the Left and democratic forces direct their fire against the monopolies, big capitalists and landlords and against the increasing influence of foreign capital.

By putting forward a political and economic programme distinct and sharply opposed to the platform and practice of the bourgeois landlord parties, by leading the masses to realise it, the Left and democratic forces enable them to move away from the bourgeois landlord parties and increasingly rally round an alternative leadership

The Left and democratic forces press the Janata Government for implementing the electoral promises regarding democratic reforms, for dismantling the framework of the Emergency period, and welcome all measures in fulfilment of these. They at the same time oppose and attack the Government's vacillations, backsliding and prevarication and resist fresh attacks on the rights of the people.

The Left and democratic forces oppose the economic policies of the Government which help the vested interests and which are mainly the handiwork of the Right forces inside the Government and the Janata Party. The Left and democratic forces defend the Left alliance Governments of West Bengal and Tripura, and fight the conspiracies of the vested interests against them.

The Left and democratic forces advocate a consistently secular outlook and are opposed to any deviation from it on the part of the Government. They specially fight the Hindu chauvinist and obscurantist communal ideology of the RSS which is today in a position to influence the Janata Government.

The Programme of the Left and Democratic Forces

(1) Continuation of the fight against the forces of authoritarianism, dismantling of the authoritarian framework erected in the Emergency, and new democratic reforms and amendments in the Constitution as suggested in the broader platform for uniting the resistance of the democratic forces.

(2) Fresh constitutional provisions to expand the powers of the states and guarantee their autonomy. Residuary powers should be with the States. Articles 356-360 of the Constitution to be deleted.

(3) Basic changes in the Constitution to eliminate the grip of the big bourgeois landlord classes over the state and the power of the bureaucracy, provision to keep fundamental rights of the people beyond the mischief of the Government or the ruling party.

(4) The inclusion of the right to work as a fundamental right in the Constitution. Right to property to be removed from the list of fundamental rights while constitutional guarantee is given only to small property holders and peasants

(5) For planned and independent development of the national economy free from foreign influence. Increased role for public ownership

(6) For a consistent struggle against compromise with the World Bank, against invitation to multi national and other policies which lead to economic dependence of the country, the demand for nationalisation of foreign monopoly concerns, immediate moratorium on foreign debt payments and oppose all steps which facilitate the penetration of the World Bank and foreign monopoly capital in our economy

(7) For nationalisation of Indian monopoly concerns

(8) For a just and equitable incomes and wages policy based on provision of minimum conditions like need based wage to the mass of people and reduction of the monstrous disparity in incomes of the big capitalist and landlords and the mass of people.

(9) Against inflation, deficit financing and heavy taxation and high prices, for drastic reduction of prices of necessities and their guaranteed distribution, nationalisation of wholesale trade in necessities

(10) For abolition of landlordism, for enactment of radical land reforms ensuring land to the agricultural labourers and to the poor peasants gratis, for anti eviction measures, guaranteed fair prices for their produce, supply of cheap credit and subsidised inputs to the mass of the peasantry

(11) For guaranteed fair wage for the agricultural labourers, allotment of free house sites for the agricultural labourers and the rural poor and cancellation of debts of agricultural labourers and poor peasants and semi proletariat and liberal provision for cheap credit and consumption loans, for adequate educational facilities for them

(12) For a massive plan for full employment to the rural unemployed and pending it, unemployment relief

(13) For need based minimum wage for the working class, against wage freeze, lockouts, lay offs and closure of mills, for taking over all closed mills and concerns, for full trade union rights, for full democratic rights to the Central and State Government 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

(14) 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 through going reforms

(15) For radical changes in education making it democratic, secular and scientific

(16) For drastic steps against those who indulge in outrages against scheduled castes and tribes, for immediate steps to put an end to the economic and social oppression of these people by landlords, contractors, traders, and restoration of lands seized by them

(17) For safeguarding the rights 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

(18) Equal wage, status and opportunities for women

(19) Areas where there is a preponderance of tribal population should be declared as Scheduled areas and there should be constitutional provisions for conferring regional autonomy in such compact tribal areas so that there may be regional Government within the State concerned to look after the economic, political, cultural and linguistic development of the tribal Adivasis, and full economic assistance may be provided for removing their backwardness

(20) The Left and democratic forces stand for a consistent anti imperialist policy of non alignment and support to Third World countries in their struggle against neo colonialism They oppose

all compromises with imperialism They oppose war and support the world struggle for peace They stand for strengthening the Indo-Soviet treaty of friendship They call for normalisation of relations with People's China and for closer and friendly ties They stand for friendly relations with India's neighbours—Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Ceylon and support the peoples of these countries in their struggle for democracy

They stand for consistent support to the Arab people in their struggle against Israeli aggression, for the right of the Palestinians to have their own state they lend full support to the freedom struggle of the African people against imperialism, apartheid and racial domination

Joint activities on any of the items of this programme will help to build progressively the front of Left and democratic forces which will champion the entire programme

The united mass actions must be considered to be a vital instrument of building the unity of Left and democratic forces It is these actions that draw lakhs of people together, develop their solidarity and consciousness and radicalise them The united struggle of the masses under the leadership of the Left and democratic parties or the mass organisations led by them must therefore be given prior importance in the struggle for building Left and democratic unity.

The Left and Democratic Forces

The Left and democratic forces firstly include our Party and mass organisations led by us—the CITU, trade unions of employees, Kisan Sabha, agricultural workers' organisations, students' and youths' and women's organisations, organisations of teachers, professors, etc

(2) They include our allies of the Left parties in West Bengal, Kerala and their mass organisations, Left parties in other states, Maharashtra, etc

(3) They include the Right C P, its followers and mass organisations headed by it It is true that the Right C P. leaders are not yet prepared to give up their policies of collaboration with the Congress which objectively disrupts Left and democratic unity

But there is a strong urge among its ranks to leave these policies behind and join the mainstream of anti authoritarian struggle Besides, in the present situation the former inhibitions against mass actions do not operate for them

(4) The radicalisation of the masses following the struggle and victory against the authoritarian forces has added to the strength of the Left and democratic trends in several parties There are large numbers in all parties who take a critical attitude towards the policies of their leadership and take a radical stand on several issues This potential force has to be harnessed by nurturing it and developing a proper approach to it from issue to issue

(5) It should include the Left and democratic forces in the Janata Party which consist of the former young Turks, radicals from the Congress, members of the Socialist Party, independents and individuals who take a firm stand against the authoritarian forces and press for democratic changes, radical individuals and groups in all constituents of the Janata Party who press for democratic and social advance and those who oppose the reactionary ideologies of the RSS and stand for a secular democratic outlook Also the mass organisations led by constituents of the Janata Party which are keen on defending the gains and fighting for the demands of the people

(6) The split in the Congress took place on the question of reassertion of authoritarianism by Indira Gandhi The leadership of the Congress led by Swaran Singh compromised its position by agreeing to the formation of a coalition Government with the Indira Congress in Maharashtra However, there are elements and groups in it who not only are against the authoritarianism of Indira Gandhi but also tend to take a radical position on many socio economic issues These elements should be cultivated with a view to winning them over to the Left and democratic programme

(7) It includes the democratic forces like the AIADMK and DMK in Tamil Nadu, the Akali Party in Punjab and the Republican parties Contacts must be established and sustained attempts must be made to bring them into the Left and democratic movement

West Bengal Left Front Government

In this vital struggle for building the front of the Left and democratic forces the Left Front ministries headed by our Party in West Bengal and Tripura have to play an important role. The spectacular victory of the Left alliance headed by us in West Bengal defeating both the Congress and the Janata has made it the object of admiration of wide sections of masses, who are watching every step taken by the ministry and are in full support of its measures.

All Left and democratic forces and especially our Party and the working class must carry on a persistent defence of the Left Front ministries of West Bengal and Tripura against the slanders and conspiracies of the Congress and other interested parties and support its progressive measures.

The Party and the entire Left forces in West Bengal must continue to defend the interests of the masses in close unison with the ministry.

The working class of West Bengal has played a magnificent role in ensuring the victory of our Party and the Left forces. While defending its immediate interests it must throw its full weight behind the ministry and support its measures of agrarian reform. In the absence of active working class support, the vested interests in rural areas will be in a position to sabotage ministerial steps and demoralise the peasantry. It must further throw its full weight to support all measures benefiting the people and defeat the efforts of people's opponents to frustrate them. The entire people must join the working class in overcoming the obstacles of the bureaucracy, corruption in administration and defeating the conspiracies and slander campaign of the vested interests.

Our Party has always held that only the Left and democratic forces can offer a real alternative in the present situation and the victories in West Bengal and Tripura strengthen these forces throughout India. They show the path to a new crystallisation which can secure an abiding advance for the people.

The Real Alternative

This struggle for unity of the Left and democratic forces is an integral part of the struggle for people's democratic revolution.

Our entire programme with its anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and its anti-monopolist basis has to be popularised. The working class, besides, has to be popularised. The working class, besides, has to be educated in the spirit of socialism, in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism and made conscious of its vanguard role. Independent political activity of the working class and its party and its growing strength is therefore necessary to build the front of the Left and democratic forces.

The endeavour to build the front does not mean an ideological truce with the varying components of the front. This will be the height of opportunism and will mean merging of the party with the front, disarming the working class of its ideology to accommodate the ideologies of other classes.

A persistent ideological struggle is necessary against the Gandhian-bourgeois ideology of the Janata Party, against the bourgeois ideology of the Congress; it is absolutely necessary to expose the roots of the opportunism and degeneration of the Right C.P. leaders; it is equally necessary to lay bare the roots of the inconsistency of many Left parties and elements. It is essential to expose and unmask the anti-revolutionary role of the Naxalite ideology with its revolutionary phrase-mongering. The Hindu chauvinist and obscurantist ideology of the RSS demands serious repudiation as the RSS is now closely connected with the Government apparatus and is able to interfere in policy decisions.

Without relating these policies and ideologies to the class roots and class outlook, without every time asserting the correctness of a line based on Marxism-Leninism, the working class cannot be trained and the Left elements cannot grow over into revolutionary fighters and the CPI(M) cannot play its vanguard role.

United Mass Actions

The mass organisations have to play an important role in building the foundations of Left and democratic unity. The struggle for the defence of the economic interests of the masses guided and united properly, merges with the struggle against the domination of the monopolists, big capitalists and landlords, and expands into the struggle for basic socio-economic changes.

Only when the Left and democratic parties are able to draw these huge mass organisations in the common battle, will there be any chance for a viable Left and democratic front. Otherwise the immediate struggle of the masses will run into familiar economic channels, unable to affect and shape the political developments in the country and contribute to the fight against authoritarian forces.

Trade Union Unity and Building the Party

The supreme importance of the struggle for trade union unity, of joint mass actions which lead to it and the responsibility of the Party towards it was outlined as follows: "It is of the utmost importance therefore that the Party creates political consciousness in the working class, makes it conscious of its role of hegemony, overcomes the present disunity of the working class, wins over the majority of the workers in the vital industries and builds a powerful underground movement with factory and workshop committees as its nucleus. The best and most advanced elements must be recruited in the Party. All this demands intensive political agitation in the working class, patient day to day work, leadership of immediate struggles for the winning of concrete demands and the building of a strong trade union movement. Only a united working class and a working class conscious of its role of hegemony can build national unity."

Thanks to the dour defence of the worker's demands under the most difficult circumstances, its leadership of innumerable strikes in face of repression and a persistent struggle for trade union unity and united actions, the CITU has emerged as an important unifying factor in the trade union movement. Its prestige and independent strength have been recognised by our opponents. There is of course no need for self complacency as the CITU represents a minority even in the organised section of the working class, and is a political force only in the two States of West Bengal and Kerala.

Besides the CITU and its unions, employees' and workers' organisations led by Left and democratic elements have grown in strength and present a powerful force in the struggle for trade union and Left and democratic unity. These organisations lead lakhs of employees, are often part of central organisations heading the

struggles of these employees all over India. Consisting of middle class employees, they represent a very important political sector in the country.

These two forces constitute a big weapon to bring together several trade union centres and organisations and mobilise the working class on an all India plane.

The tremendous urge for unity and action is seen in the fact that employees' and workers' organisations not affiliated to the CITU or other central organisations have also increased their strength and become powerful.

There are innumerable industrywise, concernwise federations embodying the great urge for unity and struggle among different sections of workers. All these are in ferment and given a correct approach by the CITU and our unions, can be brought together to defend the common interests. Most of these are under the influence of Left or democratic elements and their united strength cannot be easily ignored by any one. To unite this strength, to mobilise it for the defence of the interests of the workers and employees, to make it aware of the democratic tasks facing the people, to draw it into championing the urgent demands of the peasantry and the people like prices, food and decent living conditions—such is the task that the Party enjoins on our trade unions and the CITU.

This should make us conscious and aware of the severe weaknesses and shortcomings in the trade union movement. The movement by and large has not got out of the limitations of economism which means a lower level of political consciousness and strong political ideological influence of the bourgeoisie. The Emergency sharply brought out this fact to the forefront. A large section of the working class was influenced by the Congress to believe that it was directed against the reactionaries and did not constitute an attack against the working class and the people. There was hardly any political struggle, except in Kerala and to some extent in Tamil Nadu, against the Emergency. In the elections also, only in West Bengal and Kerala, the working class voted massively for us. In other states, the swing against the Congress went mostly in favour of the Janata.

This is not to blame the working class but to understand the weakness of the Party's work in the working class and the trade unions. The main instrument of building the revolutionary consciousness of the working class is the party, its revolutionary teaching, practice and struggle. In its absence the working class will not easily overcome its trade union consciousness. That is why in spite of leading lakhs of workers in strike struggles the political consciousness continues at a low level.

This is accompanied by the failure to build the Party in the working class. Party comrades lead unions of thousands of workers for years, and yet, they are unable to enrol even a couple of hundred Party members. To overcome this weakness it is necessary to increase the direct political activity among the workers manyfold including educational and propaganda activity and educate the working class in the true spirit of class outlook, of Marxism-Leninism.

Kisan Movement

We have been emphasising the necessity of overcoming the lag in the peasant movement since the Seventh Congress of the Party.

The two resolutions of the C C on the kisan front, i.e. "Tasks on the Kisan Front" and "On Certain Agrarian issues" are clear expression of our Party's struggle to liquidate the reformist and revisionist weaknesses in the kisan movement led by our Party.

It is an effort to reorientate our outlook in building the united kisan movement, the building up of the movement based on the agricultural labourers and poor peasants, departing from the past practice of mainly basing on the middle and rich peasantry.

It is also an attempt to consciously develop the movement in compact and contiguous areas, instead of leaving it to spontaneity and planlessness.

Similarly, the need for peasant unity, not the old peasant unity based on the middle and rich peasants, but the unity of the agricultural labourers, poor, middle and rich peasants based on agricultural labourers and poor peasants, is sharply emphasised.

The agitation, propaganda and activity on the kisan front during the last seven to eight years, in most of the states where our kisan movement exists, conform largely to the lines laid down in the above cited resolution.

In so struggling to reorientate our kisan work, if old reformist mistakes still persist or new Left sectarian mistakes creep in, the Party leadership at different levels will have to correct them, keeping consistent track of them. The very weak state of the present organised kisan movement in the country, its splitting up under different political parties and the Congress Government's disruption and suppression of kisan struggles have imposed many limitations on our Party's struggle to organise it on revolutionary lines.

Despite all these difficulties our Party's efforts to correct the earlier mistakes on the kisan front registered some progress in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura and some other states.

It is also true that by the strength of the movement, in Kerala, and in some other places, it has been possible to force the Government to make available some surplus land under the Land Ceiling Acts, in West Bengal during the United Front Government six lakh acres of land was distributed with the help of the kisan organisations.

But the fact is to be admitted that barring West Bengal and Kerala, the kisan movement under our leadership taking the country as a whole did not gain momentum. No doubt there have been sectional movements on several partial issues like price, house-sites, wages in other states, but these did not attain any sweep or breadth.

In no part of the country the peasantry could be organised to struggle on the basic issue of land seizure and land distribution. The land question, the central issue of agrarian revolution which according to us, is the axis of the people's democratic revolution, has not yet gripped the mass of the toiling peasantry.

This is inevitable because of the weakness of the kisan sabha and the low consciousness of the mass following it.

Besides, the intervention by the ruling party and the Government in the day to day life of kisans is having adverse impact on the growth of the movement. As a result of this, the power of the landlords, who are part of the power structure in villages, to divide and disrupt the organised kisan movement has enormously increased.

Despite these difficulties our Kisan Sabha and comrades have striven to face fearlessly the onslaught and organise the peasantry

In the document adopted by the C C in 1976 after pointing out how the central slogan of land redistribution still remains a propaganda slogan and not yet become a slogan of action, it is stated that "the kisan movement led by our Party, while projecting the land seizure and its redistribution slogan as the central propaganda slogan, and while organising struggles for waste land, forest lands and the so called 'surplus lands' under the ceiling acts, will have to channelise many other agrarian currents like the question of wages for rural workers, the issue of rent reduction, the abolition of scaling down of peasant indebtedness, fair price for agricultural produce, the reduction of tax burdens, and the abolition of landlord and police zoolum, against corruption etc., so that all these currents might be harnessed into one big agrarian stream. Otherwise the maximum peasant unity isolating the handful of landlords and their hirelings cannot be achieved "

These corrections should no doubt help the kisan movement to move forward. However it is necessary to correct another shortcoming also. The Kisan Sabha has made very little effort to pursue the line of united action and agitation with other organisations or groups, local or statewide and has chosen to remain within its own shell.

The building of peasant unity, the organisation of united actions on specific issues, and proper attention to partial demands should enable the kisan movement to play its role and raise the political consciousness of the peasant.

Today, the youth are in ferment. The future looks bleak for them. In the absence of a clear perspective, they are often drawn into disruptive movements. At the same time, many of them getting disillusioned with many of the parties under whose influence they are, and because of the image of our Party are looking to our Party for guidance.

It is necessary to build a powerful broad mass movement of the youth and channelise their activities and movement on Left and democratic lines. The building of youth organisations with a membership of two lakhs in Kerala, and of 240,000 in West Bengal

and a powerful organisation in Tripura, and the beginnings of such movements in several states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, etc shows the immense possibilities in this regard

The students all over the country are in a similar state of ferment and are frustrated. It is essential to build a powerful movement of students.

Indian women are victims of obscurantist semi feudal social outlook, and despite the equality of sexes proclaimed in the Constitution, are denied equal treatment, including equal wage. The weight of social oppression and unequal treatment virtually paralyses women's participation in the struggle for democracy and social change.

The women's struggle against these injustices is not just a struggle for social reform but an integral part of the Indian people's struggle for democracy and socialism. Notwithstanding the many difficulties Indian women have been playing an important role in the popular struggle for better living conditions and expansion of democracy.

Working class women are often in the forefront of trade union struggles braving the police repression, the women of Harijan agricultural workers face rapes and physical extermination whenever their men dare ask for increased wage. Women employees in urban areas play an important part in the strike struggles of the employees.

In West Bengal and Kerala women have played an important role in the fight against semi fascist terror and repression and for restoration of democracy.

In many states women have been in the forefront of anti price resistance movement. Women's organisations are getting strength in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Tripura.

The women's struggle against inequality, discrimination and semi feudal outlook must be organised and given a mass basis. The party should take initiative in promoting and building mass organisation of women and educate the entire party regarding its tasks on the women's front. This will enable the party to mobilise women in large numbers in the struggle for democratic and social advance.

The bourgeoisie, during the days of the freedom struggle, made significant contributions to the development of a modern democratic and secular culture, although some of the bourgeois leaders were preaching revivalism under the garb of nationalism. After independence, the bourgeoisie abandoned the earlier role. The thirty years of its rule resulted in the large scale penetration of the decadent culture of monopoly capitalism. The Government controlled Radio and Television, the various academies, etc., as well as the monopoly controlled Press have turned out to be the media for the dissemination of the decadent bourgeois culture. They are also used for the propagation of antediluvian, obscurantist and revivalist ideals and ideas under the level of "India's national heritage".

As against these reactionary trends in culture, however, there is a definite trend of a positively democratic nature. Increasingly large sections of writers, artists, scientists and others are also taking modern and democratic positions. Many of them have made valuable contributions to the anti-authoritarian struggle. Their role in the struggle against the obscurantist essence of some of the moves by a section of the Janata Party leadership is also valuable.

The Party must carry on a persistent struggle against the decadent and obscurantist trends in culture in unity with all those who adopt a progressive democratic position.

The Political Parties

The Congress Party

The inner party fight in the Congress has at last led to the expected split. Indira Gandhi with her caucus and her followers defecting from the parent body to form a rival organisation.

The split is a setback for Indira Gandhi for it means her failure to secure control of the central organisation and press it in the service of the caucus. The strong stand taken by a section of the leadership, hitherto her partners in the Emergency crime, but no longer willing to cover the misdeeds of the caucus, and leave her in a controlling position in the organisation, left her with no choice except to defect with her own chosen followers. Her splitting away

separates the camps of the caucus and unashamed advocates of authoritarianism from others in the Congress. While it facilitates the task of singling out these reactionary forces for attack, their strength should not be underestimated.

The leadership which now controls the Congress was deeply involved in the installation of the emergency rule and imposition of the notorious 42nd Amendment Act on the people. Many of them had compromised their honour and conscience to prostrate themselves before Indira Gandhi and Sanjay to continue in their ministerial posts. Recently, they have been critical of the "wild excesses" of Emergency, though parading its gains as well.

Simultaneously there are other elements who are forthright in their denunciation of the Emergency rule, the anti-democratic functioning of the Congress and support the demands of democratic advance.

The fight against the caucus defectors and advocates of unity against them, against the entire heritage of Emergency rule is of importance to the struggle for the advance of democracy. The isolation of the most unashamed advocates of authoritarianism from the Congress and the masses will help the democratic struggle. The Party must pay close attention to the developments inside the Congress and help the genuine elements to join the left and democratic forces in the common struggle.

The Janata Party

The antecedents of the main constituents of the Janata Party have been anti-democratic and reactionary. They are the same parties that represented the grand alliance in 1971 and those whom our Party characterised as extreme reaction, Right reaction. Our Party especially attacked the reactionary ideology of the Jana Sangh and the RSS. We described the Congress (O) as the avowed and outspoken representative of the monopolist landlord combine. These people at one time stood by the sacred right of property and opposed abolition of princes' privy purses, nationalisation of banks, etc. Above all, they openly took a violent anti-Communist posture and were in the forefront of slandering our party and the West Bengal Ministry led by us. They refused to condemn the semi-fascist terror directed against us in West Bengal.

The victims of one party rule, denuded of all freedom, they had to take up the fight against dictatorship, champion norms of parliamentary democracy and fight for them. Their election manifesto put the question squarely as one between dictatorship and democracy and committed the leaders, party ranks and their following to restoration of fundamental rights.

It is true that all will not be faithful to these commitments, vacillations, hesitations may occur and even treachery may be attempted.

The urge for democracy, for fulfilling the promises will be repeatedly obstructed by the class interests which dominate the party, by its class outlook and ideology. The economic situation, with its perilous course, which will bring the masses into sharp conflict with the vested interests, will act as a brake on fulfilment of democratic commitments. The soil for dictatorship which exists will again and again lead to attempts to undermine the fight against the forces of authoritarianism. It will nourish, and encourage authoritarian trends inside the Janata Party.

Nonetheless the promises of the Janata Party are valuable assets which must be fully utilised in the political struggle. And they can be utilised, because the radicalised sections behind the Janata—the very sections which suffered during the Emergency—are not going to lend blind support to compromising policies. They besides will not tolerate a repetition of the previous suppression.

The composition of the Party is based on the preponderance of what were known as Right parties, with the Left forces represented by the Socialist Party and Young Turks acting as a prodding element. The growing combination of the Jana Sangh and the BLD threatens to overwhelm the Party with reactionary conservative leadership. Already, the RSS, which continues to be separately organised, is emerging as a strong force forecasting ominous developments. Obscurantism is being promoted in state policies and progressive books are being banned. The party cannot ignore the RSS and its grip over the Janata Party. These forces are being resisted from inside the Janata Party by the democratic and Left elements.

The inevitable conflicts inside the Janata Party over policies, conflicts which must more and more take the form of differences between the compromising and firm forces standing against dictatorship, differences between Left and Right forces are of great importance for the struggle of Left and democratic forces. They make a contribution towards the strengthening of the Left and democratic forces and the release of the people from the influence of bourgeois parties.

The Right Communist Party

The desertion of the Right Communist Party to the camp of the Congress, its class collaborationist policies inflicted great damage on the Left and democratic movement. The climax was reached when it openly supported the imposition of Emergency and helped the authoritarian forces to liquidate the rights and liberties of the people.

This disastrous end was the inevitable result of the repudiation of Marxism Leninism and of the concept of working class hegemony leading to reliance on the bourgeoisie to change the social system. The various formulations of the party regarding the role of the working class, concept of national democracy, characterisation of the Indian state and finally characterisation of the Congress Government and Indira Gandhi were milestones in revisionism on the road to complete identification with the ruling party.

The Right C P line of supporting the Congress and attacking the Left forces headed by us logically followed from the above. Whatever the ideological trappings given to it, its essence has been to act as the tail of the Congress and to attack our Party on behalf of the ruling classes. During the last eight years, the Right Communists have done their best to undermine the united front from inside and have helped the Congress to destroy the unity of the Left. Their role in disrupting the U F Ministries in Kerala and West Bengal is well known.

The degeneration of Right C P revisionism started long ago. In 1972, it openly supported the semi fascist terror against us in West Bengal and offered alibi to the ruling classes. It reached its lowest

depth when the leaders openly supported the emergency, the authoritarian rule with its one party dictatorship and tortures and murders. In Kerala, it participated in a ministry which perpetrated inhuman atrocities against the people.

The crime of the Right C P revisionists is much more than mere abandoning of the Left front. It consists in directly conspiring and collaborating with the forces of authoritarianism to enslave the people.

All this shows how correct our Party was in carrying on a fight against Right C P revisionism in all its aspects.

The Ninth Congress Resolution stated, "The debacle of the Right Communists is really a debacle before the mounting class struggle and the intensified mass actions that were developing" (Para 102). Further, "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" (Para 101).

Now this process has been accelerated. There is deep discontent over the leadership's refusal to repudiate the current line and many are bidding good bye to the party.

This is a welcome development showing the awakening of the honest rank and file to the task before them, their desire to break with the collaborationist outlook. We must take every step to encourage and nurture this trend as part of the struggle for a Left and democratic front, to repair the damage done by the Right Communist leaders to the Left forces. Our Party must patiently persuade these ranks to take a firmer and firmer position against the line of the leadership.

The CPI(M) as the leading proletarian force cannot escape the responsibility to re-unite the Left forces deliberately split by Indira Gandhi.

The Right C P leaders are nowadays very insistent on the formation of a Left and democratic front and declare themselves to be ready to join hands with the CPI(M).

But there is persistence in the pursuit of the old outlook though Emergency is being condemned in a half-hearted manner. And there is no break in the collaboration in Kerala.

Role of the Party

During the last five years our Party had to undergo severe and barbarous repression. The semi-fascist terror in West Bengal with its orgy of murder and goondalism claimed more than a thousand lives—some of our best comrades falling victims to the hired assassins' dagger. Thousands were uprooted from their homes and more than three hundred of our trade union offices were occupied by the Congress gangsters. Despite all this, the CPI(M) could not be isolated from its mass base and its links with the masses could not be severed. This was amply demonstrated in the recent Parliamentary and State Assembly elections.

Next to West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura bore the brunt of repression both before the Emergency and during the Emergency. The number of those murdered in Kerala exceeds three hundred and gangster methods were used for attacking our mass movement, our Party leaders and MLAs and organisers. During the Emergency, our Party was in the forefront of the anti-Emergency struggle and was made the special victim of repression by the coalition ministry. Our comrades were arrested and jailed, beaten and belaboured and denied human treatment. Masses under our leadership were treated with utmost cruelty, accompanied by tortures in police lock-ups, rapes of women in police custody.

Our Tripura comrades, MLAs and Party leaders have been repeatedly thrown into jail. Jails, repression, denial of ordinary rights, goonda attacks and police beatings have been the normal fate of the Party in the state which, despite this, continued to hold high our banner.

During the Emergency severe repression was launched against our Party in several states. A number of C.C. members were arrested, others were forced to go underground. Several members of State Committees from Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Assam were arrested. In other states, Andhra, Bihar U.P., etc. several had to go underground. A large number of our comrades spent the entire period of Emergency in jail. Ferocious was the repression directed against the masses led by us. The brunt was borne by our trade union leaders and workers in several states. In Rajasthan, it fell heavily on our factory workers with hundreds rounded up on the very first day of the Emergency.

The Party withstood this repression and saw to it that its links with the people were not broken

During these six years, our Party had to face severe tests and trials on ideological and policy questions. The two deviations in the international communist movement sharpened ideological controversies and undermined proletarian unity

Our Party loyal to the basic principles of Marxism Leninism and its understanding of the world situation refused to be pressurised by either of the wrong viewpoints. The slanders and provocative attacks against us did not make us waver in our duty to the socialist countries, solidarity and fraternity with them. We refused to accept that the USSR represented social imperialism, and we refused the slander that People's China no longer represented socialism but as aggressive chauvinistic militarist regime. We refused to accept that the historic achievements of the revolutions in the Soviet Union and China, namely, the establishment of socialist systems had been obliterated in those countries and thereby refused to placate revisionism from the Right and Left

Our Party firmly holds to the basic Marxist Leninist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it firmly believes in proletarian internationalism and endorses the PB resolution on the Berlin Conference of Communist Parties. Loyalty to these principles has sustained us in the struggle against the two deviations and enabled us to perform our duty to the socialist camp and the world working class

Inside our country, we continued to struggle relentlessly against the revisionism represented by the Right C P. It was a difficult struggle because the Right C P view was supported by the CPSU Resources, international patronage and unscrupulous propaganda were used against us to give us a bad image internationally. We were presented as allies of right reaction and so on. The revisionism of the CPSU which encouraged the Right C P to support the emergency and authoritarian rule has done immense damage to the democratic and proletarian movement in India

On the other side, we had to wage a persistent and dogged battle against the Naxalites supported as they were by the CPC

Incalculable harm was done by the Naxalites to our movement which they could not have been able to do but for this support. Their talk of armed revolution ended in pure individual terrorism and had to be repudiated by their ideological teachers. In West Bengal this terrorism was directed against our cadres and it acted as the instrument of the ruling classes.

Our principled fight against this trend continued over a number of years. While we made no ideological concessions to them, we wanted to fight them politically and opposed the Congress Government's annihilation campaign against them. Whenever our ministry was formed we saw to it that they were set at liberty. Our West Bengal Ministry has declared forthwith that it intends to release all Naxalites including those convicted, notwithstanding obstacles from certain quarters. Hundreds have already been released and cases against them withdrawn.

Today, the Naxalite movement stands scattered in several small groups. With their original supporters disowned in China, themselves repudiated ideologically, the Naxalites reveal a pitiable picture of internal fights and conflicts.

These groups still concentrate their fire against us rather than against the ruling classes, are prepared to join hands with any party against us, and play a disruptive role in the mass movement. Notwithstanding this, our Party must constantly endeavour to claim the honest and fighting elements among them to the common struggle, to strengthen the Left and democratic forces. It cannot be forgotten that their desperation and ideological waywardness are a product of the present desperate situation in the country, of the intense frustration felt by wide sections of the petty bourgeoisie. Diversion of their youthful energy against our Party also arises out of this frustration. They are also victims of wrong international guidance and outlook. Our Party should welcome all those in these groups who believe in building mass movements as a means of developing the revolutionary upsurge, who are prepared to join united struggles and abide by the commonly agreed slogans and activities concerning them.

Steeled in this struggle our Party has to play a leading role in building the Left and democratic unity through joint actions on political and economic demands.

Simultaneously, the independent activity of the Party as builder of mass struggle on economic and democratic issues and as champion of democratic unity against authoritarianism, must be increased manifold

In all the weaker states, the Party must overcome all resistance to broader activity, and seek every opportunity to link itself with the masses who are in ferment

It is through our leadership of mass actions, our efforts to build the Left and democratic front and our ideological struggle against alien ideologies that the Party seeks to correct the basic weaknesses of the present situation—the polarisation of the masses round the two bourgeois combinations. Without this change in the balance of forces, without the Left and democratic forces emerging as a strong alternative focus for the people to rally round, rapid radicalisation of the situation leading to revolutionary possibilities cannot be envisaged. The struggle for Left and democratic unity is thus vitally connected with the development of the revolutionary struggle and is part of the struggle to wrest the leadership of bourgeois parties over the masses.

The fact that the basic cause of the Emergency remains recalls to our mind the sound warning given in the Statement of Policy: "We have to lead the struggle of the people in the context of a sober evaluation of the situation. While it should not lead us to adventurism, we must not also forget that the crisis is not being solved but growing. Hence, we cannot take a 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." "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."

The defence of the Party and mass organisations and the ways and means to do it must occupy the attention of the entire Party

The task of functioning as the vanguard cannot be discharged with a weak and scattered party with a membership of a hundred thousand. The Party must strike deep roots among the masses and must gain thousands of new adherents every year. The present stagnation in membership must be overcome.

There is no need for this stagnation and small membership except our own inability to educate and organise the thousands of militants thrown up in our struggle every few months. The trade union leaders especially should realise their failure to attract large number of workers to the Party and give it a wide mass base in its own class. The weakness of the Party in the working class has to be overcome in the shortest possible time. It should also be realised that on other fronts also the recruitment of members does not correspond to the mass influence of the Party or mass organisations.

A party trained in the finest traditions of Marxism Leninism, inspiring the people by its selfless devotion to the cause of revolution and irreconcilable in its opposition to all deviations—such a party alone can meet the needs of the situation, can be the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle.

The situation since the last Party Congress has changed in a big way in favour of our people. The overturn of the forces of dictatorship and their electoral defeat marks a big victory of the popular forces and has radicalised the masses.

The crisis of the bourgeois landlord system which has now invaded all spheres has weakened the system throwing it out of gear. Its basis, the economic crisis, continues to deepen.

The most well established party of the bourgeois landlord classes—the Congress—is in disarray, unable to keep its unity and command the respect and influence that it held for the last three decades.

The ruling party, the Janata Party, at present reaping the benefit of the mass swerve in its favour, is unable to consolidate its hold on the people and develop a coherent all sided policy consistent with its democratic commitments. The sharp conflict for the possession of state power between the bourgeois landlord parties, at the same time, helps the democratic movement forward, increasing its sweep and drawing together much larger sections of the people.

While therefore at present the polarisation has taken place round the two bourgeois landlord combinations, conditions are favourable for a change in the correlation of forces, for a move forward by the left and democratic forces

These forces though weak in organisation are rapidly developing due to the radicalisation of the masses. The masses have learnt the lesson of the Emergency. They have seen the corruption of the bourgeois landlord society. They have witnessed the bourgeois landlord sections attacking the sanctified principles of parliamentary democracy. They have experienced the class limitations of the bourgeois landlord Constitution. It will not be long before they draw the proper lessons and link their struggle for defence and expansion of democracy with the demand for basic political changes.

The unbearable conditions of existence impel the masses forward and drive them to seek a basic solution of their problems. On this road, our Party can guide step by step, issue by issue to the revolutionary battlefield. In the education and leading of the masses we have a powerful instrument in the West Bengal Ministry representing the alliance of Left parties headed by us.

The Party and its allies must boldly intervene in the mass struggle, in all mass movements and direct them into a single stream against the forces of dictatorship and economic misery. The vacillations, wrong, erroneous, and reactionary economic policies of the Janata Party have to be countered while continuing the fight against the danger of the revival of the caucus. The wider the independent activity of our Party, the wider the mass struggles led by the party, the greater the possibility of Left and democratic unity and the stronger the fight against the forces of dictatorship. The stronger the unity of the trade union movement and the working class the greater the weight of the democratic movement and its success. Trade union unity, unity of the kisan movement, and the growing alliance between the two, serve in the building of the Left and democratic front. These will introduce a qualitative change in the situation and lay the basis of that unity necessary for revolutionary success. The mass struggles of the present period are breaking out under very changed conditions. Decisively led

by the party and its allies, these struggles will usher in quick changes in the consciousness of the masses. And these mass outbursts of struggle will develop in all directions, the irrepressible Indian people asserting themselves on many issues. To be with the people, to lead them, to raise their revolutionary consciousness is the task of the Party. Only this decisive lead will enable the masses to link the present with the future to understand the wider perspective of the struggle, the danger of the economic dependence, the anti imperialist, anti feudal, and anti monopolist character of the struggle and direct their energies against the classes whose interest demands dictatorship.

It is the historic responsibility of our Party to pick up the present link and develop the struggle against the forces of dictatorship and open the way to future development. Let it not be said that when the bourgeois landlord system was in its deepest crisis, the party failed to lead the masses and rouse them.

Review Report

**Adopted by The Tenth Congress of
The Communist Party of India (Marxist)
Held at Jullundur on April 28, 1978**

The Ninth Congress of our Party was held nearly six years ago. In this fairly long period there took place many big developments which were of far reaching political significance. During the course of these eventful developments the political tactical line of our party that was worked out at the Ninth Party Congress had been subjected to severe test and trial. It is proper and necessary that we self critically review the course of the development—at least in their outline—and reflect upon the tactics we were pursuing from time to time. Such a review alone will enable us to establish the strong points of our political line and also reveal the shortcomings and mistakes in the same.

To begin with it is beneficial to state in brief the political situation that was obtaining at the time of the Ninth Party Congress and the corresponding tasks that were confronting our party.

The Political Report as well as the political Resolution of the Ninth Congress go to show, **firstly**, that the ruling Congress party had won huge majorities in almost all the State Assemblies during the elections of March 1972 and this in the wake of a similar massive victory for it in the Parliamentary elections of March 1971. The restoration of one party Congress rule in all the State excepting Tamilnadu and securing of two thirds majority in the Parliament had once again brought into existence the monopoly rule of the Congress Party, the monopoly rule which was broken during the years of 1967-70, when as many as eight States went out of its political control and its majority in the Lok Sabha was reduced to a bare minimum.

Secondly, these two electoral victories of 1971 and 1972 and the restoration of its one party monopoly rule had enabled the ruling Congress Party to get out of the political crisis in which it found itself just before the March 1967 General Elections and immediately following these elections. The Congress Party and Government were no more on the defensive as was the case during the years between 1967-70, nor was the Left and democratic opposition on the offensive as had been the case prior to 1971-72.

Thirdly, the ruling Congress Party, having succeeded in defeating both the Right opposition parties as well as the parties of the Left and democratic opposition in the successive elections of 1971 and 1972, to the Parliament and the State Assemblies respectively, had unleashed a political offensive on the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country. It succeeded in totally disrupting the unity of the Left and democratic forces that was forged during the years of 1966-69, and in dissolving the two Left orientated State Governments of Kerala and West Bengal. It also triumphed in setting up the anti Marxist Governments in these States with the co operation and alliance of the Right C P. The two major left parties in the country, the Right C P and the Socialist Party, not only deserted the united front of the Left and democratic forces but also joined the bourgeois landlord parties, the Right C P allying with the ruling Congress and the S P joining hands with the parties of the "Grand Alliance". Several other democratic parties and groups who co operated with the Left parties during the years of 1967-70 were either won over by the ruling Congress or became the partners of the "Grand Alliance". Thus the disorganisation and disruption of the unity of the Left and democratic forces was total and complete, leaving the CPI(M) and its small Left Party allies in the State of West Bengal alone to carry forward the struggle to reforge the unity of the Left and democratic forces.

Fourthly, the ruling Congress Party had singled out the CPI(M) and the Left and democratic movement led by it for physical attack. Besides the continued repression let loose on us by the Congress Right C P coalition Government in Kerala during the years of 1970-71, the Central Congress Government had connived with

the States' forces in West Bengal to impose a semi fascist terror rule and to legitimise it by wholesale rigging of 1972 elections. The Political Report of the Ninth Congress had noted as to how as big a number as 650 of our cadres and activists were murdered in West Bengal alone by the police and hired goondas of the Congress, its Right C P allies and the Naxalite bands, besides killing another 18 activists of our Party in Kerala. What terror and repression that no other State or region had experienced even during the emergency rule of the Congress between June 1975 and March 1977, the Left and democratic movement in West Bengal had undergone for full six years between March 1971 and March 1977.

Fifthly, it was becoming clear that the authoritarian and dictatorial trends inside the ruling Congress Party were posing a threat not only to the CPI(M), but "the existence of all democratic parties was being threatened. Those who swear by the Constitution, who stand by the Parliamentary path as well as others, all were realising that the Constitutional liberties, including the right to vote, were no longer secure under the Congress rule". Further as the Political Report of the Ninth Party Congress had noted, that "the re emergence of one party rule which was 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 were trying to establish the domination of the party over the rest of the nation, as well as of a narrow clique in the ruling party. For the leading circles of the ruling party were 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 was inevitably being taken towards "one country, one party, one leader", and this therefore was bound to release forces of opposition to the ruling party".

Lastly, as it was put in the Political Resolution, the massive majorities secured by the Congress Party in the State Legislatures and Parliament "did not mean that ahead of us was a period of stability in which the masses will patiently await the results of policies pursued by the ruling party, nor did 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".

The Tasks Set Forth by the Ninth Congress

(a) A call was given to expose and fight the growing danger of authoritarianism and dictatorship of the Congress Party. The Political Resolution, while narrating how the civil liberties and democratic rights of the people were under severe attack by the Congress Government, stated that "we have to carry on the fight for civil liberties and democratic rights meant—a fight to defeat the monster of dictatorship." It further stated that our Party had been consistently endeavouring to convince others that the attack on us constitutes a prelude to an attack on the democratic movement, and that was being realised by others, and therefore "this calls for the widest possible front of all democratic parties, groups and individuals to resist the march to one party dictatorship."

(b) The resolution, while putting forth a long series of economic and political demands on which to develop united actions and united movements wherever possible, had prefaced this charter of demands with the following call

"Taking into consideration the serious political situation, the CPI(M), calls upon all democratic parties, groups and individuals to come together for

(i) fighting the danger of one party dictatorship, ensuring all constitutional liberties including free and fair elections and right to vote,

(ii) the end of semi fascist terror in West Bengal, withdrawal of CRP and military, restoration of civil liberties, for the freedom of building mass organisations and for fair and free elections,

(iii) withdrawal of all repressive legislations such as the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Prevention of Violent Activities Act, Preventive Detention Act, and release of all arrested under these Acts, lifting of the Emergency and the Defence of India Act and Rules,

(iv) basic changes in the Constitution, to eliminate the misuse of Constitution by the ruling party, to eliminate the monopolist landlord exploitation, to ensure the right to work and full civil liberties, to do away with the arbitrary powers of dismissal conferred on the President "

(c) After stating as to how "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 alliance but also to actively fight against the CPI(M) and its close allies and how the leaders of the PSP, Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc, Kerala RSP and others assisted the Ruling Congress Party in different degrees 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' movement it is heading", the Political Resolution enjoined the Party to vigorously work for the reorganising of the unity of the Left and democratic forces. It asserted that "the collapse of these parties did not mean the collapse of the urge for democratic unity among the masses", and hence "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 "

(d) The Political Resolutions, after registering its appreciation of the numerous working class and peasant struggles in Kerala, West Bengal and other States, and after noting the growing trend of class and mass struggles, emphasised the great importance of *the tactics of united action*, in leading the class and mass battles. It urged that "our party, understanding the economic reality and mood of the masses and 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 advanced guard of the democratic movement " It underlined the fact that "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 a higher level" and highlighted them as " *the key tasks before us*"

The Polit Bureau and the Central Committee of our party while striving to implement the line laid down by the Ninth Party Congress had come up against a number of difficult and complex problems from time to time. How to defeat the semi fascist attacks on our party in West Bengal and defend our party and the movement there? How to resist the repression in Kerala unleashed by the Congress Right C P coalition Government? How to reforge the

unity of the Left and democratic forces when almost all the Left and democratic parties except the CPI(M) had deserted the front? How to pursue the tactic of united action with vigour on the class and mass fronts? And how to develop the struggle for the defence of civil liberties and democratic rights of the people? And what attitude and line was to be adopted towards the Gujarat and Bihar struggles and finally to the movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan? These had become the subjects of intense and prolonged discussions in the PB and the C C let alone in different party units at different levels

In the course of examining the merits and demerits of these inner PB and C C discussions and decisions, and opining on them, it is relevant here to narrate in brief the present political situation as it has come to prevail after the March 1977 General Elections

Present Political Situation—In Outlines

The ending of the Congress one party monopoly rule, the defeating of the drive of the Congress towards establishing the regime of authoritarianism and semi fascist dictatorship, the ending of semi fascist terror rule in West Bengal, the frustrating of the attempts of ruling Congress and others to isolate the CPI(M) and to destroy it, the restoring of the civil liberties, democratic and parliamentary democracy, and the creating of more favourable conditions to fight for the unity of the Left and democratic forces etc , have been some of the most important gains for which the CPI(M) alone had been consistently fighting for years. In the course of the struggle to achieve these above narrated objectives, hundreds of party cadres had laid down their lives, thousands of party members and militants suffered prolonged imprisonment and many other sacrifices were made by the party and class and mass organisations led by it. Who else can take more pride in these achievements than our party?

The national political situation, today, bears no resemblance to what was obtaining at the time of our Ninth Congress. We are, so to speak, faced with an entirely new political situation. The biggest event has been that the unbroken rule of the Congress Party for

the last three decades has ended and the political power is no more in its hands at the Centre and in most of the States

The 20 months long Emergency regime and its reckless drive to setup one party dictatorship is defeated. The imminent threat for the civil liberties, for the fundamental rights of the citizen and for the very system of parliamentary democracy is averted. Civil liberties and democratic rights, which were abrogated during the period of emergency are restored. A part of the 42nd Amendment to the country's Constitution aimed at totally subverting the Constitution is already done away with.

Most of the opposition political parties which were being characterised by us as bourgeois landlord in class character, have merged into newly formed Janata Party, embracing into its fold different split wings of the erstwhile Socialist Party, including some Congress radicals who had come to be called as "Young Turks" by the bourgeois press in the country.

The ruling Congress leadership, headed by Indira Gandhi, which was resorting to certain "Left" manoeuvres and populist demagoguery during its power struggles against the parties of the "Grand Alliance", in the year of 1969, 1971 and 1972, had turned out to be the unashamed advocate of authoritarianism and dictatorship. The political parties that comprised of the former "Grand Alliance", which were projecting the political platform of extreme Right reaction had to abandon their earlier platform of 1969, 1971 and 1972 and to espouse the cause of the defence of democratic rights and civil liberties, in opposition to the Congress drive for setting up of one party dictatorship.

The ruling Congress Party, when thrown out of power, has not only been reduced to the status of the opposition party but also got vertically split into two, the rebel Congress led by Indira Gandhi and the official Congress Party led by Messers Brahmananda Reddy and Y B Chavan. Both the split wings of the Congress Party do not have any basic policy differences on national and international issues. If Indira Gandhi Congress continues its aggressive defence of the Emergency regime, the Congress led by Reddy and Chavan is somewhat equivocal and apologetic about the same, though neither can be absolved from the crime of imposing the internal

Emergency and subverting the country's Constitution and the democratic rights of the people

The semi fascist terror rule in West Bengal that lasted for full six years between 1971 and 1977, though it could not be fought back and liquidated by relying on our party's strength alone, has been ended with the rout of the Congress Party at the polls in March 1977. This victory over the dark forces of dictatorship, no doubt, has become possible due to the new alignment of political forces that took shape during the course of people's struggles in the years between 1972-77, the J P movement between 1974 and 1977 making the biggest contribution.

In West Bengal, not merely the Congress terror rule is defeated, but a Left Front Government is installed in the State after the June 1977 Assembly elections. The Left Front headed by our Party has secured a massive electoral victory defeating both the Congress as well as State Janata Party which arrogantly spurned the offer of co-operation and electoral alliance by the CPI(M). The West Bengal victory has become a big morale booster to all the Left and democratic forces in the country, no matter under whichever political party's hold they remain at the present time.

In Kerala, the Congress Right C P coalition, which was heading an anti Marxist Government in the State since 1969, has succeeded in manipulating an electoral victory during the poll of March 1977. But the simple fact that the Marxist led front could muster on its own forty five per cent of the polled votes against the ruling combine of all and sundry amply demonstrates the prime place the CPI(M) has secured in the hearts of the people of Kerala. The Congress split and the consequent convulsions in the Congress Right C P alliance on the one hand and the inner party crisis that has gripped the Right C P, following the fiasco of its entire political line on the other, are already undermining the pyrrhic victory scored by the ruling front at the March 1977 General Elections. The new political situation in the country heralds a new chapter in the politics of the State, a chapter totally different from the dark one the Congress Right C P allies had been writing since October 1960.

In Tripura something more significant and thrilling has happened than was anticipated by the utmost optimists. The CPI(M) which

lost both the Lok Sabha seats in the General Elections of March, 1977, one to the Janata and the second to the Congress, has scored a thumping victory in the Assembly elections of December 1977. If the total votes polled by the CPI(M) in March, 1977 elections did not go up more than 40 to 42 per cent, the CPI(M) had marvellously increased its percentage of votes to 52% in December, 1977 Assembly elections. Here again, our party's earnest efforts to co-operate with the CFD first, and with the Janata a second time, in the struggle to liquidate the legacies of Congress misrule were stalled and rejected by both leaders of CFD and Janata. It shows convincingly that the above efforts of our party and the political line that is behind these efforts are amply rewarded, our party winning an astounding victory, totally routing the Congress, CFD, Janata and the Right C. P. The victory in Tripura, coming in the wake of glorious West Bengal victory in June 1977 Assembly elections, has further heightened the prestige of the party among the general public.

The defeat of the forces of dictatorship and the triumph for the parliamentary democratic system no doubt is a big achievement as far as it goes. It gives a fillip to the Left and democratic forces which at the present, stand very weak and disunited. The defeat for dictatorship does not remove the class foundation on which it thrives. Such foundations, in our case, lie in the political domination of the big bourgeois-landlord interests which are collaborating with the foreign finance capital, and they lie in the pursuit of the capitalist path of development for the country, and that too at a historical stage when the world capitalist system is found in deep going crisis and decay. To put the democratic system on a firm foundation and beyond the reach of mischief at the hands of vested interests not only will the path of capitalist development have to be abandoned but the broadest unity of the Left and democratic forces will have to be forged. Such a united front of all the Left and democratic forces alone can offer a real and genuine alternative.

But as things stand today, the organised Left and democratic parties are very weak and badly divided. The Socialist Party and several other democratic groups and individuals have merged into the Janata Party. The Right C. P. which deserted the Left and

democratic parties and allied with the Congress Party, as early as 1969-70, still continues its collaboration with the Congress, characterising it as its version of "Left and democratic unity" With the exception of some State based and regional based Left and democratic parties and groups there exist no all India Left or democratic party except the CPI(M) and its Left allies in West Bengal and Tripura, around which the unity of the Left and democratic forces will have to be forged The progressive and democratic forces have come to look upon the Left Front Government of West Bengal and Tripura to act as the focus around which the Left and democratic alternative can be built. Such is the the difficult and complex task that history has placed on the shoulders of our party and its Left allies

At the present juncture, a nation wide struggle is on between the Janata and the Congress, the former to consolidate its newly won power and the latter to regain what it has lost after 30 years of unbroken rule Notwithstanding the continued infights in the Janata between different segments that merged in it and the division of the Congress into two sharply split wings, the class alignment of the two rival combinations essentially continues to be the same *Large sections of the Left and democratic minded people which are rallied either behind the Janata or the Congress do constitute a significant political force that should go to form a part of the united Left and democratic front* The struggle to disillusion these forces from the political ideological influence of the dominant leadership of the Janata and the Congress parties and to disentangle them from the bankrupt capitalist path in the country is the supreme task that confronts the CPI(M) and its allies

This task can be ably discharged provided the CPI(M) and its left and democratic allies seize the initiative in the defence of democratic rights and their expansion, and forge links with all the forces that stand for democracy and are opposed to authoritarianism Our party's attitude to Janata and its friendly relations with that party during the last one year and more, are being guided by the prime consideration of this supreme task, namely, the struggle in defence of democracy and its extension—a struggle that is closely and inseparably linked with the struggle for People's Democracy

The Congress debacle at the March 1977 polls has come as a rude shock to the Right C P leaders and their international mentors and props. As the irony of history had it, the Congress regime, in which the Right C P leaders were discovering the virtues of "progress, democracy and Socialism", had turned out to be the most hated regime of repression and dictatorship. On the contrary, the J P movement, which they were roundly denouncing as fascist, had the good fortune of defeating the forces of dictatorship of the Congress and defending the parliamentary democracy.

The reformist and class collaborationist political line of the Right C P and also the Left adventurist theses of the different Naxalite sects, both of which had undermined the unity of the Indian Communist movement and disrupted the unity of the Left and democratic forces, stand exposed as utterly bankrupt.

It is sheer blindness on the part of the Right C P leaders who had miserably failed to realise the menace of dictatorship at the hands of the then ruling Congress Party. They continue, even today, to playdown the significant role played by the Janata Party and Government in defeating the forces of dictatorship and in restoring the democratic rights and liberties of the people. These leaders also fail to see the intimate connection between the struggle for democratic rights on the one hand and on the other the economic struggles of the people to better their livelihood. It is this woeful failure that is at the root of Right C P's policy of declaring the Janata as the immediate and principal target of attack, while allying with one or the other split wings of the Congress Party. It is this blindness that is behind their pseudo radical slogans of fighting and defeating both Janata and Congress simultaneously and of building a so called Left and democratic unity, which includes the Congress Party, and which is directed chiefly against the Janata Party and Government.

The deepening economic crisis and the attempt of the bourgeois landlord classes to shift the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the common people is bound to engender mass discontent, leading to innumerable class and mass struggles. The perpetuation of the same anti people policies of the Congress Government on the one hand and the continued defence of the democratic rights

and freedoms on the other can neither go together nor for long. The Janata Government will have either to carry out its solemn pledges and commitments made to the people or it has to come into increasing conflicts not only with the common people and their day to day struggles but also with the aspirations and expectations of the democratic and progressive minded rank and file members of the Janata Party. Here lies the Janata's Archless heel.

Another factor to be noted in the present context is the continued existence of several regional and state based parties. The ending of the Congress monopoly of power did not result in the emergence of Janata monopoly of power. Different parties such as AIADMK, DMK, Akali Party, Kashmir National Conference, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and its Left front allies in West Bengal and Tripura do exist as separate entities. Some of them are at the helm of State Governments such as West Bengal, Tripura, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Jammu and Kashmir State. These parties too are vitally interested in defending democratic freedoms and are opposed to authoritarianism and one party monopoly rule.

The results of the February 1978 Assembly elections in the four States of Andhra, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Assam go to show that Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Congress carried with it the great bulk of the mass following of the united Congress Party that the official Congress Party retains only a weak base, that Janata has not succeeded in making a dent in these States of Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra but even lost a part of the support that it secured in March 1977 poll, and that Indira Gandhi Congress, with two State Governments in its hands emerges as a formidable challenge to Janata and all others who stand opposed to Mrs. Gandhi's Emergency rule and its re Emergence. This development is likely to intensify the inner conflicts in all the three bourgeois landlord parties, namely, Janata, Indira Congress and official Congress, leading to a new alignment of political forces from all these three parties. Note also should be taken as to how Mrs. Indira Gandhi is once again resorting to "democratic and populist" slogans while in the same breath unashamedly defending her political platform of Emergency and authoritarian rule.

It is under these varied conditions and complex situation that the CPI(M) is called upon to work out its immediate political line, a line that fights for the defence and expansion of democratic rights and freedoms, a line that carries out the struggle to reforge and broaden the united front of the Left and democratic forces, and a line that enables the party to boldly lead the class and mass struggles of the people

In order to work out such a correct political tactical line for the current situation and its immediate future, it is essential that we self critically review the tactical line pursued by our party since the Ninth Party Congress

Political Line is Basically Sound

Before we proceed to self critically examine, in detail the political tactical measures that we had been adopting from time to time, it is necessary to state, at the very outset, that our party's political tactical line, during the period under review, has been proved to be *basically sound and correct*, notwithstanding a number of shortcomings and even some mistakes in implementing it and in developing it to meet the requirements of the rapidly changing political conditions in the country

It is certainly to the credit of our party, which was the first, to warn the people and all other political parties about the growing menace of one party dictatorship and the semi fascist terror rule by the Congress Government. The Political Resolution of our Ninth Party Congress in the middle of the year 1972, highlighted the danger of dictatorship and gave a call to fight the impending menace. It was our party and its mass following in West Bengal, and to a much lesser extent in Kerala, that bore the full brunt of violence and terror under the Congress rule. In both these States, fourteen hundred—1,100 in West Bengal and 300 in Kerala—of our party cadres and militants had been killed by the police and hired assassins of the Congress during the years between 1971-77. Other political parties of the opposition and the people of other States were to experience the nightmare of Emergency rule for 20 months during 1975-76 years, but our Party and its mass following in West Bengal had been subjected to semi fascist

terror rule for full six years. The CPI(M) is fully conscious that it had its proud contribution in exposing, isolating and relentlessly fighting against the Congress dictatorship, and finally in bringing its ignominious downfall. It was a contribution that no other political party in the country *singly* could excel it, during the fateful decade between 1967-77.

The CPI(M) was correct and clear in its class analysis and assessment of the ruling Congress Party on the one hand and the major parties of former "Grand alliance" on the other, characterising both of them as essentially representing the interests of the bourgeois landlord classes. During this period since the Ninth Party Congress, our party was always concentrating its main fire against the ruling Congress Party and its Government, unlike the Right Communists who had been allying with the Congress and making the bourgeois opposition parties their main target of attack. It was our correct estimation of these two bourgeois landlord formations and our correct concentration of fire on the Congress Party in power, that enabled our party to fight back the Right C P's line of rallying behind the Congress, and the Socialist Party's line of merging with the parties of "Grand alliance".

The CPI(M) proved itself correct in rejecting the Right C P's thesis of the rise of fascism due to the movement led by J P, and in lending sympathy and support to J P and his movement, characterising it, essentially as a resistance movement against the Congress Government and its repressive rule. History has fully vindicated the correctness of the line adopted by the CPI(M) and repudiated the political line of the Right C P as totally bankrupt.

It was the CPI(M) that has been consistently upholding the slogan of uniting the Left and democratic forces, looking upon the Left and democratic front as the real alternative and consistently working for its materialisation. The CPI(M) was never a party either to the Right opportunist slogan of building a so called "National Democratic Front" or to the equally opportunist slogan of all in united front against the Congress, advocated by the Socialist Party. If the line pursued by the Right C P landed it into strategic alliance with the ruling Congress Party and the supporting of its Emergency

rule, the line advocated and practised by the Socialist Party led it finally into merging itself in the Janata Party

Our Party, which was extending sympathy and support to J P movement, characterising it as a resistance movement against the Congress misrule, was principled and correct in rejecting the proposals to join the Jana Sangharsha Samities and in refusing to go into J P's National Co ordination Committee. Thus it jealously guarded its independent identity, and the proletarian class view point, while refusing to accept the terms stipulated by the National Co ordination Committee and its sole leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan

The CPI(M) and its political line were subjected to ruthless attacks from both the Right revisionist policies of the Soviet Party and the "Left" adventurist line of the Chinese party—two biggest Communist Parties leading the two mighty Socialist States. The Soviet leaders were doing every thing they could do to pressurise the Indian Communist movement to hitch itself to the bandwagon of the ruling Congress Party, while the Chinese leaders were busy in splitting the Communist Party of India (Marxist) with a view to thrust the banner "Maoism" on it and to mislead it on to the path of ill conceived "armed warfare". Nearly a full decade and half of life and events, since the Seventh Party Congress in October 1964, have amply demonstrated the total fiasco of both these opportunist lines, vindicating the CPI(M) and its correct political tactical line.

Our party has the unique honour of upholding the banner of Socialism and proletarian internationalism in India, unlike the Right C P leaders who, day in and day out, denounce Socialist China as "militarist and fascist", and the Maoists who have taken to the absurd line of characterising the Soviet Union as "Social Imperialist" and "fascist". The CPI(M) upholds and acclaims Socialism and its marvellous achievements of both the USSR and the People's Republic of China, despite the deep political ideological differences that separate it from both these parties.

The CPI(M), unlike the Right C P, and the Indian Maoists, had thrown its full weight in the struggle in defence of democracy, the Right C P joining hands with the Emergency rule of the Congress and its dictatorship, while the Maoists were showering contempt

on this struggle for defence of democracy, declaring the parliament as pigsty, pinning their faith in the imminence of "armed struggle" and "people's war"

All these above stated positions of our party do certainly constitute the basic political tactical line of our party. We in the main stood loyal and faithful to this general line. It is our adherence to this political line and its implementation that have earned us good political dividends. The heightened political prestige that our party is enjoying today is in no small measure due to such correct political line. We should bear it in mind, while mercilessly doing criticism and self criticism of our shortcomings and mistakes.

On United Action

The Political Resolution approvingly stated that, "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 struggles"

In pursuance of the line laid down by the Party Congress and guided by the all India Centre of our State CITU units—such as those of West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and others—had organised numerous united actions, some times drawing into them units of the AITUC and INTUC, even though the Congress Government was always conspiring to forge a combined opposition of the INTUC, HMS and AITUC against the CITU and its allies.

There is, of course, nothing unique or original in our party emphasising the slogan of united action on issues, in conducting the day to day economic struggles. It is an elementary tactic. But its importance is all the more underlined in the given political situation that was confronting our Party and its led class and mass organisations at the time of our Ninth Party Congress and following it. The situation demanded vigorous pursuit of this tactic by all the mass and class fronts, led by our Party. It was a situation when all other political parties in the country, excepting our party had either rallied behind the Congress or the "grand alliance", and it was a situation when the immediate prospect of any united front with one or the other all India political party was rather bleak.

In fact, it was our accelerated activity on the trade union front and the struggle for unity in action that had enabled our Party to develop close contacts with the leaders of the Socialist Party, working on the trade union front, and to prevail upon them to convene the Left Parties' meeting that was held in August 1973

It was this tactic of unity in action, pursued by our CITU leadership, that enabled us to bring different railwaymen's unions under one central coordination committee to conduct the glorious three week all India railway strike, and to organise the nation wide one day general strike in support of the striking railwaymen. It is again in this background, a second Left Parties' meeting was convened in April 1974, on the eve of the railway strike. This Left Parties' meeting which was attended by all the Left parties including the Right C P had lent its whole hearted support to the railway strike. Let it be mentioned that the railway strike and the solidarity actions of the working class, throughout the country, constituted a high water mark in the united activity of the Indian working class, a united activity forged in the teeth of determined opposition and hostility of the Congress Government. Mention also may be made that almost all the opposition parties, whether they were of the Right or the Left complexion, were compelled by events to stand in support of the railway strike, and in opposition to the violent suppression of the strike by the Congress Government.

All these huge working class actions narrated above, of course, were not the measure of our Party's independent strength on the trade union front, but the clear vindication of the tactic of forging united actions with all the class and mass organisations that were willing to unite and struggle. The railway strike and the political background in which it took place had acquired first rate political significance even though the demands raised by the strikers were purely of economic nature. The Congress Government as well as the political parties of opposition that supported the strike had their respective political objectives in dealing with it and they had become clearly discernible in the political developments that took place between June 1974 and March 1977 General Elections.

Another very important factor in the then prevailing national political situation was the eruption of the Gujarat movement and following it the J P movement in Bihar, behind which all the Right opposition parties such as Congress (O), Jana Sangh, BLD, Swatantra and the like rallied firmly and the Socialist Party also had head long plunged into it since July August of 1974, deserting the Left front to which it was committed earlier

Here it is very pertinent to remind ourselves as to what the Ninth Congress Resolution was drawing our attention to, namely, how the Right opposition parties like the Congress (O), Jana Sangh were attempting “to adopt a new stance towards the people”, and were “trying to trim their sails to the new situation”, the situation of growing mass discontent under the stress of developing economic crisis As already referred above, these Right parties, from their position of adopting new stance towards the people and trimming their sails to the new situation as noted by us in June 1972, had moved into the stage of conducting a mass movement, in open defiance of and in opposition to the Congress Government, with the clear political objective of removing the Congress Government from power at the Centre and in the States The C C meeting that was held from July 15 to 20, 1973, in Calcutta noted as to how these Right parties were trying to capitalise the growing mass discontent It stated “The parties of Right reaction are ceaselessly attempting to convert the situation in their favour by posing as the champions of mass discontent Mention has already been made of Jana Sangh activities which have been widened over a number of States The Jana Sangh has now started intervening in trade union struggles—specially the struggles of the Government employees”

The discussions and decisions in both the P B and the C C during the months of August September 1974 regarding the issue of our attitude to Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh, the trade union wing of the Jana Sangh, were neither carrying forward the political understanding as narrated above nor our basic understanding regarding the tactics of unity in action by different trade union centres A careful reading of the Resolution on Trade Union Unity and B M S , the resolution sponsored by the P B and endorsed by

the C.C., after discussion on 29th September 1974, go to show how we were lopsidedly underlining and emphasising our fundamental political-ideological opposition to the Jana Sangh and the B.M.S. and how we were stretching it to the point of staking and risking the tactic of unity and united action in the trade union movement.

The said resolution on trade union unity and B.M.S. consists of several conflicting statements, balancing one against another, with the main stress on fighting the B.M.S. and Jana Sangh, even if it came to pigeon-holing the "Campaign Committee" which was set up at the meeting of the Central Trade Union Organisations held on 28th August 1974. The said Campaign Committee was set up with a view to building up a movement against the Wage-Freeze Ordinance, issued by the Congress Government. That resolution had stated:

1. It was wrong on our part to have allowed the inclusion of Jana Sangh-led B.M.S. into the National Coordination Committee of the Railwaymen, without a protest, since the B.M.S. was no force among the railway workers, and it was the working class wing of the reactionary Jana Sangh, though its inclusion did not harm the railway workers nor increased the B.M.S.'s prestige. The move for its inclusion came from AIRF leader Fernandes, and it had been wrong that the review report of the railway strike did not include this point of B.M.S. and failed to warn our comrades against it.

2. It was wrong to have allowed the inclusion of the B.M.S. in the Central Trade Union Organisations' meeting against Wage-Freeze Ordinance. It was also wrong to set up a Campaign Committee in cooperation with the B.M.S. and the P.B. directed our representatives to oppose that move. Though our representatives at the meeting had to accept the formation of such a Campaign Committee, since "the majority of the organisations were not prepared to agree with us", it was to be seen that the "*Campaign Committee without office bearers or convenors and without any immediate authority to organise or intervene in campaign would be non-functioning and we should extricate from this position*" (Emphasis added).

3 The PB is of the opinion that *while the Campaign Committee is frozen*, activation at State levels of the Central Trade Unions and Federations should be done in a big way to implement the resolution. Keeping in view that the BMS is already part of the front the situation should be properly reviewed to remedy it

4 “Though the BMS is not a force, certain left parties and trade union organisations insist on its inclusion in the common front. They see no reason to exclude it. Non-Party leaders of some organisations—Central Government Employees, etc. do neither agree with our political understanding of Jana Sangh nor do they desire to exclude it from the common front. Some times, it becomes next to impossible to forge a united front of these unions unless we agree to accept the BMS as a part of the front”

5 “HMS which has recently joined our trade union front has been pressing for the inclusion of the BMS. It is being supported by the RSP led UTUC” Even the Right CP dominated AITUC no longer takes the general position of opposing the BMS or rejecting UF with it. This is so because of the pressures of other parties and some trade union organisations and the strategic position which the Socialist Party occupies today in this UF”

6 Our “Party regards the Jana Sangh as a reactionary organisation basing itself on Hindu revivalist chauvinism, organisationally dominated by RSS and violently anti Communist, anti Socialist Bloc and anti proletarian in its words and deeds. It pursues a policy of Muslim baiting and in the foreign policy matters pursue a pro Western line” Hence, “we have to consistently fight for this broader front without the BMS. If on some occasions we have to yield, it must be regarded as an exception and not the normal carrying out of our line. In such an exceptional situation, the Centre’s guidance must be sought before taking the decision”

This issue of united action of different trade union centres along with the BMS—its permissibility or otherwise is being discussed at length, not because there is anything wrong in our *basic political characterisation of the Jana Sangh and*

the RSS The Jana Sangh had been certainly taking anti Muslim, anti Soviet, anti Communist and Hindu chauvinist positions, and the RSS had been built as a para military wing of the Jana Sangh. Similarly, the B M S was being built by it to secure a foothold among the working class. There was nothing wrong in drawing the attention of our comrades and alerting them about this phenomenon, since it is always the duty of a Marxist Leninist Party to politically and ideologically expose and isolate this bourgeois, chauvinistic and communal force from its penetration and consolidation among the working class. Nor it is anybody's contention that we, as a proletarian Party, did everything necessary that was demanded of us in discharging our political, ideological and organisational tasks in exposing and fighting the chauvinist and communal forces.

The problem under discussion had been the permissibility or otherwise of our CITU agreeing to have united action with other central trade union organisations, including the B M S. To formulate the issue precisely, concretely and pointedly the question was whether in the given political situation of years 1974, 1975 and 1976, and also under the given conditions of the trade union movement and its conditions of utter disunity, and with the limited strength that our Party was having among the trade union movement, *was it correct on our part to make the issue of inclusion or exclusion of the B M S the central point of controversy, and freeze the "Campaign Committee", and cause undue delay in holding the proposed trade union convention on the question of Wage Freeze Ordinance and to give up the struggle for united action on that specific issue?*

It needs to be reiterated that the tactic of unity in action with several other trade union centres, is one of the most effective weapons not only to bring about the maximum unity in the struggle for realising the immediate objective but it is also a proven weapon to unite the working class and isolate its enemies. In the then given situation when railway strike, anti wage freeze agitation and such other issues were on the agenda, when almost all other central trade union organisations, except the pro Congress INTUC and AITUC, were insisting on the inclusion of

the B M S into united activity and when almost all the opposition political parties, except our Party, were being drawn into J P's movement against the Congress regime of corruption and repression, it was utterly wrong on our part to make our basic attitude regarding the RSS as the touchstone for unity in action with the B M S. It is such a mistaken outlook on our part that actually wrecks the tactic of united action.

Opinions might differ on the particular issue, whether the anti wage freeze movement could have led to a large scale mobilisation if only our Party was willing to have united action with the B M S or the situation that developed was such that no big united working class action on that issue was possible. Without drifting ourselves into such an involved discussion we shall have to realise the fact that the prolonged debate over the issue of the B M S was derailing us from the correct tactic of united action, resulting in the loss of initiative from the hands of the CITU.

The lopsided and exclusive emphasis on our demarcation with the Jana Sangh and the political organisational struggle against it and the B M S by the Party and the CITU, and the stiff and persistent opposition to entertain the very idea of united action with the Jana Sangh and the B M S, elevating it to a point of principle, had certainly impeded us from attempting to seize the initiative during this entire period.

Further we cannot afford to forget the fact that this was one of the important issues that kept the PB and CC sharply divided. It led to a prolonged inner party crisis inside the PB and CC. The crisis was overcome or resolved thanks to events that led to the ordering of the general elections and the rout of the ruling Congress Party in the general elections of March 1977.

To conclude the topic of united action it should be made clear that we had so far dealt with the single issue of the B M S and united action with it, and did not touch about other class and mass organisations under our Party's guidance and leadership such as the All India Kisan Sabha, Students Federation of India and other State based organisations, like the Agricultural Labourers' Associations, Youth Federations, Teachers' Associations and Women's

organisations As already pointed out, it was a situation when the unity of the Left and democratic parties got disrupted, when the two major all India Left Parties, the Right C P and the Socialist Party, were being rallied behind the Congress and the "Grand alliance" respectively, when the class and mass organisations under the leadership of other political parties were not coming forth readily for united action along with our class and mass organisations and when the situation to break our isolation and to mobilise all those who could be mobilised against the Congress Government and its drive to one party dictatorship was the foremost task, the question of unity in action had assumed additional importance

A dispassionate examination of our work during the period would reveal that the understanding of the particular tactic was not deeper, that the perseverance demanded of us was not there and the united actions that were attempted and practised in one or the other States, by one or the other class organisations, excepting the CITU were of sporadic nature The line of unity in action laid down by the Ninth Congress as a key task in isolating the ruling Congress and its allies and in bringing about the widest mass mobilisation was not properly pursued Inadequate understanding of the tactic and hesitation and reservation in boldly carrying out had hindered our work

The reasons, some times, adduced for the absence of united actions on a big scale were such that even though we were doing our utmost in this regard, it was the unwillingness and hostility of class and mass organisations under the leadership of other political parties that was responsible for the non fructification of the united actions It is nobody's contention that a correct practising of the tactic of united action could have automatically brought about united actions on a mass scale It is precisely to break the barriers erected by interested political parties and their controlled mass organisations that the slogan of unity in action should be wielded as the most effective weapon Even though such united actions are not materialised, the struggle in that direction itself would help us in expanding our mass base This should be deeply grasped and appreciated

In examining our shortcomings, in this regard it is also necessary to find out whether the issue or issues chosen and formulated for the united action, were such that a great majority of the class or mass respond to it, and the refusal to have united action with us adversely affect the position of those who oppose it

The slogans such as the unity from below, the unity of the classes and masses, instead of the united front of the Left and democratic parties etc , were some times raised as though they could substitute the slogan of unity in action In reality such slogans cannot materialise if the slogan of united action is sought to be bypassed Any attempt to underrate the great importance of the unity in action, and in its place to advocate the seemingly advanced radical slogans, result in the retarding the growth and expansion of the class and mass movements Such slogans cited above, of course, were neither pursued nor persisted

The tactic of unity in action, which is the essential tactic for all class and mass fronts led by any proletarian party, has a special importance to our party in the present phase of national development This should be borne in mind, and the tactic of united actions should be pursued and practised with vigour

The Struggle for the Unity of Left and Democratic Forces

It is pointed in the foregoing pages that the unity of the Left and democratic parties forged during the years of 1966-69 got disrupted by the end of the year 1969 It was absolutely correct on our part to take initiative in the reforging of the unity of the Left and democratic forces as a real national alternative, opposed to both the bourgeois landlord alliances of the Congress Party and the parties of the "Grand Alliance" It was this struggle for the unity of the Left and democratic forces that led to the convening of the Left parties' meetings, first, during August 1973, and the second, on the eve of May 1974 Railway strike, which the Right C P was also compelled to attend and sign an agreed programme It was this Left parties unity that gave a big fillip to a series of united working class actions in the years of 1973-74 and finally for the fructification of the historic railway strike and the one day all India general strike in support of the striking railway workers

The massive violence used by the Congress Government to suppress the railway strike, and the withdrawal of the strike after full 21 days did, by no means, imply the defeat of the Left and democratic forces and the final triumph of the Congress Government. Following the withdrawal of the strike under heavy police repression, there took place another development in the national political scene. The resistance movement led by J P in Bihar had started picking up its momentum. It became the focus of national resistance against the Congress regime. The socialist Party plunged itself head long into the J P movement, deserting the Left Parties consolidation, saying that the "Left front did not click", and J P's movement was the only alternative. The Right C P once again went back to the Congress fold, deserted the Left Parties consolidation, and described J P's movement as fascist and a CIA inspired one. Thus the struggle to reforge Left unity by our Party which scored significant initial success in 1973-74, again got a set back. The Right C P being placated by the ruling Congress and the S P being sucked into J P's National Coordination Committee. With the dissolution of this attempted Left consolidation, the slogan of the Left and democratic unity had receded into the back ground and ceased to be the immediate slogan of action.

The slogan of Left and democratic front which is also raised by the Right C P has nothing in common with that of the CPI(M). If the CPI(M) looks upon the slogan as one comprising of the Left and democratic forces and directed against the ruling bourgeois landlord party or parties, the Right C P looks upon it as a slogan that comprises not only the traditionally understood Left and democratic parties but also the ruling Congress party, characterising the later as progressive and democratic. Such had been the stand of the Right C P since the last quarter of the year 1969, and it continues the same even today, as seen in Kerala, and also as practised in its electoral alliances of March 1977, June 1977 and February 1978.

For the Right C P it had been, essentially, a front chiefly directed against the political parties of old "Grand Alliance", no matter whether they were in opposition or in power. In the past it

was called a front against the “Right reactionary parties”, and now it is named as a front against the Janata party in power. This has been the Right C P’s national alternative, and it has nothing really in common with the CPI(M)’s concept of Left and democratic unity as the real national alternative.

Similarly the slogan of general anti Congress united front as the national alternative was being put up by the Socialist Party since several years. Such a concept led it into joining all sorts of united fronts and United Front State Governments during 1967-69—fronts comprising of all and sundry from that of the Jana Sangh, Swatantra, B K D, Right C P to the Socialist Party. It led it again to join the “Grand Alliance”, in the years of 1971-72 and finally in merging into the Janata in the first quarter of the year 1977. This has nothing to do with the CPI(M)’s concept of Left and democratic front as the genuine national alternative, against both the bourgeois landlord combinations of the Congress and the Janata.

We sometimes come across certain questions regarding the nature and character of the Left and democratic parties and groups. It is asked what exactly and scientifically is the meaning of the term of “Left” and “Democratic”, and whether this or that political party strictly falls under this definition? It would be prudent on our part to adhere to the stand we were taking earlier on this question, than going into the definitions of the Left and democratic parties and the niceties involved therein.

In our April, 1967 C C Resolution, New Situation and Party’s Tasks, it was observed as the following:

“A dogmatic, sectarian and wrong attitude towards political parties like the DMK, Akalis, Muslim League, etc. persisted in the once united Communist Party. The revisionists for long, dogmatically persisted in it doggedly opposing even any sort of electoral agreements and adjustments with these parties, let alone joining hands with them for forging united fronts against the Congress. An attitude of “touch me not” and keeping them at arm’s length was considered to be a revolutionary virtue. These parties had come to be looked upon as embodiments of nothing but rank communalism, casteism and disruption.”

“Our Party correctly and courageously took the lead in discarding this erroneous attitude and boldly fought for electoral agreements, adjustments, united fronts and finally, even for participation in United Front Governments with such parties on an agreed governmental programme ”

“In both Kerala and West Bengal, our Party is participating in the running of the coalition governments which comprise of several democratic, petty bourgeois, and bourgeois parties, groups and individuals ”

The above stated understanding will have to prevail in working out our tactics, for the unity of the Left and democratic forces and forging of such a front Further, it should not be confined only to the existing organised political parties and groups which came to be termed as Left and democratic, since most of these parties and groups had already merged in either the Congress or the Janata It will also have to cover all those Left and democratic elements which are either *inside* the Janata and the Congress or *behind* both of them as their mass following

The discussion on the question of the Left and democratic front and our experience in this regard would be incomplete, if certain problems that arose in some units of our party are omitted Faced with the growing repression on our movement in the States of West Bengal and Kerala on the one hand, and witnessing the growing resistance movement under the leadership of J P and his National Coordination Committee on the other, during the years of 1974-76, the PB and the CC were discussing repeatedly the topic of unity and united action with several other political parties and groups, outside the purview of the traditional Left and democratic parties From some State Committees' of our Party too, certain discussions were sharply raised

The State Committee of Kerala, feeling actually the need for political allies to fight back the repression let loose by the Right CP Congress coalition government, and finding the willingness of the Kerala Congress leadership to join hands with our Party in fighting against the Congress Right CP coalition, advocated the *substitution of our accepted concept of Left and democratic front with that of a "Democratic Front"* It was argued that the Right

C P though constituted a Left party, it was impossible to build a Left and democratic front with that party until and unless its coalition was defeated. It was also said that the Kerala Congress which was being characterised by us, since long, as a party of big planters and big landlords, and its leadership as one comprised of Catholic hierarchy and wedded to anti Communism, had undergone a change in character, that its base was mainly middle peasant, even though some landlords were there at the leadership's level. As such it had to be characterised as essentially a democratic party, and it had to be given a place in the "*Democratic Front*", though not in the *Left and democratic front*.

The P B disagreed with the State Committee and its arguments about the concepts of Left and democratic front and also the "democratic front". After holding discussions with the State Committee, and after listening to the report of the State Committee and appreciating their anxiety and the need to have a wider alliance including the Kerala Congress to resist repression, the P B had permitted the State Committee to join hands with the Kerala Congress, if an agreed programme could be worked out, without giving such a front either the nomenclature of a *Left and democratic front* or simply a "*Democratic Front*". The alliance with Kerala Congress, though short lived and though it collapsed after the imposition of internal emergency under the threat of the Central Congress Government to arrest and detain the leadership of the Kerala Congress, had helped our party considerably in resisting the repression and stalling the mounting offensive on our Party and mass movements led by it by the Government.

The key point to be noted in this controversy is that the requirements of wider and wider allies was felt by our comrades as a dire need of the hour to resist and fight back repression, and it could not be achieved if they had to strictly confine to the concept of Left and democratic unity. The conditions were such that they had to seek broader allies than conceived by the Left and democratic alliance, even leaving out one or the other Left party from such an alliance for a time.

In West Bengal the issue of an anti Fascist United Front was raised by certain units and some leading cadres, at different levels,

though not by the State Committee Questions were posed which purported to casting doubts regarding the correctness or other wise of our Party's assessment of the Congress split, about the attitude adopted by us in the conflict between the two split wings of the Congress and their respective political platforms, and subsequently about our stand towards the ruling Congress and the "Grand Alliance" during the general elections of 1971 and 1972

We cite below from a note submitted to the P B by a party unit in West Bengal which gives pointed expression to the doubts and questions raised by some comrades, as described above It posed the issue thus

"It requires self critical analysis whether the Party's decision to vote for Giri's Presidentship in 1969 was correct It is to be assessed whether victory in the Presidential elections of 1969 over the Grand Alliance was not the starting point of this authoritarianism It is also to be recalled that the party supported Giri's candidature, the nominee of Indira Gandhi who during her Presidentship of the Congress took leadership in toppling the Communist led Ministry in Kerala in 1959"

The same Note, describing the political situation in the country, following the imposition of emergency rule, proceeds to state, that the "bourgeois dictatorship over the toiling people has assumed fascist forms though with certain variance with classical fascism in different countries, whether the present bourgeois landlord dictatorship in India is just authoritarianism or a move towards a fascist state form as has emerged in various ex colonial countries"

Further it is asked that when the P B and C C statement on the imposition of emergency on 25th June 1975 says that *all the big bourgeois and landlord classes has rallied behind the regime of Indira Gandhi, does it not follow from this that the political parties of Right opposition do no more represent the big bourgeois landlord classes?* And does it not also follow that these "former" Right parties can find a place in the anti Government front or anti fascist front? In continuation of the same line of argument, it is asked as to what justification remains, still, to

characterise some political parties as parties of extreme Right opposition when the ruling Congress Party itself has become reactionary and dictatorial?

However, it should be made clear that the advocacy of the so called anti fascist front or anti Congress front was entirely different from the *broader electoral alliance* or platform which came to be materialised in February March, 1977 and after, against the Congress drive to one party dictatorship. In a way this alliance continued to function for the purpose of liquidating the remnants of dictatorship during the Assembly elections of June, 1977 and February, 1978. *Firstly*, it was wrong to attempt to fit the opposition bourgeois landlord parties into democratic opposition parties on the plea that they ceased to be representing the interests of the big bourgeois landlord classes. *Secondly*, it was an unsustainable argument to maintain that these opposition parties lose their class character since the class interests they were representing were being well championed by the ruling Congress, and since all the big bourgeois landlord classes rallied behind the Congress after the imposition of the emergency. *Thirdly*, it was incorrect, as it was a strategical class alliance that was sought to be advocated and it was indistinguishable from the anti Congress front advocated by the Socialist Party since long. *Fourthly*, the argument that the Indira Gandhi Government had become *fully* fascist after the imposition of emergency, if not earlier during the years of 1972-74, and hence the slogan of an anti fascist front in which all the opposition parties could find a place etc., was more in the nature of arguing for the anti Congress front and adduce reasons in support of it. That has nothing in common with the broad alliance or platform or electoral front that our party was advocating and practising during the 1977-78 years.

Though the advocacy of such anti Congress front, on the lines of the S P, expresses the innate anger against the repressive rule of the Congress and the desire to defeat such a rule, it does not stand on the solid basis of class analysis and class realities. It is, in a way, a counterpart of the Right C P's theme of forming a united front with the Congress in order to fight the "extreme Right Reaction", giving it the name of a "Left and democratic front"

Our criticism and self criticism is that our PB and C C did not do all that was necessary to defend bourgeois democracy when it was being rapidly eroded, that it did not adequately utilise the inner conflicts and divisions of the bourgeois landlord parties in furtherance of the struggle against the Congress Government and its drive towards authoritarianism, and that it did not strive to rally all the forces that could be rallied on the political platform for the defence of democracy, while all the time laying exclusive emphasis on the building up of the Left and democratic front—the condition for the materialisation of which was far from mature and the unity forged between the Left parties in 1973-74 was totally disrupted

However, it was not a question of our Party's failure to characterise the Congress Government as one of fascist in character and the consequent failure to issue that slogan of forging an anti fascist united front, since both these concepts, under the given conditions, would over step the bounds of concrete facts of life and thus overshoot the mark. Neither the contention that the Right opposition parties had ceased to be political representatives of the bourgeois landlord classes nor the argument that these parties thus had qualified themselves to be partners in a *class united front against the Landlords, the monopolists and their foreign collaborators* could be tenable. Hence no confusion should be allowed by mixing up the two different class and strategic concepts, namely, the concept of forging broader unity or alliance in defence of parliamentary democracy and people's liberties, and the concept of the strategic alliance or front against the bourgeois landlord State and Government.

The imposition of Emergency rule in June 1975, as noted in the PB and C C's statement on the subject, was immediately directed by one bourgeois landlord party against the other bourgeois landlord parties opposition, as the latter posed a threat to the rule of the former and its perpetuation. Easy drawing of parallels and attempting to fit things into set patterns, though tempting, is deceptive and misleading. If one were to argue that the *particular electoral understanding or virtual electoral alliance* that had come about during the general elections of

March, 1977 ought to have been envisaged and worked for its fruition during the years of 1974-76, it was simply allowing one's imagination to run riot and see that general elections of March, 1977 before they were ordered and conducted, see imposition of internal emergency before it was clamped down and see the Right opposition parties championing the platform of parliamentary democracy and fighting against the drive to one party dictatorship before their democratic rights too were denied

Our self critical review, that we had failed to project the platform of defence of democratic rights and civil liberties, and that we did not boldly give a call for wider mobilisation around it or our pointing out of the shortcomings in adopting a completely correct tactical line to J P's movement—a line that could have enabled us to have proper rapport with the masses behind J P's movement—does in no way imply that we could afford to forget or ignore the reactionary class character of the Right opposition parties as to invite them to forge a *strategic united front* along with the Left and democratic forces, on the ground that they too were anti Congress. Their being anti Congress on other economic and political questions is quite different from their being anti Congress on the issue of defence of democratic rights, people's liberties and parliamentary democracy. The slogan of broader alliance or front that our party was putting forward was totally different from both the *anti Congress front advocated by the S P* and the treacherous slogan of *anti fascist front advocated by the Right C P leadership*. This should be strictly borne in mind.

Were we correct in characterising some opposition parties as those belonging to extreme Right reaction when the Congress Party and the Government were themselves reactionary and oppressive? Such a characterisation of some political parties was not new to us, and we were doing it when there was United Communist Party of India and did continue so in our Party Programme after the formation of the CPI(M).

It is nothing surprising that the political representatives of the same bourgeois landlord classes which are essentially reactionary can put forward two different *political* lines, one more reactionary than the other. Our own experience demonstrated that

the parties of the "Grand Alliance" were putting forth extreme reactionary demands and slogans during 1969, 1971 and 1972 confrontations with the ruling Congress Party. They were opposing the Congress from the avowed reactionary angle. Similarly, the Congress Party which represents the same reactionary classes and which opposed the political platform of the extreme reaction in 1969, 1971 and 1972 had come to represent extreme reactionary platform, annulling civil liberties, democratic rights and imposing Emergency rule and subverting parliamentary democratic system. If the CPI(M) stood opposed to the Congress and was lending conditional support to the J P movement during the years of 1974-76 and was offering cooperation with Janata during the 1977 March elections and thereafter it was because of the changed political platform of these parties. Our Party's class characterisation of the Congress and the Janata, that both represent the bourgeois landlord classes does not negate the possibility of one or the other becoming more reactionary than its counterpart.

The criticism that our Party had committed the mistake of supporting Giri's election and thereby strengthened the hands of Indira Gandhi, whose anti-Communist proclivities were revealed as early as 1959-60 when she was instrumental in overthrowing the Kerala Communist Government, is of subjective character. Though individual leaders and their own personal outlook and idiosyncracies do play a role, the decisive role is of the class interests they represent. It was not the cussedness of the personal character that was mainly responsible for her party's drive to authoritarianism and one party dictatorship, but basically the class interests in the background of deepening economic crisis and the growing conflicts and dissensions among the bourgeois landlord parties and classes that drove them to the path of dictatorship.

Any facile idea that by defeating Indira Gandhi and the ruling Congress through our opposition to Giri's candidature could have prevented the crisis among the ruling class parties or could evade the repressive and dictatorial policies of the bourgeois landlord government, to put it mildly, is too naive and non-class in its

nature It was not simply an issue of our lending support to this or that faction, *but a more serious question of the issues involved in the division and how those issues affect the democratic masses Our opposition to Giri's election in August 1969, would have objectively amounted to supporting the Congress(O) in its championing of the privy purses to the ex princes, in its hostility to bank nationalisation, in its frontal and open opposition to land ceilings and its other avowedly reactionary slogans* Such a course on our part, irrespective of the fact which wing of the bourgeois landlord parties could win or lose, would have compromised our position vis a vis the people, landing our party in an unprincipled and opportunist stand

The Drive for Dictatorship and the Struggle for Allies

The political report and the Resolution of the Ninth Party Congress took serious note of the semi fascist terror rule in West Bengal and very correctly warned against the growing threat to Parliamentary Democracy in the country They took into account the drive of the ruling Congress to set up its one party dictatorship A call was given to forge broad democratic unity in order to fight back and defeat the growing forces of authoritarianism and dictatorship

In our C C 's Report on "Economic and Political Situation" adopted at its meeting held between 15 20th July, 1973, the programme put forth for building a broader alliance was reiterated and emphasised

Similarly, in the PB and C C Resolution regarding the imposition of internal emergency on 25th June, 1975 the following was stated under the caption, "For a Broad Front of the Fighting People"

"The Emergency has introduced a qualitatively new feature in the political situation In contrast to what has happened in West Bengal in 1972, it is not our Party alone that is attacked but a wider spectrum of Indian Society and *all political parties in opposition to the Government irrespective of their colour This combined with the deteriorating economic situation proclaims the possibility of the widest possible democratic movement to fight*

the Emergency and restore the rights of the Indian people This will facilitate the advance of the Left and democratic forces”

Again, in the PB Statement of 26th November 1975, while narrating a long list of misdeeds by the Congress Government for the perpetuation of its one party authoritarian rule, the following nine demands were put forth to mobilise the broad democratic alliance

“The PB therefore, demands 1 Lifting of the Emergency forthwith, 2 Scrapping of MISA and all draconian laws, 3 Release of all those political leaders and workers arrested under MISA and DIR, 4 Removal of all restrictions on the freedom of the Press, 5 Lifting the ban on meetings, 6 Restoration of normal functioning of trade unions and other organisations, 7 Convening of Parliament without any restrictions on members’ rights, 8 Holding of elections to Parliament that are due, 9 Ensuring free and fair elections”

Thus the decisions of the Ninth Congress placed before our Party and the people the growing threat to democracy, the growing danger of one party dictatorship and consequently the growing necessity and urgency of mobilising all the forces that can be mobilised to defend democracy and defeat the drive towards dictatorship. In other words, the call of the Ninth Congress Resolution, was the call for the struggle for more allies in order to beat back the menace of authoritarian and semi fascist terror rule of the Congress Party. It was not explicit, but implicit in the Political Report and Resolution, that much wider and broader alliance was possible and necessary in order to fight the growing forces of dictatorship.

However, a self critical examination of our work and activities during the years 1974, 1975 and 1976, both during the Emergency and Pre emergency periods, go to reveal that there was a big gap between the formal resolutions calling for forging a “broader front” and putting forth a corresponding programme on the one hand and the actual practice on the other. This hiatus between the normal resolutions and statements and the practice had come to exist, surely not because the PB, C C and the entire party were not loyal and faithful to the decisions of the Ninth Congress, but it

was because of the defective assessment of the class and political forces in the then prevailing conditions, and the estimation of the then political situation being lopsided and not deep enough

A closer study of our inner PB discussions, the resolutions and statements of the PB and the C C , on the subject and our actual practice would show that there was stiff resistance on the part of the party's leadership to reassess the role of the bourgeois opposition parties when most of these parties, in practice, were slowly giving up their earlier programmatic and policy positions, and moving towards the programme of Jayaprakash Narayan and his resistance movement

The PB and the C C , instead of noting the changing moves of these bourgeois opposition parties, continued emphasising on the fundamental class character of these parties and their Right reactionary and counter revolutionary nature as was described in our Party Programme and further explained and elaborated during the 1969-72 period when these parties were holding the banner of the so called "Grand Alliance"

The PB and C C resolutions were grossly underestimating the conflict and contribution between the ruling Congress party on the one hand and the bourgeois opposition parties on the other, while tending to exaggerate the basic contradiction between the great masses of the people and the ruling bourgeois landlord classes and parties as a whole

True, it was correct on our part to characterise the role of Swatantra and Jana Sangh in our Party Programme as arch reactionary and counter revolutionary, since the programmes and policies advocated by these parties were such at that time when we were drafting and adopting the Party Programme in the year 1964

It was also correct on our part to oppose these bourgeois opposition forces during the time of 1969 Congress split, characterising them as representing the forces of extreme Right reaction because of the political programme they were projecting at that stage

It was equally correct on our part to clearly demarcate from both the blocks of the Congress and the "Grand Alliance" in the general elections of 1971 and the Assembly Elections of 1972,

and to put forth before the people our independent stand, in opposition to both the blocks, characterising them as representing the bourgeois landlord classes

We were correct in all the above narrated decisions not merely because we were able to correctly characterise these opposition parties, in class terms, as representing the bourgeois landlord interests, but because *we were opposing the blatantly reactionary programmes and policies that these parties were putting forth, standing Right even to the ruling Congress*

But when these same parties, during the years of 1974, 1975 and 1976, were objectively moving in the direction of opposing the authoritarian rule of the Congress and defending the democratic rights and freedoms of the people—may be under their own compulsions and partisan political requirements and expediency—it was quite incorrect on our part not to respond to this change. The mistake, though corrected partially in the later half of the year 1976, was not fully corrected till January, February months of 1977

In a way these political parties of former Right opposition were being considered by us as the “permanent” enemies, pitching their tents in the camp of reaction and counter revolution, while, willy nilly considering the ruling Congress party to have certain *basic* conflicts and contradictions with the Right reactionary parties, thus virtually conceding a sort of “*Centrist*” position to the ruling Congress. History had proved that such an assessment of our P B and C C was incorrect

Conflicts and Contradictions Underplayed

We correctly observed in our Political Report that “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 the 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, and pose themselves as fighting reactionaries and carry the people in the elections.”

But when it came to the question of assessing the role of the other bourgeois landlord opposition parties in their launching of the Gujarat, Bihar and J P's resistance movements, during the years of 1974-76, we were not prepared to concede that these parties too were equally capable of utilising the catching slogans to sway the masses in their struggle against the Congress Government. We continued emphasising on the Right reactionary character of these parties as was described in our Party Programme and as was assessed by us during the period of the Congress split in 1969 and also during the two electoral bouts of 1971 and 1972. We were unwilling to reassess their changing role and adopt our tactical approach to them accordingly.

It stands out that though our Party was openly voicing about the deepening economic crisis, the disintegration of the ruling Congress party and about the growing conflicts and dissensions in the bourgeois landlord parties, etc. the follow up study of the topic was not seriously undertaken and the issue was allowed to be frozen where it was during the time of 1971 and 1972 elections, when the split took place around the *Indira Congress platform of "Garibi Hatao"* on the one hand and the *avowed Rightist platform of the "Grand Alliance"* on the other.

It was true that both the Congress and the "Grand Alliance" were hand in glove as far as the attack on the CPI(M) in West Bengal was concerned. In the unleashing of large scale repression and the resorting to open rigging of the election in 1972, the parties of the "Grand Alliance", including the Right C P and the Socialist Party were active accomplices and abettors of the crime.

But things began to change, and the parties of Right opposition too began realising that Congress authoritarianism was not going to spare them. It was not deeply understood by our Party that the Congress drive to set up one party dictatorship would not merely result in the denial of democratic rights and civil liberties to the CPI(M) and its left allies, but it also might end up in the denial of the democratic rights and freedoms to the bourgeois landlord opposition parties thus compelling them to openly champion the cause of defence of parliamentary democracy.

Instead of noting the sharp division that was growing among the ruling class parties and groups and assessing their political significance for our struggle in the defence of democracy and for halting the drive to one party dictatorship, we tended to erroneously emphasise the unity of the bourgeois landlord classes behind the Emergency regime headed by Indira Gandhi. In our PB and C C statement on the imposition of internal Emergency formulations such as that “all the monopolists and big bourgeoisie of the country have rallied round her banner, that “the Tatas, the Birlas, the Chambers of Commerce, the trading associations and the associations of various industries—all have with one voice endorsed the Emergency” and that “all the State Congress ministries some of which are headed by the most notorious landlord interests have also with one voice supported this Emergency”, etc were made. Consequently, the study of the phenomenon of developing differences and divisions among the bourgeois landlord parties, in the background of deepening economic crisis was ignored. The question of utilising these conflicts and divisions for the advancement of the democratic movement did not arise as a serious proposition.

Such a lag in our Party’s thinking and understanding was partly due to the mistaken notion prevailing in sections of our Party at different levels, the PB and C C in particular, that the restoration of bourgeois democratic rights and freedoms was well nigh impossible and the establishment of People’s Democracy was the only way out.

The PB statement, endorsed by the C C, on the political situation following the declaration of emergency observed that *“a return to the conditions of Pre emergency parliamentary democracy seems to be inconceivable”* It also asserted, *whatever relaxation may be offered after a few months following a temporary overcoming of the inner party crisis of the ruling party or a compromise with the bourgeois opposition parties, the return to previous rights and freedoms will not be possible. Manipulated elections, truncated Parliament, a truncated democracy functioning within the limits of severely curtailed democratic rights and civil liberties and draconian laws which*

will be mainly directed against the masses and democratic struggle—such is the prospect that looms before us” (emphasis added)

Naturally, such pessimism and scepticism regarding the possibility of the defence and the restoration of bourgeois democratic rights inhibited the party's struggle for allies beyond the traditionally understood forces of Left and democratic unity. Such an outlook ruled out the possibility of one or the other bourgeois landlord opposition parties and groups becoming allies for defence of parliamentary democracy, however short lived and unstable such an alliance might be and whatever vacillations, desertions and treacheries such an alliance might have to encounter.

In our C C's statement on the imposition of the Emergency rule it was stated that “we were completely taken by surprise by this sudden development which shows that we were underestimating the depth of the crisis engendered by the struggle ‘between the bourgeois parties’, and that the persistence of ‘parliamentary and legal illusions’ prevented us from really grasping the warnings given by the Ninth Congress Resolution about the Congress Government's drive to one party dictatorship. It was again pointed out that, ‘there is no doubt that the immediate cause of instituting the Emergency was the serious threat of ouster held against Indira Gandhi by opposition parties in combination with dissident leaders and sections in the Congress”

Let alone the persistence of parliamentary and legalist illusions and their role in taking our Party by surprise, the significance of the fact that the immediate threat to the Indira regime arose principally from the rival bourgeois landlord parties was grossly minimised. This lag in our understanding prevented us from adopting a completely correct political tactical attitude to the J P movement and the different constituent parties that were mobilised in J P's National Co ordination Committee.

It is in this background that we will have to review our assessment of the Gujarat, Bihar and other J P led movements and the tactics adopted by our Party at different stages of these movements.

Whatever their outer trappings and immediate causes that came to the forefront of these movements, they were organised and led by the Right opposition parties, JP assuming the over all leadership. These movements were also some times being indirectly backed and supported by sections of Congressmen. The bourgeois landlord parties and groups that had lost their battles with Indira Gandhi Congress in the years 1969, 1971 and 1972 had not reconciled to accepting their defeat. They began seriously regrouping and bidding for mass support, championing some general democratic demands and taking up certain mass issues. They were also gradually realising that their palpably Rightist slogans and political platform projected in the years of 1969-72 did not pay dividends and they were in need of some radical revision in order to appeal to the mass of the electorate, and take the wind out of the sails of Indira Gandhi.

The acceptance of JP's leadership and the okaying of the charter of demands presented to the Parliament on 6th March 1975, by the Jana Sangh, the Congress (O), the BLD and others were the clearest expression of the new stance of these Right opposition parties. The fact that these parties had to launch mass movements and resort to the extra parliamentary forms of struggle highlighted the sharpened conflict and its intensity among the ruling class parties, all in the background of the deepening crisis of the path of capitalist development, in the conditions of the semi fascist terror rule in West Bengal and the hectic drive of the Congress to set up its one Party authoritarian and dictatorial regime in the country.

We all remember the famous statement of Lenin which reads "The most powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful, attentive and *obligatory* use of any, even the smallest rift between the enemies, any conflict of interest among the bourgeoisie of various countries, and also by taking advantage of any, even the smallest opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this reveal a failure to understand even, the smallest grain of Marxism, of modern scientific socialism *in general*."

We were criticising the Jana Sangh, Swatantra, and the Congress (O) for the political slogans, platforms and ideological postures that *these parties were projecting in the past and were refusing to evaluate their objective role in the given period and on the issues under dispute*

The fact that all these political parties of the Right opposition also represent classes or sections of classes, that they were also striving for securing political power, and they too were capable of adopting ever new slogans and stances in their bid to get the masses was not taken into serious account. There was no reason why our Party which could correctly note "the Left manoeuvres, resorted to by the section of the ruling party headed by the Prime Minister" should refuse to take note of the populist and democratic manoeuvre that was being resorted to by the opposition bourgeois parties led by Jayprakash Narayan. And yet, such was the serious failure on our part even though our Party was the first to be subjected to semi fascist terror in West Bengal and we were the first political party to warn the people about the Congress drive to set up one party dictatorship. To put it bluntly, it was subjectivism and sectarianism on our part that was responsible for the neglect of the study of conflicts and contradictions among the bourgeois landlord parties and consequently the failure to adopt a completely correct political tactical line towards the JP movement.

Our PB and C C, statements and resolutions lending general support to the Gujarat movement, Bihar movement and JP's nationwide resistance movement and our offer of synchronising the struggle carried on from our Party's independent platform did not, in practice, materialise in *a big way*. Our expressed desire and anxiety to extend support to these movements and thereby establish proper rapport with the masses who were increasingly drawn into JP's movement could not be translated into action.

In the series of demonstrations, protest day calls, anti repression day calls and finally in the 6th March demonstration before the Parliament, our Party was not a *direct and active*

participant Even our participation on the 6th April protest day observation was not as widespread and effective as it could be Our continued emphasis on the inadequacy of J P's programme in terms of the workers and the rural poor, and our stress on the Right reactionary character of the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and Congress (O) prevented us from rising to the occasion and adopting a completely correct political line towards the J P movement

If the P B and the C C themselves could not boldly put across the correct tactic towards the J P movement, our State Committee leadership in Bihar was lagging far behind in this respect, looking upon the J P movement as one essentially disrupting the Left unity and playing a diversionary role regarding the developing mass discontent The State Committee's efforts, in pursuance of its own understanding, to independently mobilise support to the movement to synchronise with it and also to demarcate with it, however well motivated, failed to create the desired rapport with the people at large and closer coordination with the J P movement Since Bihar happened to be the central scene of several mass battles led by J P during 1974-75 period and since our Party was also a political force in the State, our attitude and role in the movement had not the desired impact on the people, as to enhance our popular image

It was not the case with Bihar alone Most of our State units in North India where the J P movement was intense and widespread were extremely hesitant and apprehensive about our association and co-operation with the J P movement There was a lurking fear that since the parties such as the Jana Sangh and B L D were predominant in these struggles, it might have adverse reactions among the Harijans and the Muslim minorities This was another reason which had held us back from moving forward and actively orientating to the resistance movement that was on the ascendancy If there was a more clear understanding of the role of the movement and a corresponding correct tactical line pursued, our Party units in the States, though generally very weak, would have been politically better placed viz a viz the J P movement and the masses that were being rallied behind it

The Feeling Among Harijans and Muslims

In so saying and generalising about our lag in the correct understanding of the developments and in the adopting of appropriate tactics we do not ignore the reality that Harijan agricultural labourers and Muslim minorities were entertaining hostile feelings towards the B.L.D. and Jana Sangh parties respectively. It was because the record of these parties in the past was pitting themselves against the Harijan labourers and the Muslim minorities. Add to it, the systematic propaganda conducted by Indira Gandhi and her Right Communist allies, that the J.P. movement was of a fascist character, that the gaining of the upperhand by the Jana Sangh was a menace to the Muslim minorities and that the supporting of the B.L.D. in States like U.P., Rajasthan, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh would spell ruin to the Harijan agricultural labourers, had some impact on these sections of the people. It either neutralised them towards the J.P. movement or turned them hostile to it in some areas. This situation, of course, had begun changing during the 20 months of Emergency rule when these very sections of the people were subjected to ghastly repression in the name of slum clearance in Delhi and under the drive for mass sterilisation in States such as Haryana, U.P. and Rajasthan.

However, these difficulties in the then obtaining situation do neither represent the entire political situation in its totality, nor can it offer justification to our adopting wrong tactics. The political-tactical line of our party cannot be determined only on the basis of the feelings among the Harijan and Muslim minorities. How to overcome these difficulties, how to bring before these sections of the masses the growing menace of authoritarian rule, how to expose the semi-fascist terror unleashed on the Left and democratic movement of West Bengal by the Indira regime and how to bring them into the struggle against the Congress drive towards setting up the one-party dictatorship, were issues to be discussed. Ways and means to overcome the difficulties were to be devised. It is quite a different thing now to speculate as to what extent we could have succeeded

in it But the point to be noted here is about our lopsided and mistaken assessment of the J P movement and the consequent shortcoming in working out a completely correct tactical line

The mistakes in our outlook in this regard stood more pronounced when we, more or less, persisted in the same old attitude to the J P movement and its constituent political parties even after the imposition of internal Emergency, unleashing repression on all the opposition parties including all those who were willing to fight against the Emergency regime Any united action with the Jana Sangh or with any combination of parties in which it was a partner was resented and opposed for a long time, even during the period of the Emergency

Our Contribution to the Resistance Movement

The critical observations made above of our attitude to the J P movement, cannot, in retrospect, however ignore or miss to take into account our Party's contribution to the resistance movement against the Emergency regime and its victory at the polls of March, 1977

It should be made clear that our Party, from the very beginning of these agitations of Gujarat, Bihar and the like, was always lending open support to them, condemning the brutal repression unleashed against the struggling people At no stage did we come into open conflict with the J P movement, in spite of a good number of serious differences and disagreements with the declared objectives and aims of the movement

The series of PB and CC statements and resolutions supporting the movement and opposing the repression, our signing of the Joint Communique along with J P and the Socialist Party, our Party extending invitation and support to J P's visits to West Bengal and Kerala, while the Congress and the Right C P were bitterly opposing them, and our consistent opposition to the Right C P's dubbing of the J P movement as fascist etc had placed us in an unassailable position viz a viz the J P movement People understood our position as one of general support, with our own reservations on particulars Our stand had helped the rank and file of these Right parties in J P's Coordination

Committee in overcoming some of the deep prejudices they were holding against our Party and its political line earlier

The efforts made by our Party, particularly, in the latter part of the year 1976, in making the civil liberties convention, and the second convention opposing the utterly anti democratic 42nd Constitution Amendment Act a big success, and the mass campaign conducted by our Party against the 42nd Constitution Amendment, in Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Maharashtra, had enhanced the political prestige of the Party, enabling it to play the proper role during the March 1977 general elections in facilitating the defeat of the Emergency regime of the Congress Party. It was this political leverage that helped our Party to emerge in the post election political stage as the only hope for forging the unity of Left and democratic forces as a real alternative, against the reactionary concept of stabilising the so called two party system of the Janata and the Congress—the two bourgeois landlord formations to rule the country merrily and alternately

March 1977 Elections and Our Political Line

The slogan of forging a broader alliance to defeat semi fascist terror rule and the drive towards one party dictatorship, though raised as early as June July months of the year 1972, was neither clearly perceived nor consistently pursued during the years preceding the March 1977 general elections. The compulsions and the requirements of the electoral battle against the authoritarian regime of the Congress Party, though logically led to the joint electoral campaign and virtual electoral alliance in some States, such a broader alliance as demanded by the political requirements did not materialise on a *national scale*. Even the electoral understanding arrived at, and the electoral alliances forged with the Janata, did not sustain, as was seen in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Bihar. In fact, in most of the States such as U P, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Bihar and Karnataka, not even any electoral understanding could be reached in both the Parliamentary and Assembly elections, let alone electoral alliances

Does it follow from all this that the slogan for the building up of a broader alliance to defeat the platform of authoritarianism and dictatorship is incorrect? No. It does not imply such a conclusion. On the contrary it corroborates the correctness of the slogan. The course of events since January, 1977 up to now additionally confirm the correctness of the line pursued.

The adjustment of seats to avoid mutual contest, the lending of mutual support to each other's candidates by the CPI(M) and Janata, the campaign from a joint election platform and the virtual electoral alliance in some States were the political steps dictated by the dire political necessity of defeating the forces of dictatorship. Similarly, the open offer of our Party's support to the formation of the Janata Government at the centre, in case the Janata was short of numbers, was also dictated by the political exigency. The offer of electoral alliance in the West Bengal Assembly elections and the proposal to form a coalition Government with some agreed programme was a serious political and tactical move of our Party, but not a manoeuvre as our opponents try to malign it. Our State units' co-operation with the local CFD in Tripura to dislodge the hated Congress Government and the formation of a coalition ministry, in order to prevent President's rule and also with the hope to undo some of the mischief done by the dethroned Congress Government was a continuation of the same political tactical line.

It was true that the CFD Marxist Coalition Government did not last and the CPI(M) had to quit the coalition because of the breach of trust by the CFD partners in implementing the agreed programme. But again the newly formed Janata Assembly Party had sought our co-operation and alliance in forming the Janata CPI(M) coalition Government. We did respond to it, in order to avoid the imposition of the Governor's rule and also with some hope of carrying out the agreed programme. This again could not last more than two months, and our Party had to come out of the Ministry, since the Janata leaders in the State Government proved no better than the CFD leaders. There was an opinion inside the C. C. that it was not probably correct on our part

to join the second coalition on the ground that it was futile to expect the State Janata leaders to faithfully carry out the agreed programme

Judging from the December 1977 Assembly results, it appears that the mass of the people did not misunderstand our tactical line of joining the two coalition Governments. The two sincere efforts of our Party had amply exposed the leaders of the State CFD and Janata parties, who woefully failed to live up to their promises and pledges. The CPI(M), which lost both the Parliament seats in March 1977 elections, was enabled by the people to sweep the polls in December 1977 Assembly election and to secure as big a vote as 52% of the total votes polled.

In concluding the topic under discussion it should be made abundantly clear that our earlier characterisation of these opposition political parties in *class terms* was neither wrong nor is in need of revision. Our criticism and self criticism about the lag in our understanding, regarding the significance of the contradictions among the bourgeois parties and the attitude towards the J P movement etc, does in no way imply the negation or repudiation of our political tactical line during the Presidential context in 1969 or in the general elections of 1971 and the Assembly elections of 1972.

Considering the issues involved in the Congress split of 1969, and the political line put forth by the parties of the "Grand Alliance" in their Election Manifestoes of 1971 and 1972, any softness towards these parties, either on the ground that they were opposition parties or on the basis that the principal target of our attack was the Congress Party in power, would have badly compromised our position and damaged our political image. It was this correct line of ours that demarcated us from the Right C P line of allying with the Congress and also from the S P line of allying with the "Grand Alliance" to build the anti Congress front.

We cannot forget the fact that all these parties of the opposition which rallied under the banner of J P's "Total Revolution" during the years of 1974-76, were in the forefront to lend their whole hearted support in disrupting the unity of the Left and

democratic forces and in demolishing the two Left orientated State Governments of Kerala and West Bengal They also welcomed the semi fascist terror rule in West Bengal in 1971 and 1972 directed against the CPI(M) These crimes can neither be white washed nor the mischievous and misleading propaganda that the CPI(M) was indulging in the use of violence and terror during the days of 1967 69 can stick

The Right opposition political parties, after experiencing the police lathis and bullets during the Gujarat and Bihar movements, had begun realising that they too would not be spared from repression at the hands of the Congress Government With the clamping of the Emergency and the unleashing of repression and terror, all the parties in J P's National Co ordination Committee were left with no option except to range themselves against dictatorship and in defence of democratic rights and freedoms It is clear that the broader alliance about which our Party was talking, off and on, since the Ninth Congress, could not have materialised and taken shape even if our Party were to adopt a correct tactic and approach towards the J P movement during the years of 1974 75 and directly participated in the movement

The central point under discussion is not whether or not the electoral alliance with the Janata, as it had taken place in the March and June 1977 elections, could have taken place much earlier in 1974 75 provided our Party had taken a correct line The salient point that is sought to be made out is that a correct assessment of the objective role of the opposition parties in 1974 75 and a corresponding completely correct attitude towards the J P movement would have certainly enabled our Party to play a much more effective role in the then developing resistance movement against the Congress regime It could have helped our Party to forge unity and united action with all these parties against Emergency and repression, thus placing it in a much more favourable position viz a viz the other forces which fought against the Emergency

Our Party cannot afford to simply bask under the glory that it was clearly demarcating and opposing the bankrupt political line of the Right C P, which appraised the Congress split in 1969 as

one between the big and non big bourgeoisie and then supported the Congress regime as the doughty champion of democracy while denouncing the J P movement as fascist. It also cannot rest content with the correct role it played in the defence of the unity of the Left and democratic forces, without either rallying behind the Congress or the "Grand Alliance" in 1969, 1971 and 1972, as was done by the Right C P and the Socialist Party, the former setting up anti Marxist State Governments in Kerala and West Bengal in alliance with the Congress Party and the latter lining up behind the parties of the "Grand Alliance"

Apart from what is pointed out above, our Party on its own neither took initiative in the matter of civil liberties in 1972-74 period, nor did it take up the task of organising the civil liberties conventions and committees, drawing into that movement different sections and prominent individuals. When J P was moving in the direction of setting up some organisations like the "Citizens Committee for Democracy", with people who belong to no political party, we correctly pointed out to him that such "non party or super party" bodies remain inactive and defunct. But we left the matter there. J P proceeded with the setting up of the proposed "Citizens Committee", and along with it another body called the "Tarkunde Committee for Electoral Reforms". Neither could the "Citizens Committee for Civil Liberties" do much nor did our Party give any serious thought to the question whether that forum could be utilised in furtherance of the cause of civil liberties.

It becomes quite evident from the discussions and decisions of our Party during the first half of the year 1975, as well as in the second half of 1975 when the Emergency was imposed, that we were extremely hesitant to associate with the Jana Sangh and its allied parties, even on the issue of civil liberties. It was not until October 1976 that a broad based all India Civil Liberties Convention could be organised and similar conventions could be convened in different States and districts. We mention all this only to underline the fact that our Party which ought to be in the van for forging the broader alliance in defence of democracy and against the dictatorship had lagged behind. Even on the issue of civil

liberties and the struggle in defence of the democratic rights, it betrayed a complacent and self centered sectarian attitude. To say so is not to suggest that broad based civil liberties organisations, as had come to exist in the later part of the year 1976, would have come into existence in the period 1972-74, if only we had a correct line of approach. But a correct line of approach would surely have placed our Party as one that stands in the forefront of the struggle for civil liberties and democratic rights. It, certainly, would have helped to rouse more wider circles of the people, than were already under our Party's influence, for the struggle in defence of the civil liberties and democratic rights—an integral part of the bigger struggle in defence of parliamentary democracy, and against dictatorship.

On Some Other Issues

The semi fascist terror rule in West Bengal and the severe police and goonda attack on our movement in Kerala and other strong pockets of our Party—a repression that lasted for 6 continuous years between 1970-76—had drawn the serious attention of our Party. It posed before the Party the problem of how to resist this repression and what forms of struggle and organisation were demanded to beat back the police and armed goonda attacks on our Party and the mass movements led by it. The political murders that were perpetrated in West Bengal and Kerala alone during this period reach a massive figure of more than 1400—1100 in West Bengal and 300 in Kerala. Thousands were detained under different draconian laws. Some more thousands were implicated in false cases. In West Bengal the police and goonda repression had been so intense and widespread, that normal peaceful and legal activity had become extremely difficult if not altogether impossible. Under these circumstances questions were raised whether resistance with more militant forms of struggle was necessary and possible. It was also asked by some comrades whether there was any hope of restoring the democratic rights and freedoms, and whether what was taking place in West Bengal was not going to be repeated in the rest of the country. In certain circles and at certain levels of the Party, there came to prevail what may be termed as discontent and despondency.

Despite all this, it stands to the credit and maturity of our Party leadership, at different levels, that it refused to fall a victim to the enemy's provocation and get incited into resorting to more militant and higher forms of struggle—forms which would only have come handy for the Congress Government to mount the police and goonda armed offensive on our Party and the mass movements to disrupt and destroy it. Life and events have vindicated that the forms of struggle chosen and practised were, by and large, correct, and the class enemies' tactics of provocation and annihilation had failed.

Another important question that occupied the serious attention of the P B and the C C, during the period under review, was the question of organisational preparedness to meet all the eventualities i e, the sudden and surprise attacks on our Party by the powers that be, whenever they were found in difficulties. We were attacked and detained under the Defence of India Rules in the year 1962-63 on the totally false charge that we were "anti-national" etc. Some of our leaders in Bombay were kept under detention for a period of full three and half years till May 1966. Others who were released after an year or so at the end of the year 1963 were again attacked on 31st December 1964 and detained under DIR on another totally false and trumped up charge that our Party was about to launch an armed struggle. As many as 1,500 or more of our cadres and leaders were kept behind bars till April-May months of 1966. The notorious "White Paper" concocted by Gulzarilal Nanda's Home Ministry is a standing monument for the lawless anti-Communist law of the Government and its Home Department. A third time since 1962-63 our Party cadres and leaders came under the surprise attack of the party in power when Emergency was declared during the mid night of 25th June 1975, proclaiming to the world the black lie that the attack was aimed at the so called fascist forces, while attacking all opposition parties including our Party.

How to ensure the safety of the Party and how to safeguard the continuity of the leadership to the class and mass movements against the attacks, still remain a serious question, to which no

satisfactory solution has yet been found. Though the defence of democratic rights and liberties and their expansion enable us to forestall such attacks on our Party to a great extent, it is demanded of every revolutionary party to devise ways and means not to place itself at the kind mercy of the bourgeois landlord Governments and their political vagaries, and to ensure its safety under all eventualities. This topic deserves serious review and proper solution. Our decisions and their implementation in this regard, during the 20 months of emergency, rightly came up for sharp criticism at the hands of the Party ranks. The P B , the C C and the State Committee leaders will have to own up their respective share of mistakes in this regard.

Before concluding this review it should be once again stated that this self critical review is neither exhaustive nor has it dealt with our work in the class and mass organisations and in the matter of Party organisation. It deals only with the political tactical line of our Party, and that too in its main outlines. It is necessary to devise ways and means to review the work on the mass fronts and Party organisation and draw necessary correct lessons from it for future guidance.

Messages Sent to Tenth Party Congress of CPI(M) by the Fraternal Parties*

Workers' Communist Party of Egypt
Comrades,

It gives us great pleasure and honour to take this opportunity to greet your Tenth Congress which is being held at such a victorious juncture of your struggle. Your Party has ably and resolutely carried high the Leninist banner at a historical period which witnesses the domination of different forms of Right and Left revisionism over the world Communist movement, leading to division of the Socialist camp and adversely affecting all the patriotic and revolutionary movements in the world.

Your glorious victory in West Bengal and Tripura, and your success in the overthrow of Mrs Gandhi's Government and her "Emergency" regime, and finally in the restoration of democratic rights is viewed by our Party with great admiration and enthusiasm, being considered by it as an invaluable lesson for all revolutionary forces in the Third World countries which are struggling against the police dictatorships of the dependent bourgeoisie. Your international line and your tactics in facing the Indira clique police dictatorship has constituted an example from which all world revolutionary forces should draw and benefit.

The ability of your Communist Party at the present juncture, to adopt and follow an independent line in the world Communist movement, to its Marxist Leninist principles, and to apply them creatively to its particular conditions and to win the support of the large sections of the working class and the toiling masses, has lent inspiration to our Party and masses, and affirmed our

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confidence in the line around which we have united and are resolutely following in spite of all the obstacles and hardships

It gives us pleasure to convey to you that our Party which has not yet completed its ninth year has been able, by virtue of adopting an independent Leninist line and in the most difficult of times, to achieve great victories in the face of the capitulation of the Egyptian bourgeoisie to imperialism and its police dictatorship. For in spite of the vicious and continuous attempts by the bourgeois regime to crush our Party and the Egyptian mass movement through mass arrests, sham trials, and the formulation of new increasingly repressive laws, our Party has been able to win new ground everyday and to rally new masses around it and, consequently, the democratic and revolutionary anti imperialist struggle is gaining momentum and the weight of the Communist movement is becoming greater among the popular masses. The Egyptian bourgeoisie under the leadership of the dictatorship of Sadat's regime, in unleashing its suppressive organs, in filling its jails, and trampling over all democratic rights with the purpose of paving the way for the final phase of its capitulationist and treacherous policies, is, in fact, digging its own grave. The Egyptian revolutionary movement today, particularly after the glorious uprising of January 18 and 19 is waging a fierce and sustained struggle for the overthrow of Sadat's treacherous regime and the establishment of a democratic republic along the path of a struggle for Socialism.

The Arab world, in spite of the fierce zionist and imperialist onslaught and in spite of the savage blows dealt to the revolutionary armed struggle in Oman and the Arabian Gulf and in particular the Palestinian and Lebanese armed struggle, at the hands of those enemies and their local allies from amongst the Arab agent reactionary regimes and the surrendering bourgeoisie, is witnessing, in fact, the opening of a new stage in its anti imperialist struggle—a stage of radical popular democratic struggle under the leadership of the true Communist forces as opposed to the previous stage of compromise and capitulation by the national bourgeoisie.

Comrades,

In paying tributes to the great victories achieved by your Party in the previous years, we feel confident that this Tenth Congress will usher in a new stage in the resolute class struggle against monopoly capital, landlordism and imperialism that will be finally crowned by the emergence of India as a citadel of People's Democracy to stand side by side with the great proletarian revolutions from the October Revolution to the victorious Vietnam Revolution

The Central Committee of the Workers'
Communist Party of EGYPT

Communist Party of Great Britain

The Communist Party of Great Britain greets all delegates attending the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) Your Congress is meeting at the time of a new phase in India's post war history The decline of the Congress Party and the inability of the Janata Party to solve India's crisis through the capitalist path place new complex tasks before the Indian working people and all democratic forces The solutions of these problems through the unity of the working class, working people and all who cherish democracy will open new possibilities of working class and democratic advance Wish your Congress success towards building unity of the working people and all democratic forces

GORDON MCLENNAN
General Secretary,
Communist Party of Great Britain

Romanian Communist Party

On behalf of the Romanian Communist Party and of its General Secretary and President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, we convey to the Congress, to all the members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), our comradely warm message

We make use of this opportunity to express solidarity towards your struggle to promote the fundamental interests of the working class and the whole friendly Indian people

Between the Romanian Communist Party and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) there have been established links of friendly collaboration and solidarity, based on equality in rights, on mutual respect and confidence, their positive evolution has been always stimulated by the meetings and talks between the leaderships of the two Parties

We would like to reaffirm our confidence that these relations will be further developed for the benefit of strengthening the friendship between our peoples, of the multilateral collaboration between Romania and India, of the cause of peace and Socialism in the world

We wish full success to the work of your Congress and in implementing the decisions to be taken

Central Committee,
Communist Party of Romania

Left Party Communists, Sweden

The Swedish Communists wish you all success in your important struggle against the reactionary forces, for peace, democracy and Socialism We highly appreciate your important contribution to the worldwide fight against colonialism and imperialism The international Communist movement plays in this respect a very important role It is our ambition to still more develop the cooperation between the fraternal Parties and between the Communists of Sweden and India

LARS WERNER,
President,
Left Party Communists, Sweden
Stockholm, March 17, 1978

Communist Party of Vietnam

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the Vietnamese working class and people, we would like to express our warm and fraternal greetings to the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), to all the Indian Communists, the Indian working class and people. We wish the Indian working class and people many new successes in your noble cause for social progress and peace.

We wish the solidarity and friendship between the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), between the working class and peoples of our two countries be ever consolidated and developed.

On this occasion, we sincerely thank the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the democratic organisations and the Indian people for the previous support to the past patriotic war of resistance against U.S. aggression and the present Socialist building of Vietnam.

Good success to your Congress.

The Central Committee of the
Communist Party of Vietnam
Hanoi, March 31, 1978

Other Resolutions Adopted by The Tenth Congress of The Communist Party of India (Marxist)*

Held at Jullundur on April 28, 1978

(a) Condolence

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) mourns the deaths of Comrades Mao Tse tung, Chou En lai, Chu Teh, outstanding leaders of the Communist Party of China, who had led the people of China in the victorious revolution laying the foundation for the building of Socialist China

The Congress mourns the death of Comrade Rajni Palme Dutt, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Great Britain, whose contribution for the spread of Marxism Leninism has been outstanding

The Party Congress sends its heartfelt condolences to the Communist Party of China and Great Britain

(b) **The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) mourns the death of Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad, founder of the Communist movement in India, and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)** Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad faced long periods of incarceration both during the British regime and after the country achieved independence. He stood steadfast in keeping the Party on the principles of Marxism Leninism and in the struggles that the Party had to wage against revisionism and Left opportunism.

The Congress mourns the death of Comrade A. K. Gopalan, member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and President of the All India Kisan Sabha. Comrade Gopalan entered the national movement as a Congress leader and soon joined the Communist movement in the early thirties. By his strong championing of the cause of the working class, peasants

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and agricultural labourers and giving dynamic leadership to their struggles, he came to be the symbol of the struggle of the downtrodden against injustice and exploitation

The Congress mourns the death of Comrade Harekrishna Konar, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and General Secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha. Comrade Harekrishna Konar at an early age joined the revolutionary movement in the struggle against British rule and was incarcerated in the Port Blair Jail in the Andamans. He came over to the Communist movement and had been a courageous fighter against Revisionism and Left sectarianism. He built a powerful Kisan movement in West Bengal.

The Congress mourns the death of Comrade C H Kanaran, member of the Central Committee and Secretary of the Kerala State Committee of the Party. Joining the struggle against the British under the Congress, he came over to Communism and by dint of his indefatigable work and unique organisational ability rose to the topmost rank in the Party.

The Tenth Congress further mourns the deaths of Comrade Azhikodan Raghavan, member of the Secretariat of the Kerala State Committee, Comrade Gerald Pereira, Secretary of the Goa State Committee, Comrade Chandra Sekhar, Secretary of the Delhi State Committee, Comrade Manikonda Subba Rao, member of the Secretariat of the Andhra State Committee, Comrade Guntur Bapanayya, member of the Andhra State Committee and President of the Agricultural Labour Union, Comrade Ram Asrey, member of the State Committee of Uttar Pradesh and President of the U P Committee of the CITU, Comrade Subodh Choudhury, member of the West Bengal State Committee, Comrade A B Palanisami, member of the Tamil Nadu State Committee, Comrade Mithalal 'Kaka', member of the State Committee of Rajasthan, Comrade Prabha Shankar Jha, member of the State Committee of Rajasthan, Comrades Ram Kisan Bharolian, Harnam Singh Chamak and Gajjan Singh Tandian, members of the Punjab State Committee.

They have all made immense sacrifices to build the Party and the mass movements of the people facing heavy repression and against heavy odds.

The Party will ever cherish the great contribution they have made to the cause of revolution

(c) On Martyrs

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) pays its homage to the thousands of martyrs who had laid down their lives while upholding the banner of the Party and fighting the battles of the working class, peasants, agricultural labourers and other down trodden sections of the people

Over 1100 comrades in West Bengal and 300 comrades in Kerala and many in other States were killed by goondas hired by the enemy

Many were tortured in police camps and in jails. Hundreds were killed by police bullets while leading the struggles of workers, peasants, agricultural labourers and other downtrodden sections of our people

The Congress dips its Red Banner and pledges that our Party will cherish their sacrifices and will carry on the struggle for the cause for which these comrades made the supreme sacrifice

(d) Israeli Aggression on Lebanon

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the Israeli aggression on South Lebanon directed against the Palestinian Liberation forces. The existence of the Palestinian Liberation Front and Palestinian resistance and its unity with the Lebanese national movement have become a big obstruction to the aims of the Israeli aggressors and the imposing of a U S imperialist dictated settlement in West Asia. Backed fully by U S imperialism, the Israeli zionists are directing all their efforts to wipe out Palestinian resistance

They have been encouraged in this by the reactionary stand of the Sadat regime of Egypt. Sadat's journey to Israel and the U S to reach a bilateral agreement has disrupted Arab unity, the only guarantee for the victory of the just Arab cause. But the Israelis have not only refused to give up the occupied territories, but are busy colonising it with the setting up of more and more Jewish settlements

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) condemns the Israeli aggressors and their U S imperialist backers and extends full support to the Arab peoples in their struggle to get Israel to vacate its aggression, to liberate the Israeli occupied Arab territories and to win the just right of the Palestinians to have a State of their own

(e) On Southern Africa

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia who are trying to perpetuate their fascistic oppression of the Black people. The Congress condemns the Anglo American imperialists for their support to these hated regimes.

In Rhodesia, the illegal regime of Ian Smith has made some concessions to placate some reformist Black leaders. These concessions are not meant to transfer real power to the Black people, but to gain time and perpetuate white racist rule. The Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe has rightly rejected them as illegal and unacceptable.

In South Africa, the Vorster regime is continuing with its creation of Bantustans which are only meant to keep most of the land and resources in the hands of the small minority of Whites and make the Black people totally dependent on the Whites even for their wretched existence.

Defying all U N resolutions and world opinion, the Vorster regime is continuing its illegal occupation of Namibia and refusing to negotiate with the only genuine representative of the Namibian people, the South West African People's Organisation, for the transfer of power to the Black people. Further, the Vorster regime is bent upon partitioning Namibia having declared the Walvis Bay as part of South Africa. The U S imperialists are also interested in continuing the NATO base in Namibia and are manoeuvring against the liberation movement.

In Southern Rhodesia, in South Africa and in Namibia, the Black people are determinedly fighting for their liberation with arms in their hands.

The imperialists who are themselves for keeping up these regimes to protect their economic and military interests in the

region are helping them to divide the ranks of the freedom fighters and suppress them with brutal force. The Smith regime has even committed aggression against the front line African States, specially Mozambique, in the name of liquidating guerrilla bases.

The Party Congress extends its fullest support to the fighting Black people of Southern Africa.

It calls on the Government of India to continue to give all support, moral and material, to the Black liberation fighters and their genuine organisations—the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe and the South West African People's Organisation in line with the decision of the Colombo Non Aligned summit, stop giving support to the Anglo American proposals which are meant only to perpetuate the White racist regime, and instead expose these treacherous imperialist manoeuvres.

(f) Reunification of Korea

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes with concern the continuing U S imperialist provocations against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The latest in the series are the military manoeuvres carried out in South Korea by the U S imperialists in cooperation with the Japanese from March 7 to 17 1978. This was the biggest military mobilisation by the U S since the end of the Korean war in which more than one lakh soldiers were deployed, 250 planes were brought in including B 52s of Vietnam notoriety and 20 warships equipped with nuclear weapons. Manoeuvres were held on both land and sea, utilising tanks and other war materials.

The U S imperialists are intensifying their activities in South Korea supporting the puppet regime after their defeat in Vietnam. In face of the growing support to the demand for unification of Korea, the U S imperialists are bent upon shoring up the puppet regime and using South Korea as a base not only to keep Korea divided, but to threaten the independence of other countries in the region. The suppression of the people of South Korea has also been intensified by the puppet regime to put down all opposition to it and even any independent thinking. The punishment for just supporting the unification of Korea is death by hanging.

The Party Congress condemns the aggressive and provocative acts of U S imperialism and the brutal suppression of the people in South Korea This Congress demands the withdrawal of all U S forces, weapons and bases from South Korea so that the people of Korea can decide the question of the unification of their country without any outside interference

The Party Congress calls on the Government of India to respond positively to the appeal of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and condemn the U S imperialist provocations in Korea

(g) Racial Hostility in U.K. and Canada

This Congress expresses its concern at the rapid growth of racial hostility in the United Kingdom and Canada where a large number of Indian immigrants live The racist feelings are manifesting themselves in many forms

At the governmental level this is taking the form of legislations which purport to prohibit the entry of immigrants from the Asian and African countries, and in the demands for preventing the dependents of the immigrants from joining their families and for the repatriation of those who are already resident

In the job market the immigrants are being forced to work only in lowpaid unskilled jobs and are deprived of promotional opportunities, and the discrimination in the housing market is leading to the residential, and therefore also cultural and social, segregation of the migrants from the local population

In many places the immigrants have been subjected to harassment, intimidation, violence and even murder, which are being organised by the fascist groups, like the National Front In many instances, immigrants are being used by the Government, politicians and the media as the scapegoat for the failure of the capitalist system to meet the basic needs of its toiling population

This Congress calls upon the British and Canadian Governments to desist from racist discriminatory policies, to treat the immigrants on an equal basis with the rest of the population, and to put a stop to the activities of racist organisations which are engineering racial hatred and misleading a section of the population

The Congress also urges the Indian Government and its High Commissions to make a break with the past policy of apathy and indifference towards the problems of the immigrants, and to take positive steps, by way of negotiation with the Governments concerned and other means, to provide security and equality to the overseas Indians

The Congress also makes an appreciative note of the role of the overseas Indians in coming to the help of their fellow countrymen at the time of disasters and other needs. The Congress also notes the contribution they made in the struggle against authoritarianism during the Emergency rule through the Committee for Civil Liberties and various campaigns, demonstrations, conventions and other modes of propaganda

The Congress also thanks the democratic minded sections of the population in these two countries—which include many trade union and Left organisations—for their solidarity actions in support of minority groups and against the racist groups

(h) Protest against Attacks on Iranian and Palestinian Students

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its vehement protest against the treatment meted out to Iranian and Palestinian students in the country by the Government of India

The Palestinian students have been fighting for the just cause of the Arab world. Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories occupied by aggression, the right of the Palestinian Arabs for their own State—demands which have been endorsed by the U N, the non aligned movement and world opinion. They have also been protesting against Sadat's betrayal of the Arab cause and disruption of Arab unity

The Iranian students have been mobilising democratic opinion in India against the despotic regime in their country under the Shah and his savage secret service. In Iran itself a powerful resistance movement is growing

Palestinian and Iranian students have been arrested on various occasions—the latest being at the time of the protest against Sadat's betrayal and the Shah of Iran's visit to India. They have been

ill treated and beaten in jails. They are very often ordered not to go out of their rooms to prevent them from organising any demonstration. The Iranian students are threatened with deportation which would mean long years in prison in Iran if not immediate execution.

All this is happening under a Government whose leaders have acclaimed the role played by Indians abroad against Indira Gandhi's Emergency rule. During our struggle for Independence also, Indians abroad had worked to rally support of democratic opinion in various countries to our freedom struggle. The Iranian and Palestinian students are asking for nothing more than this right enjoyed by Indians in the United States, Britain and other countries. Instead of conceding this, the Prime Minister has declared that foreign students in India have no rights.

The Party Congress demands that in line with our traditions there should be no ban on the legitimate and peaceful activities of the Iranian and Palestinian students. The Party Congress demands that the Government of India make it clear to the Iranian regime that it will not repatriate any Iranian student on the demand of the Iranian secret service.

(i) On Economic Policies of the Janata Government

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) considers that the economic policies pursued by the Janata Party Government are determined by the class interests of the ruling classes, though the spokesmen of the Government and the Party assure the people that they are intent on serving the interests of the common man and are determined to end the primary evils of poverty and unemployment.

Intent on pursuing the capitalist path, the Janata Government relies on deficit financing, high taxation of the common man and foreign aid as the primary sources of finance.

All these are weapons of throwing one sided burdens on the people, reducing their standard of living and intensifying their misery. They help to concentrate wealth, money and capital in the hands of the monopolists, capitalists, landlords and add to the profits of the foreign capital invested in India.

Notwithstanding election promises to put an end to deficit financing, the two Janata budgets have gone in for heavy deficit financing, making a farce of price control

There is not only refusal to lower taxation on necessities of life, but the 1978 budget has imposed additional excise duties on all articles of daily consumption. Its only effect will be to raise prices and further curtail the consumption of the people to the detriment of their health and well being

The Janata Party, in its manifesto, promises abolition of landlordism and land distribution. The policy announcements of the Central Government show that it is in no hurry to go beyond the 'reforms' and laws enacted by the Congress Governments

The Janata Government accepts the fraudulent estimation of surplus land made under Congress rule by the landlord-bureaucratic combination. It comes out with the same proposals chewed over and over by the Congress

These proposals themselves could never be implemented because the landlords and the bureaucracy controlled by them had a grip over the administration

The grip of the vested interests will not be broken under the Janata rule considering the strong landlord lobby inside the party. It is significant that some of the Janata State Governments have announced their intention to go back on Congress Land Reforms, and raise the ceiling limit

During the last year of Janata rule in the various States nothing has been done to improve the conditions of the agricultural workers. There has been hardly any effort to implement the existing legislations regarding minimum wages. Leave aside provide guarantee for decent wage, on the contrary when the agricultural labourers—a large number of whom are Harijans—dared fight for their demands, the landlords and vested interests committed unspeakable atrocities on them, without the law doing anything to protect them

While big concessions to the capitalists have been given in the budget, the Government's attitude towards some urgent demands of the workers has been either niggardly or hostile

While the Janata Government has agreed to give bonus to industrial workers, it has refused to extend it to railway, Central and State Government employees and Post and Telegraph and Defence workers. Its statement on bonus constitutes a repudiation of acceptance of bonus as deferred wage. Besides, there is no guarantee for bonus in the next year.

Several Janata State Governments have banned workers' strike. Brutal firings on striking workers have taken place in Bihar, U P, Madhya Pradesh.

The most patent failure of the Janata Government has been on the question of prices. Notwithstanding the claims of success in lowering the price level, retail prices with a few exceptions never came down, on the contrary they are consistently on the rise. Prices of such necessities of life as pulses, oil, continue to remain at an unprecedentedly high level inflicting excruciating misery on the people.

There could be no others equal to the monstrous deficit financing of the Government.

Still some immediate relief to the people was possible, had the Janata Party Government embarked upon wholesale trade in the necessities of life and taken possession of the available stocks. Here its ideological commitment to the private sector, the strong pull on the party of the trading interests came in the way, leading to the sacrifice of people's interests.

The Janata Government besides is moving in the direction of dismantling planning in the name of making it more flexible and reliable. The Rolling Plan monstrosity is a crude device to repudiate planning.

Further under the pressure of the World Bank and with the excuse of mobilising foreign exchange resources, the Indian capital goods industry is being thrown open to competition from abroad with the removal of many import restrictions though a large section of the industry is not able to utilise its full capacities.

At the same time instead of developing the home market, the Janata Government encourages dependence of the economy on foreign western markets through increased reliance on exports.

The Janata Party Government, like its predecessor Congress Government, relies on greater aid from the World Bank and accepts its prescription greater freedom for private sector, more concessions and invitation to multinationals, less role to the public sector, reliance on exports, liberalisation of competitive imports, acceptance of global tenders for Government projects, joint concerns between Indian capitalists and western monopolists in India and abroad in Third World countries

The Janata Government continues trade agreement with Socialist countries and expands them. It also permits joint concerns with Socialist countries in Third World countries. These steps act as a balancing force but the tilt and reliance on the western capitalist world stands out sharply.

Like the Congress Government, the Janata Government has accepted the so called agricultural orientation called for by the World Bank in its economic policy, and loans in foreign exchange to raise rupee finances for its agricultural programme. The World Bank's rural plan excludes land reforms, and this suits the Janata Government leaders.

In this background the Janata Party's promise to create a society largely based on self employment is just a meaningless utterance. With the monopoly in land, capital, means of production, trade, credit and money remaining undisturbed—nothing can be done to change the present inequitous order.

Besides, while the Party Congress fully supports all aid to small village and handicrafts industry, it considers that such can only be transitional, enabling the workers to reach rapidly higher forms and technique of production. Small scale industry necessarily means low wage and poor living conditions. A prosperous society cannot be based on rejection of modern large scale production methods and technique.

The Janata Party misleads the people by suggesting that concentration of economic power can be broken by the promotion of small industry. This is an appeal for backward conditions and poverty.

Public ownership of all means of production, social ownership of means of production, distribution and exchange constitute the

only way to break concentration of economic power and at the same time utilise the most modern techniques. Nationalisation of foreign monopoly concerns and Indian monopoly must be the first step in this direction. But the Janata Party Government, with its commitment to private enterprise, is unable to accept this and seeks shelter under small industry. In this background, the talk of decentralisation is nothing but an eyewash.

The policies pursued by the Janata Government are inimical to the interests of the masses and they lead to the ruthless suppression of people's struggles for livelihood.

They increase the grip of foreign exploiters on Indian economy and endanger the independence of our economy. They increase the grip of the Indian monopolists and landlords and lead to intensified exploitation. They will only strengthen the forces of dictatorship and undermine the unity of the masses forged in the anti-Emergency struggle. Pursuance of these policies further will only strengthen the authoritarian trends inside the Janata Party and the Government.

The Tenth Congress calls upon all Party members and units, all Left and democratic forces and especially those in the Janata Party to resist these policies and protect the independence of the economy and living conditions of the people. It calls upon these forces to struggle for alternate economic policy directed towards countering the power of the landlords, monopolists and capitalists who hold the economy in their vicious grip.

(j) On Wages and Incomes Policy

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) declares that the aim of a proper wages and incomes policy should be to reduce growingly the disparity in the incomes of the exploited and exploiting classes.

A rapid rise in the living standards of the masses constitutes one part of the policy. The other is to take away the huge incomes of the exploiting classes which can be best achieved by eliminating private ownership of the means of production.

To start with such a policy must accept a time-bound programme for need-based wage, (b) full neutralisation of rise in the cost of living and equal pay for equal work.

The aim of wage policy should be to reach need based wage as the minimum with differentials above it for skilled and intellectual labour. In the rural areas its aim is to reach immediately decent wage for agricultural worker with a time bound programme of advance towards need based wage, for the mass of peasants, it must ensure orientation in the direction of providing them a decent living standard.

In the rural areas this cannot be achieved without destroying the present inequality in the ownership of the means of production, i.e., the land monopoly of the landlords, and their monopoly of money and credit.

Such a policy must further ensure stable prices of necessities of life so that they are within easy reach of the lower strata.

The Janata Party in its election manifesto came very near to these principles. Its manifesto stated "The Janata Party believes that economic policies should subserve the interests of the workers in the agricultural and industrial sectors. The Party will introduce legislations to ensure minimum wages for all categories of workers. Such minimum wages would be sufficient for the maintenance of the worker and his family."

Its national wage policy is based on the following "A fair wage must be the minimum wage. A wage and price policy must ensure that income disparities are reduced. Steps will be taken to see that minimum incomes rise rapidly so that the differences between the minimum and maximum income after tax is reduced to 1 to 20. It will strive progressively to reduce this difference to 1 to 10 within a decade by a policy of increased redistribution that raises floor levels and discourages bloated incomes."

The year that has passed since this statement shows the Janata Government is backsliding on its promises. The resistance to striking workers' demands, the repression directed against them, the attempts to enforce compulsory deposit of additional Central D.A., the total refusal to enhance the wage of the agricultural worker or to give a fair deal to the peasant, while leaving the capitalists, landlords and traders with bloated incomes constitute repudiation of the clear cut declaration.

The terms of reference of the Bhoothalingam Committee on wages and incomes policy further make it clear that the Government is determined to work in the opposite direction and follow the earlier policy laid down by the Congress Government

The Committee is packed with management personnel. It has no place for representatives of the all India trade union organisations

The terms of reference avoid all mention of the big incomes of the capitalists and landlords—the disparity in incomes between exploiting and exploited classes. The Janata Government has thus adopted the position of the Congress rulers and wants to deal only with wage differentials—the so called inequality among workers only

While turning a blind eye to the huge incomes of the exploiting classes, the Committee is directed to deal exclusively with such questions as fixation of minimum wages, maximum wage for different categories of workers, wage differentials and criteria for determining them, linkage between wages, incomes and prices, a review of arrangements with regard to dearness allowances, etc

Instead of calling for need based wages the terms of reference demand ceiling on wages (maximum wage). Even the Indira Government did not so blatantly call for a ceiling on workers' wages. This is nothing but an attempt to freeze wages and workers' earnings

The intention is to focus attention on wage differentials and suggest reduction of wages in the name of reducing disparities—to help the capitalists to reduce their wage bill

The Janata Party's statement on economic policy had to note the departure of its Government from the accepted line and comment that "the terms of reference do not expressly cover the question of minimum wage for agricultural workers and income disparities and limitation on personal consumption "

The employees and workers should be prepared in advance for an offensive against the living standards as a result of this policy and outlook

The Tenth Congress calls upon the entire organised movement of the trade unions and employees' organisations to resist this outlook and policy. It notes with satisfaction that all Central

organisations have unitedly boycotted the Bhoothalingam Committee

The Tenth Congress demands of the Janata Government that it abandons its incomes and wages outlook, (disbands the Bhoothalingam Committee) and returns to the principles adumbrated in the Janata Party's election manifesto

The Congress once more emphasises that a proper wage and income policy must direct its attention towards reducing the income disparities between the exploiting and exploited classes and calls upon the entire trade union movement to fight for the same

(k) On Labour Policy of Janata Government

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) warns that the rapid drift in the Janata Government's labour policy is leading to a widespread attack on democratic rights and freedom of the trade union movement. As under the Congress Government, labour policy is being reduced to a law and order problem with the workers inevitably branded as disturbers of peace and order.

The last one year of Janata rule has witnessed banning of strikes, enactment of legislation to illegalise working class actions and numerous police firing killing large numbers of workers. The Tenth Congress strongly condemns these brutal police firing and the failure of the Governments to bring the officers to book. Not on one occasion has any Janata State Government expressed regret.

The Janata Party, in its election manifesto, declared that its economic policies must subserve the interests of workers in industry and agriculture. The trade union movement and democratic parties welcomed this unambiguous statement. But the Government's practice shows that there is a reversal of policy which now serves the interests of the big capitalists at the expense of the workers.

Niggardly beginnings were made by restoring the minimum 8.33 per cent bonus for one year only. At the same time, large numbers of employees including Government employees have not yet been covered by the Act. The election manifesto of the party had clearly accepted bonus as a deferred wage, but the Government is going back on it.

While the Central Government assures the people of plans to meet the challenge of unemployment and end it in ten years, in practice, it encourages or connives at the job slaughtering plans of the private and public sectors alike. In the mining industry, dominated by the public sector, at least one lakh workers are faced with retrenchment as a result of modernisation plans.

The Central and State Government employees are denied trade union and democratic rights as before and are subject to arbitrary dismissals. Maintenance of confidential files and police verification continue to determine their fate. A large number of employees victimised during the Emergency are yet to be restored to their jobs. The Bill to introduce secret ballot for trade union recognition is being delayed and unions which were favourites of the previous Government, continue to enjoy recognition adding to the discontent of the workers.

While some Janata State Governments and Labour Ministers have been trying to be helpful in solving labour disputes, restraining repression and police harassment, many have taken a hostile attitude to strikes, demanding their unconditional withdrawal as a condition precedent to talks or negotiations. The Prime Minister himself has taken this unheard of stand which virtually bans all direct action and demands surrender from the workers. This was the attitude of the Central Government in the strike of the workers of the Atomic Power Project in Rawal Bhata and of the Copper Mines at Khetri in Rajasthan.

It is the experience of many trade unions also that promises and assurances given by the highest in the Government before withdrawal of strike are not implemented after resumption of work.

The Tenth Congress notes that while the proposal of the September 18 Convention of the Central Trade Unions and National Federation for a dialogue on incomes, wages and price policy failed to evoke a positive response from the Government, the latter appointed the Bhoothalingam Committee on incomes policy, packed with the representatives of management. No wonder that all sections of the trade union movement, all central trade union organisations irrespective of their political affiliations have boycotted the Committee.

The Tenth Congress warns all democratic forces inside and outside the Janata Party against this accentuated drift in labour policy which is leading to avoidable confrontation between the workers and the Janata Party Governments. Implementation of electoral promises will go a long way in assuaging working class discontent and anger. Continuation of the present policy means more and more attacks on the democratic rights of the workers bringing grist to the mill of the authoritarian force. Fight against dictatorship cannot go along with denial of the minimum demands of the workers and repression on trade union struggles.

The Tenth Congress calls upon all central trade unions and federations to unite and to defend the interests of the working class and the freedom of the trade union movement. It lends its support to the economic and political demands raised by the September Convention of trade unions and is confident that the united voice of labour combined with other democratic forces will succeed in ending the present drift.

(1) On Centre State Relations

The nearly three decades working of the Indian Constitution has clearly demonstrated that the Constitution is federal only in name but in essence unitary. It is this experience that had made the ruling Janata Party itself promise decentralisation of power in its Election Manifesto.

The March meeting of the National Development Council has highlighted the issue even more prominently. For the first time no consensus could be worked out on the Centre's arbitrary point of view. Instead the NDC decided to set up a committee to review the fiscal arrangement between the Centre and the States. Cutting across party barriers, the Left Front Chief Ministers of West Bengal and Tripura and the Chief Minister of Punjab received the support of several other Chief Ministers in their demand for greater financial powers to the States and for a new approach to Planning and development of the country.

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is of the view that all this highlights the urgency of a review of Centre State relations as they have evolved at present.

While the demand has been growing for greater powers to the States so as to make States' autonomy real and effective, what the Centre has been doing is to erode even the limited powers of the States. The very existence of constitutionally elected State Governments depends on the sweet will of the Centre, as can be seen from the number of non Congress State Governments subverted during the three decades of Congress rule at the Centre.

During the last ten years, the Centre's tentacles have spread further to the States even in the sphere of law and order which is formally a State subject, through the creation of the Central Reserve Police, the Border Security Force, etc. By the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution, the Centre took the power to send its police forces and station them in the States even without the concurrence of the latter, and education which was a State subject was transferred to the Concurrent List. Personnel of the all India services posted in the States were even earlier not under the disciplinary jurisdiction of the State Governments but of the Centre. The process has reached a stage where it threatens to reduce the States to the status of subordinate departments of the Centre under the aegis of the Union Home Ministry.

Added to this is the concentration of all the principal means of financial resources in the hands of the Centre. While the main responsibility for nation building activities is that of the States, they have only very limited resources mainly confined to land revenue and sales tax, with all the expanding sources of revenue like excise, customs, etc. kept in the hands of the Centre. With the introduction of Planning, the Centre has gathered still further financial and administrative powers in its hands, reducing the States to the position of mendicants. Even the meetings of the National Development Council had been reduced to a ritual.

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) takes note of and repudiates the persistent and misleading propaganda carried on by the opponents of States' autonomy that it is detrimental to the unity of India. The CPI(M) and other democratic forces championing the demand for autonomy are behind none in their anxiety to preserve the unity and integrity of India.

The age old bonds that tied the various linguistic cultural groups that inhabit the country are a valuable heritage that we all cherish. These bonds were further strengthened by several decades of common struggle for freedom from colonial bondage. The people of India are now united in their common aspiration to build a prosperous life for themselves as well as to develop themselves as a free people.

The simple fact that all agree that defence, foreign affairs, communication and currency remain under the exclusive purview of the Union Centre repudiates the insidious propaganda that States' autonomy would undermine the unity of India.

By the very fact that the people are divided into several linguistic States, their development in conditions of freedom and democracy demands that each of these linguistic cultural groups should be free to develop their own identity and develop their distinctive cultural heritages. It was because of this reality that the Congress leadership of the freedom movement rejected the British made Government of India Act of 1935 which provided for a unitary set up and pledged that free India would be federal and not unitary with all residuary powers vesting in the States. But when it came to the actual framing of the Constitution, it was based on the 1935 Act, and the thirty years of Congress rule has been a negation of the solemn pledge given earlier.

The Tenth Party Congress declares that this policy of the Congress Party has to be reversed. There is no inherent contradiction between States' autonomy and the existence of a Centre strong enough to preserve and defend the sovereignty of the country and the territorial integrity of India and help the rapid socio economic development of the country and people.

The CPI(M) has made its detailed proposals for amending the Constitution of India to provide for States' autonomy. Other democratic parties and organisations have made their own proposals, some of which may not go as far as the proposals made by the CPI(M).

Recent political changes in the country leading to a situation where one political party rules at the Centre and in some States while several other parties are in office in some other States, give

greater urgency to a full debate on the question of Centre State relations

It is extremely regrettable and painful to note that the Prime Minister, Sri Morarji Desai, rejects out of hand the very proposal for a national debate on the subject of Centre State relations. Such a rejection is neither in conformity with the democratic professions of the Janata Party nor in tune with the electoral pledge of the Janata Party regarding "decentralisation" of power.

The Party Congress is happy to note that the West Bengal Government has circulated a memorandum on Centre State relations, which has evoked keen interest in all quarters.

The Party Congress calls on all Party units to organise broad discussions on the subject, through seminars, symposia, etc. in cooperation with all other parties and organisations that are interested in the question of States' autonomy and the genuine unity of the Indian people.

(m) Atrocities on Harijans

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is alarmed at the growing atrocities on Harijans in several States, like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Haryana. Burning alive of Harijans, beatings and torture, rape of Harijan women, destruction of their homes have assumed alarming proportions. The Party Congress demands of the Governments of these States to take firm action against the perpetrators of these crimes and give them exemplary punishment.

These atrocities on Harijans are nothing new, they have been going on for a long time. The overthrow of the Congress regime roused a new awakening and consciousness among the Harijans in the rural areas, who are mostly agricultural labourers, as regards their rights and against centuries old social oppression and economic exploitation. These atrocities are being resorted to by the landlords by way of reprisal against the Harijans' assertion of their rights. These atrocities can be successfully fought only by organised resistance against all kinds of exploitation and oppression and not merely by relying upon Governments in which landlords' interests are powerfully entrenched and on the administration which is tied to the landlords through innumerable threads.

The Tenth Congress, therefore, calls upon Party members and all democratic elements to take prompt action to give all protection to the Harijans and organise a powerful movement, specially of the agricultural workers, to face and defeat the on slaught of the landlords and for the economic and social emancipation of the Harijans

The Party Congress calls on all peasant organisations to stand by the Harijans and give all support to their demands and struggles and thus help build the unity of the peasantry and agricultural workers

(n) **Rising Prices**

Contrary to the claims of the Government, prices of essential articles are reigning very high and the consumers have to pay more and more for their necessities as the days pass. The policies of the Government are only aggravating the situation

Unless the Government decides to commandeer the stocks of essential articles like foodgrains, pulses, cooking oil, cloth, medicines, kerosene and so on, and supply them through a wide public distribution network in both the urban and rural areas, the rise in prices cannot be checked and prices brought down to reasonable levels

The Government has also to give up its policies of resorting to huge deficit financing (more than Rs 1000 crores this year) and drawing from foreign exchange reserves (more than Rs 1300 crores this year), all of which adds to the inflationary pressures, and give up or drastically cut down the heavy excise duties on several consumer items, if the people are to be rescued from the hardships of heavy prices

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) therefore demands

*Government take over of the wholesale trade in foodgrains, extension of the public distribution system to supply all essential articles in towns and villages,

*Nationalisation of major consumer goods industries like sugar, textile, pharmaceuticals, etc ,

*No deficit financing,

*Removal or sharp reduction of excise duties on essential articles,

*Maximisation of agricultural production by implementing land reforms in favour of peasants and agricultural labourers,

*Remunerative price for agricultural produce

The Party Congress calls on all Party members and units to carry on countrywide agitations and struggles for the above demands and enlist the support of all parties, groups and organisations for such a movement

(o) **On Communal Riots**

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its grave concern at the serious communal riots that are taking place in the country

The most recent of them has been at Sambhal in the Moradabad district of Uttar Pradesh in which, according to official versions, 13 persons were killed and many injured. As happens in all such communal incidents, it is the minority community that suffers the most both in the matter of loss of lives and destruction to property. Earlier, in U P itself, such incidents had taken place in Varanasi and elsewhere.

Certain organised communal forces belonging to the majority community are invariably responsible for organising these incidents against the minority community, creating a feeling of insecurity in the latter.

The attitude of the State Government to these incidents is criminal, to say the least. Even when it is known that tensions are developing, preventive steps are not initiated, and when riots actually broke out, nothing was done to give protection to the minorities.

This Party Congress expresses its sympathy to the victims of these incidents and demands that adequate compensation be paid to the families of those killed and injured. It demands that the instigators of these incidents, and the officials who connive with them be brought to book.

The Party Congress congratulates the democratic forces in all communities for courageously giving protection to the victims of such incidents. These riots are engineered also with the purpose of disrupting the unity of the working people and democratic forces.

The Party Congress calls on all secular forces to be ever on guard against the organisers of communal holocausts

(p) **On The RSS**

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes with concern the growing danger to secularism and democracy from the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and its policies of rabid Hindu communalism. Born five decades ago, with the slogan of Hindu Rashtra inscribed on its banner, the RSS has its own volunteer forces organised on para military lines which have been actively participating in innumerable Hindu Muslim riots in the country. The revivalist ideology of the RSS, its obscurantism, its glorification of Hinduism and hatred to Islam are all characteristics that do not befit any democratic and secular organisation.

The RSS is hostile to progressive and scientific thinking and is inimical to Socialism and Communism. It is opposed to India having fraternal friendly relations with the Socialist countries.

This organisation which claims to speak on behalf of the majority community in the country is striving to influence and dominate the policies of the Janata Government. By maintaining its separate identity and existence even after the Jana Sangh's merger into the Janata Party, it is trying to secure its grip on the government machinery and its administration. These efforts of the RSS leadership have been rightly causing concern and worry to the secular and democratic components inside the Janata Party and they are opposed to the separate existence of the RSS and its enjoying official patronage from the Janata Party and Government.

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) welcomes this struggle of the secular and democratic forces inside the Janata and appeals to all progressive and democratic minded parties and individuals in the country to take a determined stand against the RSS and its revivalist policies. The Party Congress calls upon all Party units to join hands with all the other secular and forward looking forces to conduct a systematic campaign to expose the rabidly communal and chauvinistic policies of the RSS, and the baneful influence of these policies on our country's internal and international policies.

(q) On the State Government Employees

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) congratulates State Government employees all over the country for their increased organisational strength as reflected in their All India Federation

The State Government employees have waged many heroic struggles as in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, etc

In Maharashtra, they went on a glorious 54 day strike in which one million employees participated braving all repression The Party Congress condemns the attitude of the Congress Government of Maharashtra of not having any negotiations with the striking employees—a stand in which the State Government was encouraged by the Janata Prime Minister himself

In Kerala, the State Government employees fought a bitter seventeen day strike Here again, the Congress Right Communist Coalition refused to have meaningful talks with the employees to settle their demands, instead, it did everything to break the strike

The State Government employees are an important section of the people and a part of the democratic forces They are ill paid, there are no uniform scales of pay, dearness allowance is denied to them at par with Central Government employees, they are deprived of bonus, promotional avenues are inadequate and there is no security of service The system of police verification for recruitment still prevails

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) demands that State Governments immediately introduce higher uniform scales of pay and give interim relief pending pay revision and that the State Government employees be given dearness allowance at par with Central Government employees

The Tenth Congress congratulates the West Bengal Government for extending the principle of bonus to its employees and demands that other State Governments concede their employees' demand for bonus

The Party Congress demands full trade union rights to the State Government employees and withdrawal of all rules which circumscribe these rights The Party Congress demands the abrogation of Article 310 and 311(2)(c) of the Constitution

of India by which Government employees can be dismissed arbitrarily

The Tenth Congress congratulates the Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura for withdrawing all measures of victimisation against their employees and demands that the other State Governments withdraw all such victimisation measures and restore their jobs to all victimised employees with full emoluments for the period of victimisation

(r) On Demands of Peasants and Agricultural Labourers

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes that despite the promise made by the Janata Party in its Election Manifesto to abolish landlordism and distribute surplus lands to the agricultural labourers, nothing has been done to redeem this promise, nor even to give any worthwhile relief to the toiling peasantry

On the other hand, the Janata Government has decided not to go beyond the framework of the totally inadequate Congress land legislations. While this itself leaves hardly any surplus land for distribution to the landless, some Janata leaders and State Governments have been voicing the demand for raising the present ceiling on landholdings

Meanwhile, the peasantry continues to be ruthlessly exploited as before. They are denied a remunerative price for their produce, especially in the case of commercial crops like sugarcane, jute, tobacco, cotton, etc., while they have to pay ever rising prices for their daily necessities and agricultural inputs. The support prices fixed by the Government do not benefit the bulk of the peasantry who are usually forced to make distress sales of their produce immediately after the harvest and it is the big landlords and traders who corner their stocks to sell at higher prices later. This vicious process has been further accentuated by the lifting of food zones and abandonment of procurement

Every new budget sees further taxes and levies, direct and indirect, most of whose burdens invariably fall on the rural people. Despite all talk of easy and cheap credit facilities, the middle and poor peasants and other sections of the rural poor

have still to borrow from landlords and usurers at exorbitant rates of interest

Large scale evictions of tenants and sharecroppers continue and in the absence of any proper land records, the landlords are not only able to make fictitious transfers of land and evade ceiling laws, but even legislations on rent reduction and security of tenure have been rendered meaningless because of the influence of the landlord gentry on the bureaucracy and administration

As for agricultural workers, except where they are organised and strong, they are denied even the minimum wages fixed by law There is no security of work for them They are crushed under debt burdens and in many cases are reduced to virtual bonded labour

The Party Congress is glad to note that as against this situation in most of the states, the Left Front Government of West Bengal has amended the Land Reforms Act to give legal protection to sharecroppers and reduce the burden of land revenue on the small owners, that it has started provisional settlement operations to correct the record of rights, that it has enhanced the minimum wage of agricultural workers and created guarantees for its payment and embarked upon a programme of "food for work" during the lean months to give relief to the rural poor

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) reiterates the demand for abolition of landlordism for enforcing radical land reforms so as to ensure land free of cost to agricultural workers and peasants

The Congress demands effective anti eviction measures, guaranteed remunerative prices and good market facilities for the peasants' produce, and provision of cheap credit and subsidised inputs to the mass of the peasantry

The Congress demands fair wages for agricultural workers, allotment of free house sites to the rural poor and cancellation of their debts

The Party Congress calls on all Party units, all class and mass organisations working among peasants and agricultural labourers to organise united actions with all parties and organisations which are willing to cooperate to win these demands and save the peasantry and the rural poor from ruinous exploitation and oppression

(s) Newspaper Employees' Demands

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the withdrawal by the newspaper employers of their representatives from the statutory Wage Boards for journalists and non journalists appointed by the Government of India in 1975 to fix the wages of newspaper employees

The wages of newspaper employees have remained stationary during the last ten years despite the fact that during this very period the industry has shown tremendous prosperity This is clearly seen in the steep rise in the circulation of all newspapers, continuous increase in the assets and gross revenue and profits of almost all newspapers

The newspaper barons have withdrawn their representatives from Wage Boards by putting forward a spurious plea that the "independent" members of the Boards are not really independent The very fact that they put forward this plea after their representatives functioned on the Wage Boards for two and a half years clearly brings out the utter untenability of their contention The real motive behind this contention of the newspaper barons is to scuttle the Wage Boards and thus deny any revision of wages to newspaper employees

In this situation, it was but natural that among all sections of newspaper employees such as journalists, non journalists, news service employees, there was growing discontent and anger which expressed itself in the countrywide protest strike jointly organised by them on January 14, 1978 This was followed by the joint convention of the representatives of the All India Newspaper Employees' Federation, Indian Federation of Working Journalists and PTI and UNI Employees' Federations on March 28, 1978, in Calcutta, which not only gave a call to prepare for an indefinite countrywide strike of all newspaper employees in the near future, but also succeeded in the formation of a united Confederation of all sections of newspaper employees in order to give a united leadership in the impending struggle

This Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) warmly greets the fighting unity of newspaper employees and whole heartedly supports their just struggle for revision of wages and improvement of their working and living conditions

This Congress also registers its strong protest against the manner in which the Government of India has dealt with the deadlock created by the newspaper barons in the functioning of the Wage Boards. While, on the one hand, the Government of India has given a number of concessions to the newspaper barons relating to import of newsprint, concessions in import duties, excise levies, licences for consumable material, release of advertisement by DAVP, etc., it has not taken a single step to compel the employers to withdraw their non-cooperation with the statutory Wage Boards for the last four months.

This Congress strongly demands that the Government of India Labour Ministry should immediately direct the Wage Boards to carry on and complete their work despite the withdrawal of employers' representatives, so that the journalists and newspaper employees are able to secure long delayed wage revision at an early date.

(t) Police Firings in Hyderabad

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the wanton firings and brutal killings of the people of Hyderabad by the Indira Congress Government of Andhra Pradesh and its police.

The police raped a young Muslim girl and killed her husband on March 30. When the people protested against this brutality, the Home Minister of the State Government and its Inspector General of Police absolved the police of the crime and shielded the culprits. The police fired upon the demonstrators killing three.

When the bandh call, given by the CPI(M), Janata Party, Majlis, Republican Party and others, was magnificently responded to by the people of the twin cities (Hyderabad and Secunderabad), the police opened fire at several places killing nine persons again on April 3 and injuring more than one hundred. Curfew was clamped and the army called in to suppress the agitated people. This whole affair is reminiscent of the terror rule under the Indira Gandhi Government.

The Party Congress severely condemns the massacre and sends its condolences to the bereaved families. The Party Congress

demands the dismissal of the Home Minister and the Inspector General of Police who gave false statements on the rape and murder shielding the culprits. It demands the arrest and trial of guilty officials.

The Party Congress calls for immediate withdrawal of the army and release of all those persons arrested. It also demands adequate compensation to the families of the killed. The Party Congress demands that the whole police structure should be overhauled so that these kinds of brutalities and third degree tortures can never be repeated.

(u) On Madras TVS Workers' Struggle

Nearly 8000 workers of TVS, Madras, have been subjected to severe repression by the management for the past several months. The workers' right to elect their own leadership is denied. Nearly 300 workers have been suspended and 15 dismissed. Police protection is still being given to the management and workers' right to peaceful protest is suppressed.

The workers are on an indefinite hunger strike now, with 55 arrested workers fasting in jail.

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) expresses its wholehearted support to the struggling TVS workers and calls upon the Government of Tamil Nadu to withdraw all cases against the workers. It also calls on the Government to intervene immediately and ensure that justice is done to the workers.

(v) On Space Centre Employees' Agitation

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its strong protest against the attitude of the Government of India towards the legitimate demands of the workers at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Trivandrum.

The employees had presented a memorandum regarding their demands. The management not only refused to meet the employees' delegation but without any reason the police resorted to a lathi charge on the workers injuring a large number of them. Fifteen workers were also taken into custody.

The Party Congress condemns the police excesses and calls on the Government of India to take immediate steps for restoring normalcy at the Space Centre.

(w) Support to Khetri Strike

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) extends its support to the forty day old strike of more than ten thousand workers of the Khetri Copper Complex in Khetri (Rajasthan) against victimisation of the union leadership during the Congress regime and other legitimate demands

The Congress condemns the attitude of the Central Government, which on the one side refuses to negotiate with the striking workers and on the other resorts to widespread repression against them. Peaceful striking workers, women and children were wantonly lathi charged by the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary and the Central Industrial Security Force

The Party Congress while expressing its solidarity with the striking workers disapproves of the attitude of the Government making the withdrawal of the strike a pre condition and demands immediate negotiation with the Sangharsh Samiti formed by all the trade unions for conducting the strike and for settlement of all the outstanding demands of the workers

(x) On Bata Workers' Strike

Twelve thousand workers of Bata Shoe Factory in Calcutta are on strike since 9th March, 1978 on demands of wage revision, bonus, etc

Series of bipartite and tripartite negotiations have failed to change the adamant attitude of the management. Even the State Chief Minister's intervention failed to bring an honourable settlement of the disputes. The workers were, therefore, forced to resort to strike and start an all India campaign to boycott the Bata shops

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), while supporting the just demands of the workers urges upon the working class of India to support the cause of striking workers. It calls upon the management of the Bata Company to come to an honourable settlement with the workers

(y) On Special Plenum

The resolution moved by Comrade EMS said

Putting the Party organisation on correct lines cannot be undertaken by the PB and CC alone. It should be considered the

combined task of the State and Central leaderships of the Party The Congress, therefore, directs the new PB and CC to convene a Special Plenum to discuss the problems of organisation before the end of 1978 The Plenum has to be properly prepared for To this end,

"(a) The PB shall, within a month, prepare a questionnaire on the basis of which the State Committees can prepare reports giving the state of organisation, the specific problems connected thereto and the ways in which these problems are proposed to be tackled

"(b) The PB shall study these State reports and prepare an organisational report for the Plenum which, after its approval with the necessary amendments by the CC, shall be sent to the State Committees

"(c) The State Committee shall then send their views on this report to the Central leadership, so that a revised report can be presented to the Plenum

"The PB and CC shall decide the quota of representation at the Plenum for the State Committees and all India fractions in mass organisations as well as the date, venue, etc , of the Plenum

"Meanwhile, it is essential that the Party uses the immense possibilities that have opened up to strengthen itself The increased prestige and influence of the Party, the hundreds of new militants who have rallied to the Party in the course of mass struggles and electoral battles, provide big opportunities to consolidate, strengthen and expand the Party The State Committees are directed in the period between now and the Plenum to make utmost efforts to recruit these new militants in mass organisations and Auxiliary Groups depending on their level of consciousness and educate them so as to raise them from the present level of consciousness to the consciousness required to become full members of the Party as early as possible Party units should give them all guidance in their day to-day activities to develop united actions and movements and to integrate them with the work of the Party and the mass organisations led by it "

The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Congress

Credential Committee's Report

Submitted To The Tenth Congress of The
Communist Party of India (Marxist) Held at
Jullundur on April 28, 1978

Report of the Credential Committee submitted to the Tenth Congress, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Jullundur, April 28, 1978

1. We have received 572 forms filled in by delegates and observers.

Statewise distribution is as follows:

State	Delegates	Observers	Total
1 Andhra Pradesh	31	4	35
2 Assam	10	2	12
3 Bihar	18	2	20
4 Delhi	4	2	6
5 Goa	2	—	2
6 Gujarat	2	2	4
7 Haryana	2	1	3
8 Himachal Pradesh	2	1	3
9 Karnataka	7	1	8
10 Kerala	148	5	153
11 Madhya Pradesh	4	1	5
12 Maharashtra	14	3	17
13 Manipur	2	—	2
14 Orissa	6	2	8
15 Punjab	20	2	22
16 Rajasthan	6	1	7
17 Tamil Nadu	43	3	46
18 Tripura	15	2	17

Continued

State	Delegates	Observers	Total
19 U P (East)	14	2	16
20 U P (West)	3	1	4
21 West Bengal	123	19	142
22 C C Staff	10	3	13
23 C C	27	—	27
Total	513	59	572

2 Age Groups

30 years and, below	31 to 50	51 to 70	Above 70	Total
33	284	242	13	572

3 Class Origin

(a) Working Class	72
(b) Urban middle class	277
(c) Agricultural labour	16
(d) Poor peasants	67
(e) Middle and rich peasants	107
(f) Landlords	33
Total	572

4 Education

(a) Matriculation and below	295
(b) Above matriculation and below graduate	82
(c) Graduate and Post graduate	195
Total	572

5 Year of Joining Party

(a) 1940 and earlier	98
(b) Between 1941 and 1950	167
(c) Between 1951 and 1964	199
(d) After 1964	108
Total	572

6 Wholetimers and Part timers

Wholetimers	492
Part timers	80
Total	<u>572</u>

7 Frontwise Break up

Party	76
TU	45
Kisan	47
Party and TU	168
Party and Kisan	133
Youth	25
Women	19
Student	16
Party journals and culture and professional fronts	43
Total	<u>572</u>

8 Position in Party

Central Committee members	27
State Committee members	291
District Committee members	188
Members of Committees below DC	21
Party members	45
Total	<u>572</u>

9 Marital Status

Married	453
Unmarried	119
Total	<u>572</u>

10 Period Spent in Jail

One year and less	124
Above one year and below five years	238
Above five years and below ten years	98
Above ten years	25
Those who did not go to jail	87
Total	<u>572</u>

11 Period Spent in Underground Life

One year and less	111
Above one year and below five years	240
Above five years and below ten years	51
Above ten years	6
Those who did not have any underground life	164
Total	<u>572</u>

12 Women Delegates and Observers

1 Andhra Pradesh	1
2 Bihar	1
3 Kerala	11
4 Maharashtra	1
5 Tamil Nadu	2
6 Tripura	1
7 Delhi	1
8 West Bengal	4
9 C C Staff	1
10 C C	1
Total	<u>24</u>

13 Oldest Comrades

Comrade Ratan Lal Brahman (West Bengal)	78 years
Comrade D S Vaidya (Maharashtra)	78 years
Comrade Ganesh Ghosh (West Bengal)	78 years

Credential Committee's Report 197

Youngest Comrade

Comrade V Uma Maheswara Rao
(Andhra Pradesh) 23 years

Earliest to Join the Party

Comrade B T Ranadive 1928

Comrade who has Spent the Longest Period in Jail

Comrade Ganesh Ghosh (West Bengal) 28 years

**Comrade who has Spent the Longest Period in
Underground Life**

Comrade Jaipal Singh (Delhi) 15 years

Jullundur
6 4 1978

- 1 N Sankariah (Convenor)
- 2 Saroj Mukherjee
- 3 Puthalath Narayanan

Central Committee Members Elected by The Tenth Congress of The Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Held at Jullundur on April 2-8, 1978

New C.C.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. E. M.S. Namboodiripad | 23. Ramdass |
| 2. B. T. Ranadive | 24. Shankar Dayal Tiwari |
| 3. P. Sundarayya | 25. Nripen Chakravarty |
| 4. M. Basavapunnaiiah | 26. Dasarath Deb |
| 5. P. Ramamurti | 27. Deshraj Chadha |
| 6. Harkishan Singh Surjeet | 28. Ahilya Rangnekar |
| 7. Jyoti Basu | 29. L. B. Gangadhar Rao |
| 8. Promode Dasgupta | 30. M. K. Pandhe |
| 9. Samar Mukherjee | 31. Jaipal Singh |
| 10. Krishnapada Ghosh | 32. A. Nallasivam |
| 11. E. K. Nayanar | 33. R. Umanath |
| 12. E. Balanandan | 34. T. K. Ramakrishnan |
| 13. A. Balasubramaniam | 35. Susheela Gopalan |
| 14. M. R. Venkataraman | 36. V. S. Achuthanandan |
| 15. N. Prasad Rao | 37. Saroj Mukherjee |
| 16. M. Hanumantha Rao | 38. Benoy Chowdhury |
| 17. S. Y. Kolhatkar | 39. Manoranjan Roy |
| 18. Godavari Parulekar | 40. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi |
| 19. Mohan Punamia | 41. Chandubhai Patel |
| 20. Siabar Saran Srivastava | 42. G. S. Randhawa |
| 21. Achintya Bhattacharyya | 43. Sivaji Patnaik |
| 22. Satwant Singh | 44. Nrisingha Chakrabarty |

Polit Bureau

Comrades E. M. S. Namboodiripad, B. T. Ranadive, P. Sundarayya, M. Basavapunnaiiah, P. Ramamurti, Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Jyoti Basu, Promode Dasgupta, Samar Mukherjee, A. Balasubramaniam and E. Balanandan.

General Secretary

Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad

Summing-up of The Tenth Congress of CPI(M)*

E.M.S. Namboodiripad, General Secretary

The following is the text of the summing up speech made by Comrade E M S Namboodiripad to the delegates to the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on April 8, 1978

We are now coming to the close of our business

During the last one week, we have been exchanging views. Certain clashes of views have no doubt taken place but at the end of it all, we have been able unanimously to adopt the Political Resolution and have the new Central Committee unanimously elected. With regard to the Review Report, we unanimously adopted it directing the new Central Committee to incorporate the criticisms and suggestions made in the Congress.

I am sure that we can all derive satisfaction that, through our labours, we have been able to achieve this. This is not to suggest that we have solved all our problems. There certainly are unresolved problems, one of which we have decided to take up in a Special Plenum. As for other problems, they will have to be taken up by the Central Committee in due course.

Inspiring Balance Sheet

But it is a fact that, after six years of the utmost difficulty in our work, years in which we had to work against heavy odds, and in the course of which we had to face the attacks launched from various quarters, we have been able to arrive at a by and large unified understanding on the political situation in the country and on the most vital problems of the international movement which affect us, that we were thus able to make a

*Published in 'PEOPLES DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, April 23 1978

beginning in the reunification and reorganisation of the Party as a whole, enabling it to shoulder the new and much greater responsibilities that devolve on us. This should inspire us to carry this forward.

I will now explain some of the salient points of the understanding that we have arrived at.

Let me first take the question of our approach to the international revolutionary movement, to the question of the unity of the Socialist camp and of the Communist movement. On these questions, for quite some time, there have been differences among us. These differences have been repeatedly aired at various levels of the Party after which we have now come to certain conclusions.

We have come to the conclusion that the Socialist world exists and is growing from strength to strength. I need not elaborate on that. That has been put in the Political Resolution.

When we speak of the Socialist world, we are including in it all those countries from the Soviet Union and China to Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea which are the latest so far to come into the Socialist world. We do not subscribe to the theory—on the other hand, we firmly reject the theory—that the Soviet Union has ceased to be a Socialist country, that it has become a "social imperialist" country. We have also rejected the theory that People's Republic of China has ceased to be a Socialist country, that it has become a militarist country.

We look upon the Socialist world, its growth, its strength, its successes in economic development, the increase in its military strength, all of which act as the guarantee of success in the worldwide struggle between imperialism and Socialism, in which all the peoples of the former colonial or "developing" countries are interested. This is of great importance to all of us.

We do not subscribe to the theory that what happens in the Soviet Union, China and other Socialist countries is no matter of concern to us. We are an integral part of the world revolutionary movement, part of the international Communist movement.

Independent Stand

This however does not mean that, in the struggle within the world Communist movement, we follow the leadership of any

fraternal Party—either of the Soviet or Chinese or any other party We are critical of several policies of the Soviet Party and the Chinese Party We are not prepared to accept the leadership of either of these Parties We take an independent line which has been characterised in the bourgeois Press as equidistance between the Soviet Union and China There is no question of equidistance It is a question of our taking an independent stand through our own thinking, express our own views if and when necessary, criticise one or the other or both, while at the same time, assessing as highly valuable the existence and growth of every Socialist country and above all, of the Soviet Union and China

It is necessary to stress this because in our ranks, there are still comrades who think that the Soviet Union being revisionist has ceased to be a Socialist country, the Soviet Communist Party being revisionist does not deserve our respect, our appreciation They also think that China is the leader of the world revolution and all that On this question, this Congress has come to the final conclusion that we respect the Soviet Union, China, the Soviet Party and the Chinese Party, but we reserve to ourselves the right to criticise either of them whenever they take a stand against us I want to stress this point because this has been a matter of continuing internal debate in the Party Now that the Congress has adopted this stand, there is no room for further debate on it

Parties of West Europe

As in our relations with the Socialist countries, so too in our relations with the working class and Communist movements of capitalist countries, we take our own independent stand For instance, in our resolution we have made it perfectly clear that we adhere to the principles of proletarian internationalism, dictatorship of the proletariat, the role of the Communist Party On all these things, we adhere to the basic Marxist Leninist principles On that there is no doubt We find from the pronouncements made by some of the Communist Parties in Europe, Parties adopting what is called "Euro Communism", that they appear to reject some of these principles We, for our part, have positively made it clear that we still adhere to these principles

This means that on this question, perhaps, there are differences between us and those parties. This, however, will not blind us to the reality that the Communist Parties and working class movements in Italy, France, Spain, etc., are making big advances. As an integral part of the international Communist movement adhering to the basic principle of proletarian internationalism, our Party rejoices at the growth and strengthening of the Communist Parties of Italy, France, Spain, etc. Our appreciation and solidarity with the Communist Parties and working class movements of these countries, however, does not mean that we subscribe to those ideas of the Parties known by the term "Euro Communism"

Basic Principles

We do not enter into polemics with those Parties because they do not directly interfere in Indian affairs. Unfortunately, the Soviet Party and the Chinese Party are doing so and, therefore, we have to polemicise against them. We are not carrying on a polemical campaign against the Parties of "Euro Communism", but we positively make it clear that we stand by these principles, to which from all the pronouncements made by the leaders of those Parties they are not adhering.

It is important for our Party that we should educate our ranks and the entire masses on these basic principles. Dictatorship of the proletariat is a principle which is a natural or logical culmination of the theory of class struggle. So, too, is proletarian internationalism. On the basis of the very same theory of class struggle which is international, we, Communists, the entire working class, the entire working people of India show solidarity with the Socialist countries as well as the revolutionary Communist working class movements in all capitalist countries. This is the stand that we are taking. That is why we have not further spelt out our approach to or criticism of these Parties.

One thing is definitely clear, we are not going to have an "Indo Communism". We take a stand that Communism is a worldwide movement of which we are an integral part. But how to apply it in the concrete conditions of India is left to us. On this, of course, if

we have the opportunities, we will certainly exchange views with all fraternal Parties

National Situation

Comrades,

Now I come to the national situation. Here the whole question of controversy has been our approach to the Congress and the Janata Party. Anybody who studies not only this Political Resolution but all the earlier statements and resolutions of the PB and CC particularly those beginning with the statement made by the CC immediately after the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections in January 1977—anybody who studies all these resolutions, can see that we have been adopting a strictly independent class position. It is not a question of permanently allying ourselves with this party or that party of the ruling classes but taking our own independent stand and, in pursuance of that independent stand, having temporary alliances with this or that party. Now the question is raised whether by not coming out against the Janata Party as much as against the Congress, we are not committing the same mistakes as the Right CP in relation to the Congress. As a matter of fact, some of the spokesmen of the Right Communist Party who have been briefing the Press at Bhatinda said that having allied themselves with the Congress they have fallen into a ditch, and that they do not want the Marxist Party to fall into another ditch.

Our Record

I would like to recall to your mind that, during the last ten fifteen years, we have been adopting varying attitudes to various parties at various times and in spite of all that, we have adopted an independent class position, although now and then, we may have slipped here and there.

The Right CP, on the contrary, really fell into a ditch. Take for instance

The time before, during and after the Fourth General Elections in 1967. At that time, we agreed with the Socialist Party and other

Opposition parties that in as many States as possible, the Congress should be defeated and non Congress Governments should be formed We did not subscribe to the theory of the Right CP, that parties like the Swatantra, Jana Sangh, etc , were so dangerous that in order to defeat them, alliance with the Congress was desirable On the other hand, we looked upon the Congress as the main stumbling block before the revolutionary and progressive forces in the country We, therefore, helped the forging of non Congress alliances and the formation of non Congress Governments

Right CP's Record

The Right CP, after some years of campaign to the contrary, came in 1967 to subscribe to the idea of unity of all the anti Congress forces But look at what had happened after the 1967 elections when we helped the formation of non Congress Governments in as many States as possible We, however, did not join the Governments, we kept out of them On the other hand, the Right CP, who for quite some time had been looking upon these non Congress bourgeois parties as the main enemy, had no hesitation in joining the Coalition Governments along with them

Again in 1969, we and they jointly took the stand that as between the Syndicate Congress and the Indira Congress, the Syndicate Congress with all its pronouncedly Rightist policies was a greater menace to the working class and the democratic movement than the other Congress We joined hands with the Indira Congress as against the Syndicate Congress But here again, you will see that there were two lines

Ours was an independent line of having temporary alliance with one or the other bourgeois combination as against the other, strictly in accordance with the interests of the proletarian and semi proletarian classes and strata From the point of view of these class interests, we had a temporary alliance with the Indira Congress but that was strictly temporary That alliance was subsequently broken

On the other hand, the Right CP, which, a couple of years ago, had no hesitation to join the non Congress Governments

dominated by the Rightist Opposition parties now turned full circle, the first thing that they did after the Congress split was to join hands with the Congress in order to topple the two Left led Governments of West Bengal and Kerala. In 1971, when, after the West Bengal election, not only was the Congress turned into a minority but all the Left and democratic parties together could have formed a Government, the Right CP rejected our offer of forming a non Congress Government. On the other hand, they helped the formation of a Congress Government which instituted the notorious semi fascist terror. The Right CP fully collaborated with that terror regime. In all these cases, you will see that the two lines—the Right CP line and ours—clashed with each other. There is a line of virtually aligning themselves with this, on that party, losing one's own identity as a party of the working class. In 1967, although they had only two or three MLAs they took seats in the Ministries dominated by the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra, while in 1969, they joined hands with the Congress.

Our Party, on the other hand, was able to keep its independence in spite of temporary alliances with the non Congress parties in 1967 and with the Indira Congress in 1969. We have shown in action that we as a party is capable of taking the independent class position of the working class.

Once again, in 1977-78, our Party has taken up the same independent class position in relation to the Janata Party. We have not joined hands with the Janata Party in a Coalition Government, nor did we make any such proposal except in those States where we are the most effective force—in West Bengal and Tripura. Our attitude to the Janata Party is such as to help the formation of a Janata Government at the Centre and in the States provided they do not pursue anti working class and anti people policies.

So, here is a line which strengthens us and isolates the most dangerous enemy for the time being. We have proved in practice that we are capable of applying this tactic correctly from time to time as the situation changes and it is this line that we are once again reiterating and elaborating in the Political Resolution of this Congress.

The correctness of our approach to international and national questions has been and is being further confirmed by the greater

and greater support that we are getting from all sections of the people all over the country. We go back from this Congress with the confidence that, in the Political Resolution that we have unanimously adopted, we have a weapon with which to forge Left and democratic unity to mobilise all the anti-authoritarian forces and enable our movement to go forward. While we go back with this confidence, let us remember that although this is the correct political tactical line, much depends on how we take it to the people, how we concretise it, how from time to time and place to place as the situation warrants, we apply the general principles of Left and democratic unity and anti-authoritarian struggle in practice. This puts a new and heavier responsibility on our shoulders.

Diary of The Tenth Congress of CPI(M)*

Held in Jullundur on April 2–8, 1978

*A K Gopalan Nagar (Jullundur), April 2, 1978, 3 p m
Comrade Nripen Chakravarty, member of the Central Committee
of the Party and Chief Minister of Tripura, hoisted the Red Flag
The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)
thus begun*

Five hundred and thirteen of the 521 delegates elected to the Congress and 59 observers clench their fists and salute the Flag For holding this flag high 1200 of our comrades in West Bengal, 300 of our comrades in Kerala and many comrades in other States have made the supreme sacrifice When we salute the Flag and clench our fists, it is not a formality, it is a pledge from the bottom of our hearts, from those who are living to those who have laid down their lives in the cause of the Indian Revolution, the pledge that we will continue the work that they left unfinished, that at this Tenth Congress of the Party, we will evolve tactics which will open up the path for the rapid advance of the Party and take us nearer to the day of victory which our martyrs did not live to see

Comrade Nripen Chakravarty echoes our feelings when he recalls the grim battles which our Party has fought in the six years since our last Congress in Madurai in 1972 We have already recorded glorious victories—our Party leads the Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura This Tenth Congress is to map the course of advance from these victories to still more glorious successes

We bow our heads before the Martyrs' column and offer flowers in humble tribute to our departed comrades

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, April 16, 1978

We file past the Martyrs' column to the hall where the delegates' session will be held during the next one week. Against the backdrop of red and white are the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Comrade Satwant Singh, member of the Central Committee and Secretary of the Punjab State Committee of the Party, welcomes the delegates on behalf of the Reception Committee.

The delegates elect a Presidium of seven to conduct the proceedings of the Congress. Comrades Jyoti Basu, M Hanumantha Rao, Godavari Parulekar, M R Venkataraman, Dasarath Deb, P K Kunjachan and Fauja Singh Bhullar take their place on the Presidium.

The Steering Committee consists of Comrades E M S Namboodiripad, B T Ranadive, P Sundarayya, Jyoti Basu, Harkishan Singh Surjeet, M Basavapunnaiyah, Promode Dasgupta and P Ramamurti.

The Congress elects a Credential Committee consisting of Comrades N Sankaraiah (Convenor), Saroj Mukherjee and Puthalath Narayanan.

A Resolutions Committee with Comrades P Ramamurti, Ramdass, A Balasubramaniam, S Y Kolhatkar and N Prasada Rao is also unanimously elected.

The delegates stand up and mourn the deaths of comrades who have left us since the last Congress and pay homage to the martyrs who have laid down their lives in the same period.

When Comrade E M S Namboodiripad announces that he will read out the fraternal message from the Communist Party of Vietnam wishing the Party and Tenth Congress success, there is thunderous applause. More messages have arrived and are read out in the following days—from the Workers' Party of Korea, Romanian Communist Party, Workers' Communist Party of Egypt, Communist Party of Great Britain and Left Party Communists of Sweden.

Review Report

Comrade M Basavapunnaiyah introduces the review of the Party's Political Tactical Line from June 1972 to April 1978 and says

In the fairly long period of six years between the Ninth and Tenth Congresses, many big developments of far reaching political significance have taken place. During the course of these developments, the political tactical line of the Party worked out at the Ninth Congress had been subjected to severe tests and trial. It is necessary to have a self critical review to establish the strong points of the political line and also reveal the shortcomings and mistakes.

After detailing the situation as it existed at the time of the Ninth Congress—the big Congress victory in the 1971 election, the then ruling party's political offensive against the unity of Left and democratic forces, the semi fascist terror in West Bengal, the threat that the authoritarian and dictatorial trends in the ruling party were posing not only to the CPI(M) but to the entire Opposition, etc., Comrade Basavapunniah enumerated the complex and difficult problems the Party had to face in implementing the tasks laid down by the Ninth Congress.

We are looking back at these problems from a totally different political situation today when the 20 month long Emergency regime has been defeated, the unbroken rule of the Congress Party for three decades has been ended, when the Congress Party itself has been split vertically into two, when not only the semi fascist terror in West Bengal has been defeated but a Left Front Government headed by the CPI(M) has been formed in that State and a similar Government has also been formed in Tripura, and the Marxist led front in Kerala has been able to secure 45 per cent of the votes.

Despite all this, as things stand today, the organised Left and democratic parties are very weak and badly divided, with the Socialist Party and several other democratic groups and individuals having merged with the Janata Party and the Right Communist Party collaborating with the Congress.

During all this period, the Party's political tactical line has been proved to be basically sound and correct, notwithstanding all shortcomings and even some mistakes in implementing the line.

The Party was correct and clear in its class analysis and assessment of the ruling Congress Party on the one hand and the

major parties of the former "Grand Alliance" on the other, characterising both of them as essentially representing the interests of the bourgeois landlord classes

During this whole period, the Party has been concentrating its main fire on the ruling Congress Party and its Government. It was this correct estimation of the two bourgeois landlord formations and the correct concentration of fire on the Congress Party in power that enabled the Party to fight the Right C P's line of rallying behind the Congress and the Socialist Party's line of merging with the parties of the "Grand Alliance"

History has fully vindicated the correctness of the Party's line of lending sympathy and support to the movement led by Jaya Prakash Narayan, characterising it essentially as a resistance movement against the Congress Government and its repressive rule. The Right C P's line of looking upon this movement as the rise of fascism has been proved to be totally bankrupt.

While extending sympathy and support to the J P movement, the CPI(M) was principled and correct in rejecting the proposals to join the Jan Sangharsh Samitis and J P's National Co ordination Committee. Thus it guarded its independent identity and the proletarian class point of view. The heightened political prestige the Party is enjoying today is in no small measure due to such a correct political line and this has to be kept in mind while self critically reviewing the shortcomings and mistakes.

Dealing with unity in action, especially on the trade union front, Comrade Basavapunnaiah pointed out that it was this tactic of unity in action that had led to huge working class actions including the three week long railway strike and the all India general strike in its support.

But what has to be noted here is that while our basic political characterisation of the Jana Sangh and RSS are correct, the lopsided and exclusive emphasis on the demarcation with the Jana Sangh and the political organisational struggle against it and the BMS and the stiff opposition to entertain the very idea of united action with the Jana Sangh and BMS, elevating it to a point of principle, certainly impeded us from seizing the initiative during the entire period.

As regards the other fronts—kisan, agricultural labour, students, youth, women, teachers, etc —the understanding of the tactic of unity in action was not deep enough, the perseverance demanded of us was not there and whatever united actions took place were of sporadic nature

The lesson to be learnt is that the tactic of unity in action, which is an essential tactic for all class and mass fronts led by any proletarian party, has a special importance for our Party in the present phase of developments and this tactic should be pursued and practised with vigour

Comrade Basavapunnaiiah then dealt with the Party's efforts to build the unity of Left and democratic forces and continued

Our self criticism is that our PB and CC did not do all that was necessary to defend bourgeois democracy when it was being rapidly eroded, that it did not adequately utilise the inner conflicts and divisions of the bourgeois landlords parties in furtherance of the struggle against the Congress Government and its drive towards authoritarianism, and that it did not strive to rally all the forces that could be rallied on the platform for the defence of democracy

Rejecting the argument that the Right Opposition Parties had ceased to be political representatives of the bourgeois landlord classes and that they had qualified themselves to become partners in a class united front against the landlords, the monopolists and their foreign collaborators, Comrade Basavapunnaiiah said, no confusion should be allowed by mixing up the two concepts, namely, the concept of forging broader unity or alliance in defence of parliamentary democracy and people's liberties, and the concept of the strategic alliance or front against the bourgeois landlord State and Government

The Ninth Congress placed before the Party and the people the growing threat to democracy, the growing danger of one party dictatorship and consequently the growing necessity and urgency of mobilising all the forces that can be mobilised to defend democracy and defeat the drive towards dictatorship. The call, thus, was for the struggle for more allies in order to beat back the menace of authoritarian and semi fascist terror rule of the Congress Party

However, a self critical examination of our work and activities during the years 1974 76, both during the pre Emergency and Emergency periods, reveals that there was a big gap between the formal resolutions calling for forging of a broader front with a corresponding programme on the one hand, and the actual practice on the other. This was because of the defective assessment of the class and political forces in the then prevailing conditions. The estimation of the then political situation was not deep enough and was lopsided.

There was resistance on the part of the leadership to reassess the role of the bourgeois landlord Opposition parties when these parties, in practice, were slowly giving up their earlier programmatic and policy position and moving towards the programme of Jaya Prakash Narayan and resistance movement. The Polit Bureau and the Central Committee, instead of noting the changes taking place in these Opposition parties, continued to emphasise the basic class character of these parties and their Right reactionary and counter revolutionary character as laid down in the Party Programme and elaborated in subsequent pronouncements.

The PB and CC grossly underestimated the conflict and contradictions between the ruling Congress Party on the one hand and the bourgeois landlord Opposition parties on the other, and continued to harp on the basic contradiction between the mass of the people and the ruling bourgeois landlord classes and parties as a whole, even though, for the time being, that contradiction had gone into the background and the conflict between the two bourgeois landlord combinations had come into the foreground.

While the attitude of the Party to the Right Opposition parties was correct at the time of the Congress split in 1969 and the elections in 1971 and 1972, it was incorrect not to respond to the change that was taking place when these parties, in 1974 76, were moving in the direction of opposing the authoritarian rule of the Congress and defending the democratic rights of the people—may be under compulsion of partisan political requirements and expediency. This mistake was corrected partially in the latter half of 1975, but was not fully corrected till the beginning of 1977.

The Party tended to consider these bourgeois landlord Opposition parties as "permanent" enemies, as parties of reaction and counter revolution. When these parties began realising that Congress authoritarianism was not going to spare them also, these parties were compelled to openly champion the cause of defence of parliamentary democracy.

The pessimism regarding the possibility of defence and restoration of bourgeois democratic rights inhibited the Party's struggle for allies beyond the traditionally understood forces of Left and democratic unity. Such an outlook ruled out the possibility of one or the other bourgeois landlord Opposition parties and groups becoming allies for the defence of parliamentary democracy, however shortlived and unstable such an alliance might be and whatever vacillations, desertions and treacheries such an alliance might have to encounter.

The significance of the fact that the immediate threat to the Indira regime principally arose from the rival bourgeois landlord parties was grossly minimised. This lag in our understanding prevented us from adopting a wholly correct political tactical attitude to the J P movement and the different parties that were mobilised in J P's National Co ordination Committee.

The bourgeois landlord parties and groups that had lost their battle with the Indira Gandhi Congress in 1969, 1971 and 1972 began regrouping and bidding for mass support championing some general democratic demands and taking up certain mass issues. The fact that these parties had to launch mass movements and resort to extra parliamentary forms of struggle highlights the sharpened conflict between the parties of the ruling classes—which came in the background of the deepening crisis of the capitalist path of development, the semi fascist terror conditions in West Bengal and the hectic drive of the Congress to set up its one party authoritarian and dictatorial regime in the country.

It was subjectivism and sectarianism on our part that was responsible for the neglect of the study of the conflicts and contradictions among the bourgeois landlord parties and consequently the failure to adopt a completely correct political tactical line towards the J P movement.

The mistakes in our outlook in this regard stood more pronounced when we, more or less, persisted in the same old attitude to the J P movement and its constituent political parties even after the imposition of the internal Emergency. Any united action with the Jana Sangh or any combination of parties in which it was a partner was opposed for a long time even during the Emergency.

All this, however, should not lead us to ignore our Party's contribution to the resistance movement against the Emergency regime and its victory at the March poll. The Party had from the very beginning lent its support to the Gujarat and Bihar movements and at no stage had it come into conflict with the J P movement, in spite of a good number of serious differences with the declared objectives of the movement.

The efforts made by our Party, particularly in the latter part of 1976, making a big success of the Civil Liberties Convention and the Convention against the 42nd Constitution Amendment, the mass campaign of the Party against the amendment in various States, had enhanced the political prestige of the Party, enabling it to play a proper role during the March election and in facilitating the defeat of the Emergency regime of the Congress Party. It was this political leverage that helped the Party to emerge in the post election political stage as the only hope for forging the unity of the Left and democratic force, as the real alternative against the reactionary concept of stabilising the so called two party system of two bourgeois landlord combinations.

Comrade Basavapunnaiah then reviewed the correct electoral tactics pursued by the Party in March, June and February and again pointed out, a correct assessment of the objective role of the Opposition parties in 1974-75 and a corresponding correct attitude towards the J P movement would have certainly enabled our Party to play a much more effective role in the then developing resistance movement against the Congress regime. It would have helped our Party to forge unity and united action with all these parties against the Emergency and repression, placing it in a much more favourable position vis a vis the other forces which ought the Emergency.

Thirtyeight comrades participated in the discussion on the report—Comrades E M S Namboodiripad and P Sundarayya, and Patyam Gopalan, Imbichi Bawa, Dakshinamurthy, Padmalochanan, Ravindranath, Achuthanandan, Susheela Gopalan, Chathunny Master (all from Kerala), Sunil Moitra, Bhola Bose, Niren Ghosh, Bijoy Modak, Shantimoy Ghosh, Kamal Sarkar (all from West Bengal), Anandan Nambiar, V P Chintan, R Umanath (Tamil Nadu), Nripen Chakravarty (Tripura), Krishna Kant and Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi (Bihar), Jagjit Singh Lyallpuri (Punjab), S Y Kolhatkar and P K Kurane (Maharashtra), Ravi Sinha and P K Tandon (U P East), L B Gangadhara Rao and B N Reddy (Andhra Pradesh), S L Vasisht (West U P), Prakash Karat (Delhi), Raghvir Singh (Haryana), Dinkar Mehata (Gujarat), Shirali (Rajasthan), Banamali Das (Orissa), Krishnappa (Karnataka), Hemen Das (Assam), Motilal Sharma (Madhya Pradesh), and M K Pandhe (CC Office)

The Congress afterwards unanimously adopted the report directing the new C C to incorporate the suggestions made in the Congress and other improvements

Political Resolution

Presenting the draft political Resolution, in the morning session on April 5, Comrade B T Ranadive explained some of its salient points

Our understanding of the world situation, he said, is based on the understanding given by the International Conferences of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1956 and 1960—the intensifying contradictions between the Socialist Camp and the imperialist camp, between the capitalist class and the working class, between imperialist countries and underdeveloped countries

The present is not only a period of national liberation, many countries are going over from national liberation to Socialism. The victories in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea are not only victories of the national liberation movement, but victories of the Socialist world over the imperialist world

Is the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed countries still operating? The old colonialism has collapsed but

imperialism is still active with its neo colonialist policies. The contradiction operates today in the form of fight against neo colonialist efforts to establish supremacy.

But the ruling classes in many of these countries are trying to compromise with imperialism and they also compromise with the pre capitalist formations of these countries. This paves the way for dictatorships of which we had our recent experience, our neighbours and earlier Indonesia also had this experience.

Referring to the crisis of the capitalist system, Comrade Ranadive said that though struggles in the developed capitalist countries had not risen to the level of revolutionary struggles, shocks are being given, one after another, to the parliamentary system, Governments are brought down leading to mid term elections.

While inner imperialist contradictions have also intensified, the sharpened contradiction between the Socialist and imperialist camps can be seen in all major issues of international politics. The contradiction expresses itself sharply when US imperialism commits aggression against a small Socialist country like Korea.

We do not have a complacent attitude, said Comrade Ranadive, and he referred to the imperialist counter attacks earlier in Indonesia, in Chile and other countries, the upsetting of Governments and installing of reactionary regimes, Sadat's disruption of Arab unity, etc. Imperialism is historically doomed, but its day to day activities and military strength have to be taken into account.

Comrade Ranadive then dwelt on the situation in the world Communist movement and the wrong policies pursued by the two big parties - the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and China.

Despite all differences and disunity, the very existence of the Socialist world is a positive factor in the shaping of developments.

There is general radicalisation of the masses everywhere and they are moving to the Left and our country is no exception to this onward march.

From the Madurai Congress, the Party had given the warning against authoritarianism. Still we underestimated the contradiction between the bourgeois landlord parties.

Turning to the elections, Comrade Ranadive said it was not an ordinary electoral victory. A big churning of the mass movement had taken place. Behind the victory in the West Bengal Lok Sabha and Assembly elections lay the sacrifice of 1200 comrades. Intense was the class struggle, intense was also the sacrifice. No previous election had acquired such political colour.

The Emergency and dictatorship marked the biggest crisis of the bourgeois landlord system entering all spheres—parliamentary, party, individual morals. This has very wide and profound implications for us.

It is of supreme importance for the parties of the bourgeois landlord classes to get possession of power. The conflicts between these parties will affect the masses, give a fillip to the mass struggles.

Today, the main challenge to democracy comes from the Indira Gandhi Congress. In this context, Comrade Ranadive explained the broad platform in defence of democracy and said that such a broad front was not an instrument of forming Governments anywhere.

An unpleasant but correct fact in the situation is that there has been no shift in the balance of forces in favour of the working class. It is our task to change this balance in favour of the working class and its Party.

The danger of dictatorship has to be traced to the basic economic context—the existence of big landlords, monopolists, multinationals, etc., who are for curbing and finally abolishing all democratic rights.

The crisis of the economy, the growing dependence of the economy on foreign aid and loans, the growing influence of the World Bank, the desperate efforts that are being made to get footholds in foreign markets, etc., have all politically menacing consequences.

Turning to the Janata Party, Comrade Ranadive said that it was a bourgeois landlord party which had come to occupy

Governmental power by denouncing the Emergency and dictatorship and advocating democracy against dictatorship. We must make a difference between a party which advocates Emergency and a party which opposes it. The Janata Government pursues the same economic policies as the previous Congress Government, but the Janata Party has made some commitments to the people. It is our task to see that followers of that party and others are pushed forward to press for the fulfilment of these commitments.

It will be a grave blunder not to see the difference between the Janata Party and the Congress, that will play into the hands of the forces of dictatorship. We do not say that the Janata Party will defend democracy for ever. To guarantee the defence of democracy, we will have to mobilise the Left and democratic forces. We also have to see that the people who are getting discontented with Janata policies do not go back to the Indira Gandhi Congress. We will unmask every crime of the Janata Government, but we will not allow the forces of dictatorship to gain from this.

What we want to bring about is a front of Left and democratic forces so that the alternative before the people is not between the Janata Party and the Congress. The toiling people and democratic sections should be rallied round the Left and democratic forces. The Left and democratic front is not a mere electoral front, but an instrument of mass struggles. To the measure the CPI(M) builds up this force, to that extent the weight of the working class and its leadership increases in the front. The Left and democratic front fights not only for economic demands but is the core of the struggle for democracy.

There have been many ups and downs in our efforts to forge a united front of Left and democratic forces due to the class vacillations of many of our allies. If we are not there, parties like the Right C.P. will join hands with Indira Gandhi to fight Right reaction and parties like the Socialist Party will join with Right opposition parties to fight Indira Gandhi.

Referring to the historic railway strike, Comrade Ranadive said that even though we were not the leader of that action, it was a

product of our activity. It was made possible by the earlier strike of the loco running staff at whose head stood our comrades. It was also a product of our consistent efforts for unity. Though we did not lead the strike, we can definitely say that we were mainly instrumental for its success.

Our initiative and efforts to build the Left and democratic front will lead the masses away from the two bourgeois landlord alternatives and place us in an advantageous position. The Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura are instruments of building the unity of Left and democratic forces.

In this context, Comrade Ranadive spoke of the role of united mass actions in building the climate for the Left and democratic front. Whenever we made efforts to build Left and democratic unity, the activity of the working class rose. Even though these were economic struggles, they radicalised the consciousness.

It is for the Party to raise this elemental consciousness to political, Socialist, consciousness. This job cannot be done from the trade union platform, it is the job of the Party. We as Communists are not discharging our tasks in the trade unions. As trade union leaders, yes, but not as Communists. How many trade union leaders instil peasant consciousness in the working class?

During the Emergency, the working class did not accept the political challenge. If it had done so, the Emergency could not have continued for so long. That is our self criticism.

As regards the kisan movement, its level, consciousness, actions are far from satisfactory. Taking the country as a whole, it has not been able to put large sections of the peasantry under our leadership.

The joint struggles of students, youth, etc. are good instruments for radicalising these sections and carrying forward the struggle for Left and democratic unity.

Explaining the Party's attitude to the Right C P, Comrade Ranadive said that there can be no unity between a Marxist Leninist Party and a revisionist party. Consider it as a Left Party, though it is not pursuing the line of a Left Party. Recent developments in the Right C P are welcome, many in the party want to change its line of collaboration with the Congress.

Why does the party not consider the Naxalites as a Left force? Despite their tall talk of revolution, many groups among the Naxalites consider the CPI(M) as their main enemy. Wherever they are prepared to abide by the discipline of the mass movement, bring them into joint actions and draw in the honest elements among them.

Comrade Ranadive in conclusion summed up the Party's understanding:

The ruling Janata Party, at present reaping the benefit of the mass swerve in its favour, is unable to make a deep impression on the people, and develop a coherent all-sided policy consistent with its democratic commitments. The sharp conflict for the possession of State power between the bourgeois landlord parties, at the same time, helps the democratic movement forward, increasing its sweep and drawing together much larger sections of the people.

While, therefore, at present, the polarisation has taken place round the two bourgeois landlord combinations, conditions are favourable for a change, in the correlation of forces, for a move forward by the Left and democratic forces.

The masses have experienced the class limitations of the bourgeois landlord Constitution. It will not be long before they draw the proper lessons and link their struggle for defence and expansion of democracy with the demand for basic political changes.

The Party and its allies must boldly intervene in the mass struggle, in all mass movements and direct them into a single stream against the forces of dictatorship and economic misery.

The vacillations, wrong, erroneous and reactionary economic policies of Janata Party have to be countered while continuing the fight against the danger of the revival of the caucus. The wider the independent activity of our Party, the wider the mass struggles led by the Party, the greater the possibility of Left and democratic unity and the stronger the fight against the forces of dictatorship. The stronger the unity of the trade union movement and the working class, the greater the weight of democratic movement and its success. Trade union unity, unity in the kisan movement,

and the growing alliance between the two, serve in the building of the Left and democratic front. These will introduce a qualitative change in the situation and lay the basis of that unity necessary for revolutionary success.

Fortyone delegates participated in the discussion which was spread over April 5 and 6. They were Comrades P Sundarayya, Manoranjan Roy, M A Rasool, Kanak Mukherjee, Benoy Konar, Shyamal Chakravarty, Satya Sadhan Chakravarty, Bejoy Modak, Manoj Ganguly, Buddhadev Bhattacharjee (all from West Bengal), M V Raghavan, Ramachandran Pillai, K Mohanan, M M Lawrence (Kerala), P Sanzgiri, Ahilya Rangnekar (Maharashtra), V P Chintan, Nallasivam (Tamil Nadu), Chandubhai Patel (Gujarat), Bhagwan Sharma, Nand Kishore Shukla, K N Dube, Siraj Ahmed (Bihar), Vidyadeb Burman, Manik Sarkar (Tripura), Kortala Satyanarayana, B N Reddy (Andhra Pradesh), Nurul Huda, Uddav Barman (Assam), Jaipal Singh (West U P Delhi), Sivaji Patnaik (Orissa), Zahoor Siddiqui (Haryana Delhi), Satya Narain Tewari (U P East), Hetram Beniwal (Rajasthan), Sthalekar (Karnataka), Randhawa (Punjab), Tara Chand (Himachal Pradesh), Peter Fernandes (Goa), Motilal Sharma (Madhya Pradesh), Vimal Ranadive and Narikutty Mohan (C C Staff).

After Comrade Ranadive summed up the discussion, a few amendments were accepted and the political Resolution was adopted unanimously by the Congress.

Special Plenum

In the morning of April 7, Comrade E M S Namboodiripad moved the resolution on convening a Special Plenum of the Party by the end of the year to discuss the question of Party organisation.

Explaining the reasons which prompted the Central Committee to make the proposal, Comrade E M S pointed out how the Party had been going through a period of stresses and strains not only since the Ninth Congress but even before. The semi fascist terror in West Bengal had begun before the Ninth Congress, so, too, police repression combine with goonda attacks in Kerala and

other parts of the country For a few months after the Ninth Congress, the Party had to face all this almost alone This, however, was followed by a period in which there was a certain amount of united action in the trade union field and among the Left and democratic parties, even though the semi fascist terror in West Bengal and the police goonda attacks in other parts continued Furthermore, the Party had to face a concerted campaign of slander unleashed by the Right C P and the Congress saying that the Party was collaborating with "the Right reactionary and fascist forces in the country" On top of all this, the Party, along with the other Opposition forces, had to go through the 19 months of Emergency

Comrade EMS paid tributes to the Party cadres, sympathisers and the masses organised in the trade unions, Kisan Sabha, etc , led by the Party who stood this test very well No other party would have survived such a combination of ideological, political and physical attacks on it

This courageous resistance put up by the Party cadres, combined with the tactics of unity in action with all the anti authoritarian forces as well as the effort to build the united front of Left and democratic forces has now put the Party on the national political map of India It is true that organisationally the Party is weak except in a few pockets It has nevertheless acquired such a political prestige all over the country that one can very well say that it has become a national political force in the country as a whole The political tactical line adopted at the Tenth Congress—the line of mobilising all the anti authoritarian forces on a broad platform of defending democracy and of forging the unity of all Left and democratic forces for radical shifts in socio economic policies—is bound to attract still larger numbers of people from all walks of life towards the Party

This is the political background, said Comrade E M S , against which the problems of organisation have to be examined

The crucial question is, shall we able to use the favourable political situation to strengthen the Party organisation which means (a) to improve its ideological political work among all other toiling people as well as students, youth, women,

intellectuals, etc , (b) to draw the best class conscious elements from the working people and revolutionary minded intellectuals into the Party, (c) to educate the new and re educate the old members and functionaries of the Party to enable them effectively to intervene in all the political, socio economic and cultural developments in the country, to turn them to reliable bases on which an all sided struggle against the ruling classes and their ideologues can be launched, etc

On the ability of the Party to discharge these tasks, Comrade E M S went on, depends the success of the very political tactical line evolved at this Party Congress. On it depends the Party's ability to play an effective role in building the unity of Left and democratic forces and mobilising all the anti authoritarian elements on a broad platform of defending democracy. For, the implementation of the political tactical line demands a several fold increase in the number of Party members, in the quality and quantity of the activities undertaken by Party units from top to bottom, in the amount of the educational literature produced in all the Indian languages by the Central and State Committees, etc. In other words, the political developments have made it both possible and necessary that the Party organisation proceeds to have an unprecedented expansion in its cadres, members, sympathisers and in their many sided activities.

Such an expansion, however, makes it necessary for the Party to pay attention to the problems of organisation. For, the organisation as it exists today is not capable of discharging the tasks of an ever expanding Party, leading mass struggles and intervening in the political life of the country on an increasingly larger scale.

The organisational outlook and the methods of work and styles of functioning of all Party members from the PB and CC to the lowest units have to be remodelled since they have been calculated to serve the needs of a relatively small party undertaking modest tasks. Every one of us has inherited certain organisational concepts and practices from the time when ours was a small party. Continuing on the same rails would far from helping, hinder the work of an ever expanding party.

Add to this the fact that increasingly large number of members who have, of late, come into the Party bring with them into it organisational concepts and practices of bourgeois and petty bourgeois political parties and their functioning. They have to be educated in the principles and practices of the revolutionary party of the working class with Marxism Leninism as its theoretical basis and the principles of inner Party democracy combined with the strict observance of the time tested norms and forms of Party organisation.

Comrade E M S pointed out that every one of the Party's activities—political agitation through various media, including production and distribution of Party literature, development of mass movements and struggles, organising Party education, raising Party finances, etc—has assumed much larger proportions because of the new fund of goodwill and support the Party has earned and may be expected to earn in the future.

The resolution moved by Comrade E M S said

"Putting the Party organisation on correct lines cannot be undertaken by the PB and CC alone. It should be considered the combined task of the State and Central leaderships of the Party. The Congress, therefore, directs the new PB and CC to convene a Special Plenum to discuss the problems of organisation before the end of 1978. The Plenum has to be properly prepared for. To this end,

"(a) The PB shall, within a month, prepare a questionnaire on the basis of which the State Committees can prepare reports giving the state of organisation, the specific problems connected thereto and the ways in which these problems are proposed to be tackled.

"(b) The PB shall study these State reports and prepare an organisational report for the Plenum which, after its approval with the necessary amendments by the CC, shall be sent to the State Committees.

"(c) The State Committees shall then send their views on this report to the Central leadership, so that a revised report can be presented to the Plenum.

"The PB and CC shall decide the quota of representation at the Plenum for the State Committees and all India fractions in mass organisations as well as the date, venue, etc , of the Plenum

"Meanwhile, it is essential that the Party uses the immense possibilities that have opened up to strengthen itself. The increased prestige and influence of the Party, the hundreds of new militants who have rallied to the party in the course of mass struggles and electoral battles, provide big opportunities to consolidate, strengthen and expand the Party. The State Committees are directed in the period between now and the Plenum to make utmost efforts to recruit these new militants in mass organisations and Auxiliary Groups depending on their level of consciousness and educate them so as to raise them from the present level of consciousness to the consciousness required to become full members of the Party as early as possible. Party units should give them all guidance in their day to day activities to develop united actions and movements and to integrate them with the work of the Party and the mass organisations led by it"

The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Congress

Comrade E M S then placed before the Congress the panel for the new Central Committee. In addition to the 27 members of the CC at present, the panel included the names of 17 new members. The Congress adopted the panel unanimously.

During the seven days of the delegates' session, the Congress adopted a number of resolutions, some of which are printed in this issue, the rest will appear in our next issue.

The new Central Committee met in the morning of the 8th and unanimously elected Comrade EMS as the General Secretary and a Polit Bureau of eleven.

Comrade Tapiala, on behalf of the Reception Committee, thanked the delegates for their co operation.

Comrade M Hanumantha Rao expressed the feelings of all the delegates when, on behalf of the Presidium, he thanked the Punjab State Committee for the excellent arrangements that had been made for the Congress—housing, food, etc , and specially the volunteers, most of them young militants.

The delegates' sessions came to an end with the singing of the *Internationale*

By the time the delegates came out of the Congress Hall, the main avenue of Jullundur City were already filled with people who had been pouring in from the surrounding rural areas. Innumerable demonstrations thronged the streets leading to the venue of the mass rally. It was one of the biggest rallies which the city had witnessed with a packed audience listening raptly to the leaders of the Party—Comrades E M S Namboodiripad, Jyoti Basu, B T Ranadive and Harkishan Singh Surjeet.

With that ended the historic Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), a Congress of achievements, a Congress of confidence.

Intelligence Steals Files of Tenth Congress*

Protest by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on April 12, 1978

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemns the methods used by the Central Intelligence agencies against political parties. The Congress Government was notorious for these methods. The Government has changed, but the Intelligence Branch carries on as before.

During the recent Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) in Jullundur a person was caught while stealing the file of a delegate. This person, who is said to be a sub-inspector in the Intelligence Branch, has been handed over to the police on a charge of committing theft.

Two persons riding a motor bike without number plates knocked down Comrade Ramanand Singh, delegate from Bihar, and snatched away his file. One of the two on the motor bike was one Dutta, Inspector of the Intelligence Branch based in Delhi.

We have verified these facts and want to know whether a political party cannot carry on its normal activities without interference by the Intelligence agencies and their attempts to steal our records, in the process even endangering the life of one of our comrades. We appeal to all democratic forces to raise their voice of protest and see that such atrocious methods by the Intelligence Branch against political parties are stopped forthwith.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, April 16, 1978

CPI-CPI(M) Joint Communiqué*

The representatives of the CPI and the CPI(M) met at the Central Office of the CPI(M) (on April 13, 1978). The participants were C. Rajeshwara Rao, N. K. Krishanan and M. N. Govindan Nair of the CPI and E. M. S. Namboodiripad, B. T. Ranadive, M. Basavapunniah, Harkishan Singh Surjeet and Samar Mukherjee of the CPI(M).

The two sides exchanged information on the political positions of their respective parties as they emerged out of the Bhatinda and Jullundur Congress of the two parties. It was found that, while there were undoubtedly differences on several issues, there was a large area of agreement on how the two parties can, along with other Left and democratic parties, organisations and groups, take up the burning issues affecting the people at large.

Trade Unions, Kisan Sabhas and other mass organisations, irrespective of their political affiliations and loyalties, can be brought together for common campaigns and the two parties will work in that direction.

Left and democratic parties and groups can also be mobilised in support of such mass campaigns as well as on some of the urgent political issues on which there is general agreement among such parties, organisations and groups. The two parties will explore all the possibilities of such joint actions without abandoning their respective political positions.

It was further decided that the representatives of the two parties will have frequent exchange of views in order that, while unity in action is developed, the two parties get a better understanding of each other's position and, if possible, narrow down their differences.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, April 16, 1978.

Repression in Pantnagar*

**Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Issued Statement
in New Delhi on April 15, 1978**

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) expresses grave concern at the reports regarding the repression unleashed by the authorities on the karamcharis of the Pantnagar Agricultural University. Even according to official sources, 21 persons were killed in firing while unofficial estimates are 51 killed and more than a hundred injured. The entire campus of the University has been turned into a police camp with no security for anybody living and desiring to work in the institution.

The provocation for all this was that the farm workers employed by the University decided to organise themselves, place before the authorities a charter of demands and demonstrate for them. The authorities refused to have any negotiations with the union and called in the police.

From preliminary reports received by the P B the firing and post firing repression has been unimaginable and is reminiscent of what used to happen like the Turkman Gate, Muzaffarnagar and similar incidents during the Emergency. The P B appeals to all democratic parties and organisations to protest against this.

The P B notes that in the U P Vidhan Sabha, the question was raised and protest was expressed not only by the Opposition but by Janata MLAs as well. It demands of the Janata Governments at the Centre and in the State immediately to put a stop to the sadistic practices that are now going on, bring the guilty to book, allow the farm workers to organise themselves and to enter into negotiations with them so that their legitimate demands are met.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, April 23, 1978

P.B.'s Protest Against Morarji's Stand*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on April 18, 1978

Prime Minister Morarji Desai's statement in the Lok Sabha on April 17 on the U S nuclear fuelled power pack on the heights of Nanda Devi is an unashamed defence of the Government of India's collaboration with the U S imperialists to locate this spy device on the soil of India

This spy device, no doubt, was directed against China, and the Soviet Union and other neighbouring countries. There can never be any justification for the Government of India which claims to stand for peace, national independence and non alignment to have entered into any collaboration with U S imperialism for spying against the Socialist countries. What is even more condemnable is that this collaboration was with U S imperialism which ever since the early fifties has stood against India at all crucial moments, while building different military alliances like SEATO and CENTO to bully India.

Morarji Desai justifies the whole episode as in national interests. Is it in our national interests to allow U S imperialism which organises coups in various parts of the world, plots the assassinations of popular leaders, to use Indian soil for its spying activities, for facilitating its policy of creating tension and committing aggression?

It is shocking that although the Government of India was a party to the installation of the device which creates dangerous

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, April 23, 1978

health hazards to the people of the country, the people of India had to come to know about it from revelations in the U S Press

All those who are responsible for this infamous collaboration with the U S imperialists should have been roundly condemned by the Prime Minister instead of justifying their treacherous deal and providing an alibi to the U S imperialists and their conspiracies on Indian soil

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) calls on the democratic forces to express their grave concern and strong protest to the Prime Minister that he is out of tune with what the Indian people stand for, namely, that it is a crime to allow Indian territory to be used for the spying activities of U S with its deadly nuclear devices

The P B of the CPI(M) calls upon the Central Government and the Prime Minister to openly denounce the agreement of 1964 66 between the U S and the Indian Government, and repudiate all such agreements, if any, with whichever country the Government of India has made them

It demands that the Government shed all complacency about the health hazard as shown by Morarji's statement on the subject and do everything possible and necessary to locate the device and destroy it safely

Recent Developments Cause Concern*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), after its meeting in New Delhi on April 9 11 1978, issued the following statement to the Press

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its profound sense of concern and alarm at recent political developments

The forces of dictatorship represented by Indira Gandhi are securing a new cohesiveness and boldness and are able to exploit the acute discontent of the people arising from the many failures of Central and State Governments of the Janata Party. So acute is the economic distress, that the Indira Congress does not find it necessary to repudiate the Emergency, and pledge full loyalty to democratic principles to gain access to the minds of the people. It refuses to accept the sovereign right of the people regarding constitutional changes, refuses to put the fundamental rights of the people beyond the power of parliamentary majority and is determined to obstruct all attempts to dismantle the 42nd Amendment Act. It wants to declare Parliament to be overlord of the people in the name of its sovereignty to grab all power for the Executive as it did during the Emergency.

The brutal firings on industrial and agricultural workers, the monstrous atrocities on Harijans, the arrogant and unscrupulous justification by Janata Chief Ministers of these misdeeds and finally the failure on the price front, all have supplied readymade ammunition to Indira Gandhi.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, May 14, 1978

The results of the Azamgarh Lok Sabha by election and the two Assembly by elections in UP constitute fresh signs of the electorate swinging away from the Janata towards the Indira Congress. Their importance lies in the fact that Indira Gandhi has now secured successes in what was the heartland of Janata influence and victory.

All progressive forces, peoples from all walks of life and democratic and radical elements from all political parties must now combine their strength to resist the march of the authoritarian forces and rouse the country to the creeping danger. They should vigorously work for the implementation of democratic reforms which would bar the way to one party dictatorial rule. These include removal of provision for preventive detention from the Constitution, curtailment of the Emergency powers of the President and his powers to intervene in matters affecting the States, complete dismantling of the 42nd Amendment Act, right to recall, proportional representation and putting the fundamental rights beyond the mischief of Parliament or the ruling party, removal of property right from the list of fundamental rights and autonomy and widening of financial powers for the States.

All progressive and democratic elements must expose the claims of Indira Gandhi to speak on behalf of the people and unmask the anti democratic character of her platform. The wider the mobilisation the greater the chance of checkmating the progress of authoritarian forces.

Pathetic Complacency

Instead of actively counteracting the menacing situation, the leaders of the ruling party display pathetic complacency, and seem to be totally unaware of the rapid loss of their credibility and influence.

Every State, every Ministry is plagued with division. Removal of Chief Ministers or change of Ministers is demanded, with the ad hoc Presidents expelling the General Secretaries. Group politics is on the rampage and it makes unscrupulous use of caste appeal to remain in power.

It will be, however, wrong to ascribe the inner crisis of the Janata Party exclusively to unprincipled group fighting. To a certain extent it represents a conflict between the conservative and radical elements, the latter realising that ministerial policies are isolating the party from the people.

It is well known that the Janata State Ministries are monopolised by the Jana Sangh-BLD combination. The attempt of this combination to dominate the Central and State Ministries, and the party organisation, and its unabashed use of its position to distribute patronage to its own followers and the separate and independent functioning of the RSS as its organised arm to achieve these aims constitute the main cause of the inner crisis.

The other constituents are compelled to resist these efforts to capture the organisation and in the course of it expose the obscurantist, communal ideology of the RSS and advocate secularism.

Protest from Radicals

At the same time protest against the policies of the leadership intensifies the inner crisis. They come from radical and progressive elements who protest on the floor of the Assembly and Parliament against the atrocities on Harijans, on police firings, on concessions to capitalists against workers. The defeat of the proposed preventive detention measure was one of the achievements of this radical pressure. These elemental protests have yet to secure cohesiveness of purpose and organised strength.

The crisis has paralysed the Janata Party's capacity to checkmate the rising challenge from Indira Gandhi. It has undermined its grip over the administration, lowering its prestige among the people.

The Political Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) warned, "The bourgeois landlord parties are unable to maintain their unity and are riven by dissensions." "The Janata Party is no exception. The wrangling in election, the manipulation for places in the Ministry, the struggle for tickets and open appeal to former loyalties—all are the first symptoms of the disease.

The CPI(M) sympathises with the democratic elements in the Janata Party and supports their protests against reactionary policies. Their efforts will bear fruit if they growingly join hands and support the broad protest movement of the masses against economic misery and help the Left and democratic forces to organise it, if they take an active hand in helping the mobilisation of all forces ready to fight the advancing tide of authoritarianism.

The reactionary and callous policies pursued by the Janata Governments are directly responsible for the resurrection of the forces of authoritarianism and their challenging mood.

Feeling of Revulsion

The brutal firings in Pantnagar and Bailadilla which were not isolated instances, the gruesome happenings in Agra where Harijans were hunted out, the continuous tale of atrocities against Harijans in the villages which increase with every verbal assurance in Parliament and Assemblies, the daily firings on industrial workers, and the insecurity and terror felt by the minority community have resulted in the rapid erosion of the Janata vote. The callous justification of the misdeeds of Chief Ministers and others and slandering of the victims of repression have created a feeling of revulsion among the very sections who actively helped the Janata to get into seats of power.

The performance of Janata Party leaders and Government on the economic front is no more creditable. The price front vitally affects the daily lives of India's teeming millions. Notwithstanding relaxation in prices of wheat and rice, all the major items of daily consumption continue to remain beyond the reach of the people. There is no real relief from the high prices of the inflationary years notwithstanding some minimal fall here and there. On the other hand prices of some items like pulses and oil have reached inordinate heights.

Plan Draft—Anti Climax

The draft of the Sixth Five Year Plan constitutes an anti climax to the tall claims made by the Janata Party in its election manifesto and its strong criticism of Congress policies.

Its bias is the unwillingness to touch the vested interests and introduce any institutional changes in the interest of the common man

Imprisoned within this framework the planners are unable to look beyond a low annual growth rate of 4.7 per cent which means the actual growth rate achieved will be still lower. Spurious arguments are advanced to present this low target as a deliberate choice to secure distribution further to the people. There is no instance in the world where people have succeeded in making a dent against poverty with such slow growth rate. The Planning Commission however makes fantastic claims that with an annual growth rate of 4.7 per cent it will be in a position to provide thirty million jobs for new labour entrants in the five year period as well as to clear the backlog of unemployment to a great extent—the backlog being twenty million at the lowest.

The increased expenditure in rural areas which under conditions of institutional change and eradication of land monopoly would have benefited the mass of peasantry and agricultural workers is going to be a windfall for the landed gentry. The Planning Commission quotes the Reserve Bank Report that the top ten per cent of the rural population own more than half the total assets including land. Unless this reality is changed, claims to distribute justice are meaningless. But the Commission has no such idea.

Working Class Ignored

In consonance with the Government policy, it relies only on the distribution of surplus land available under the Congress legislations. For financing the Plan the Commission relies on commodity taxation which includes taxation of necessities of life. Ten per cent of the financial requirements of the public sector come from foreign aid loans increasing our country's dependence on the World Bank and its constituents.

In this document of nearly three hundred pages there are hardly two pages devoted to the working class and its role. It is the most astonishing performance for a body which calls for the

involvement of the people in fulfilling the plan objectives. The Commission also relies on increased returns from public sector undertakings as an important source for financing the Plan. It thinks this can be achieved without involving the workers, without their cooperation and participation. There is no mention of increased wages, bonus, adequate DA and certainly no reference to need based wage as a time bound programme. All the promises given in the Janata Party's manifesto stand repudiated. Behind this lies the outlook which treats the working class a privileged class. In practice it is accompanied by attacks on the freedom of the trade union movement.

As if all this is not enough, no effort was made to discuss the final draft with States and involve them in shaping it. Assurances were given that there would be discussions on additional financial resources for the States and the National Development Council would be consulted for giving final shape to the Plan. The promise was not kept. The Plan as it stands can only be described as a Central Plan and not a National Plan.

The proposed Industrial Relations Bill constitutes a flagrant attack on trade union rights unworthy of a party committed to democratic norms. It is sheer hypocrisy for the Janata Party leaders to solemnly promise democratic changes in the Constitution and meanwhile extinguish rights already existing. The Bill is intended to sanction Government formed unions, deny the right of recognition through secret ballot and virtually ban strikes. The Janata Party will earn the hostility in industrial cities with the introduction of this black legislation. It is surrender before big capitalists and foreign monopolists though the Ministers regale the Lok Sabha off and on with anti capitalist sallies.

Centre State Relations

The question of Centre State relations has become an important issue connected with the advance of democracy and the strengthening of the unity of our country. Immense concentration of power at the Centre took place during the last three decades

especially during the Emergency. The demand for dialogue is now supported by several State Ministries and wide sections of public opinion.

The leaders of the Janata Party are unable to see the democratic character of the issues involved, oppose greater powers to the States and bring grist to the mills of dictatorship. They alienate public opinion in the States and expose their promise of decentralisation of political power as a verbal stunt and nothing more.

During the course of a discussion on the question in the Rajya Sabha Mr. Desai not only made disparaging remarks about smaller States but proudly proclaimed that he was opposed to reorganisation of States, i.e., he stood for the continuation of the British made provinces. With this reactionary outlook, all talk of defending Indian unity is futile.

Equally dangerous and shocking is the stand taken by the Prime Minister on the question of planting of a nuclear spying device in the Himalayas, with the aid of the U.S. imperialists and the CIA.

This act of anti-national treachery was planned and completed under the Congress Governments. Instead of denouncing it and exposing before the people the betrayal involved in it, Mr. Desai justifies it as being in national interests—presumably because he also was a party to this dirty deal.

Further, to screen the enormity of the crime, he holds out utterly false assurances that there is no danger of radiation, when in reality the lives and health of millions living along the Ganges are in danger. Through such wordy flourishes Morarji intends to convey that it is not urgent to trace and remove the device. The CPI(M) warns the people against these false assurances and demands that the entire force of scientists and other resources should be fully used to locate the device and free the country from the danger of radiation.

Mr. Morarji Desai compromised the country's interests by unilaterally declaring that India would not explode an atomic device for peaceful purpose. This was surrender under U.S. blackmail.

In exchange Mr Desai did not get uranium for Tarapore but only insult from Carter when he visited India. Now Carter has sanctioned the export of uranium but the U S administration is blocking it. Though Mr Desai has rejected the demand for international supervision, yet his uncalled for and repeated reference to end all peaceful explosions compromises national prestige. Unless public opinion is vigilant sacrifice of national interests may occur again.

The CPI(M) calls on the people to realise that the forces of authoritarianism and dictatorship are unable to make headway where the Left and democratic forces are strong and able to rally the masses behind them. In West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, the demagogy of the Indira Congress finds little response, though in West Bengal, P C Sen, the Janata President, is not averse to strike a deal with the Congress(I) against the Left alliance Ministry. This disgraceful opportunism is rightly condemned by other Janata leaders.

Today, the main menace arises from the Indira Congress. The official Congress will lose all credibility if it does not strike out on an Independent path, break its alliance with the Congress(I) in Maharashtra and, above all, repudiate the entire heritage of the Emergency and show its willingness to repair the damage done to the Constitution. The continued menace can be countered only by steady and rapid growth of the Left and democratic forces with their championship of the economic interests of the masses and constant fight for democracy. The West Bengal Ministry by its performance in the midst of a difficult situation has given fresh strength to the struggle for the unity of Left and democratic forces.

The CPI(M) calls on all Party units to work for the strengthening and uniting of the Left and democratic forces. The important lever today is united struggles of the masses for better living conditions against the exploitation of landlords, monopolists and others. The united strength of the peasants, workers, students, employees, of women for their rights, of the people against price rise—these alone will forge unity and save the masses from falling victims to Indira demagogy. Every effort

should be made to see that these struggle involve the mass organisations of all parties and are not utilised for sectarian ends but are linked with the defence of democracy to bar the return of Emergency conditions

There is no other force that can successfully do this task. The CPI(M) calls upon the Left and democratic elements in all parties to come into the arena to defeat the growing challenge of dictatorship, hasten the process of democratic reforms under discussion in Parliament and overcome the vacillations and half heartedness of the Janata Party leaders in this connection. It especially appeals to the radical elements in the Janata to uphold the banner of loyalty to the people and prevent the present drift of their leadership.

The CPI(M) urgently appeals to the leadership of the CPI to change its line and contribute its strength to develop the unity of the Left and democratic forces. The CPI(M) warns the CPI leaders against slipping into an indirect alliance with the Indira Gandhi Congress through a wrong estimate of the political situation and misdirecting their fire in the wrong direction. Its ministerial coalition in Kerala with the official Congress which is in alliance with the Congress(I) in Maharashtra disrupts the unity of the Left and democratic forces as in the past.

Central Committee's Greetings to the People of West Bengal and Tripura*

Resolution Adopted in its Meeting Held
in New Delhi On June 10 14, 1978

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) warmly greets and congratulates the people of West Bengal and Tripura for the sweeping victory of the Left and democratic forces headed by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in the recent Panchayat elections. The election results prove that the rural masses have expressed greater confidence in the Left Front Governments and rallied on a bigger scale behind them since the last Assembly elections despite vigorous slander campaigns, communal propaganda and disruptive activities to discredit the two Left Governments by the two Congresses, dominant sections of the State Janata Party and various other reactionary forces.

This is for the first time the Panchayat elections were held on party symbols and they developed into a big fight against the rural vested interests by the rural poor supported by the broad democratic masses on the basis of Left programmes.

The massive election in 56,000 seats in West Bengal has been held in a thoroughly democratic manner as also the election in 7200 seats in Tripura.

In contrast to other States where recent by elections have shown an advance of the Indira Gandhi Congress, the Panchayat elections in West Bengal and Tripura have resulted in the defeat of these forces as also the forces of disruption led by Janata Party leaders like P C Sen. This is due to the strength of the Left and democratic forces in these two States and the policies pursued by the two Left Front Governments. The results have tremendously strengthened the Left and democratic forces and pointed out the path of a new alternative to the whole country.

The Central Committee hopes that the victories won would be further consolidated and their lessons carried to other States.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, June 18, 1978

Statement on Current Situation*

Issued by the Central Committee of CPI(M)

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in New Delhi from June 10 to 14, 1978 and took a number of decisions

In pursuance of the mandate given by the Party Congress, the Committee decided to convene an organisational Plenum in West Bengal in December this year. Two hundred and fifty delegates including the members of the Central Committee will participate in the Plenum. The Committee finalised the Review Report in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Congress and elected a number of committees to guide the work of mass organisations.

The Central Committee reviewed the national and international developments of the last two months.

Africa

The Committee denounced the French invasion of Zaire in the name of protecting the European citizens from the forces waging a liberation struggle against the hated rule of Mobutu—the murderer of Lumumba. The shameless aggression and the excuse of protecting White people both recall the methods of open imperialist expansion and aggression of the 19th century. There is no facade, no fig leaf.

The new phase of wanton invasion in Africa inspired by the US imperialists shows that imperialism is now bold enough to launch a counter offensive, undeterred by the forces of peace or the desire of world peoples for peace and freedom. This menacing

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, June 18, 1978

and dangerous development exposes the thoroughly unrealistic and illusory character of the hopes about an irreversible detente raised by certain revisionist leaders

The Central Committee further expressed its sense of shock and sorrow that in this new development when all the forces of democracy and Socialism should stand together to resist the imperialist offensive, People's China is lending its support to the French and other West European imperialist States in their colonial adventures in Africa under the absurd plea that it is opposing the Soviet conquest of Africa. There is nothing more reactionary than supporting the American thesis of Soviet Cuban intervention in Zaire. It is the usual trick of the imperialists to denounce every liberation struggle as foreign inspired and help the enslavers. But this is the logical result of the Three Worlds concept of the CPC which finds in the second world of Anglo French German imperialism a friend and ally of the Third World of developing countries.

The decision of the five big NATO States to set up an African Task Force and spend 110 billion dollars in the coming ten years to sustain it, constitute an open and shameless preparation to reconquer Africa with the aid of puppets like Mobutu. This constitutes a warning to freedom loving peoples of all countries and calls for worldwide protests against this resurrection of old colonialism.

Instead of strengthening detente, the U S imperialists have scuttled it, they have embarked upon a new arms race, have virtually stalled the second stage of the SALT talks and have shown scant respect for the Special Disarmament Session of the U N. In fact, they have used the intervening period since the signing of the earlier agreement for preparing and strengthening their plans of colonial aggression.

The Central Committee hailed the victory of the democratic forces in Afghanistan and is confident that the People's Democratic Party will consolidate its rule despite the slanders and conspiracies of international reactionaries. The C C at the same time denounces the authoritarian and military regimes of Iran, Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh which are suppressing the people of those countries.

The trend towards dictatorship in a number of developing countries and rise of military dictatorship in the two neighbouring countries constitute a serious warning to our own people who liberated themselves from authoritarian rule only a year ago. The vigilant democratic movement in our country must render every help to those now under the jackboot of military rule.

Vietnam

The Central Committee expresses its deep sense of sorrow and concern at armed conflicts between Vietnam and Kampuchea. The C C fully supports the proposals put forward by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to settle the issue peacefully.

The C C is similarly concerned at the strained relations between the People's Republic of China and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The C C earnestly hopes that the dispute will be peacefully settled in a spirit of friendship free from all pressurisation. After three decades of continuous warfare against imperialism, the people of Vietnam badly need peace to be able to devote themselves to the building of Socialism in their country. The C C considers that it is the internationalist responsibility of all Socialist forces to ensure this for the people of Vietnam.

The Central Committee hails the results of the Panchayat elections in West Bengal and Tripura. The magnificent victory of the CPI(M) and the Left alliances in these grassroots elections which shake up the entire mass of peasantry constitutes a big triumph of India's Left and democratic forces engaged in bitter battle against the forces of dictatorship led by Mrs. Gandhi. In contrast to the steady and even spectacular advance of the Congress (I) in other States at the expense of the Janata Party, West Bengal and Tripura show consolidation and strengthening of the Left and democratic forces. The victory is all the more significant because the Congress(I) in West Bengal was aided by a section of the Janata Party led by P C Sen. The democratic policies of the Left alliance Ministry headed by our Party have successfully rebuffed the advance of Indira forces, showing the way to the consolidation of Left and democratic forces. This stands in sharp contrast to the developments in several Janata ruled States

where firings on striking workers, atrocities against Harijans and oppression of the Muslim minority offer a readymade weapon for the authoritarian forces to exploit

Janata Govt.'s Policies

The Central Committee warns the people that the Janata Party is proving unable to meet the challenge of the authoritarian forces which are already well entrenched in the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, and the three States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. Encouraged by the growing estrangement of the Janata from the people these forces have launched a counter offensive in defence of the Emergency and are unfolding an open platform for dictatorship. The breach of electoral promises and the repressive policies in relation to strikes and other mass actions, students' struggles, make a large section of people susceptible to the anti Janata denunciations of Indira Gandhi enhancing the danger of authoritarian rule.

But the leadership of the Janata Government is determined to pursue this course in pursuit of the narrow class interests of the landlords and capitalists. The recommendations of the Bhoothalingam Committee and the new Industrial Relations Bill constitute new weapons of offensive against the urban and rural masses. Those who parade their rural orientation as a new found salvation organise massacres of rural population as in Pantnagar without any qualms of conscience. The U P Ministry has no less than 42 firings to its credit in the course of a year.

The callous attitude of the Government can be seen on the question of prices of agricultural produce. Prices of commodities like sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, jute, etc., have fallen sharply and the peasantry has been caught in the vortex of an intense agrarian crisis. They are living in conditions of starvation at a time of bumper harvests. All this despite the incessant talk of the Janata Government about rural orientation and rural development.

The Janata Party Government is extending open invitations to multinational corporations and is promising them the same status and treatment as national concerns.

On the question of language also, despite repeated protests, efforts are on by the Janata Government to impose Hindi as the sole official language. This has created not only a lot of dissatisfaction among the non Hindi speaking people but is also undermining the sense of national unity.

Congress Governments

The three Congress Ministries have not learnt anything from recent developments. In Maharashtra, the Congress(I) is in open alliance with the fascist Shiv Sena in which the U.S. Embassy at one time took a lot of interest. Under the Patil Ministry, gangsterism of the worst type has been let loose against certain trade unions. Neither relief nor effective steps against closures of factories are in evidence and in spite of the tall talk about protecting the tribals, they continue to be deprived of land under the Coalition Ministry. The Congress(I) Ministry in Andhra Pradesh, apart from pursuing its usual anti people policies, is determined to compound its crimes by giving a quietus to the Bhargava Commission enquiring into the murders of Naxalities by reducing the Commission to a farce by ordering conduct of its proceedings in camera. The Janata Government at the Centre cannot permit the attempt to cover up the crimes of the Emergency period and must ensure that the Bhargava Commission carries on its proceedings in full gaze of the public.

The Swaran Singh Congress, though rapidly losing to the Indira Congress, is yet unable to take a forthright position on the issue of Emergency and demarcate itself completely from the Congress (I). On the other hand, quite a substantial section is seeking merger with the Indira Congress and under its pressure the party has been forced to enter into a coalition in Maharashtra with the Congress(I). While to some extent demarcating itself from the Congress(I) on the question of proposals for constitutional reforms, the party does not wish to support the demand for the punishment of the caucus found guilty by the Shah Commission and even to strike a different path on the issue of economic policies. Its Ministers both in Kerala and Maharashtra pursue the traditional anti people policies of the Congress. However, it is a fact that

there are other elements in the party who are forthright in their denunciation of the Emergency rule and support the demands of democratic advance

Performance in Kerala

The dismal performance of the Congress CPI Ministry in Kerala is there for all to see. The coalition has done everything to cover up the crimes of the Emergency period under the Chief Ministership of Sri Achutha Menon. It has not yet published the report of the Viswanath Iyer Commission investigating some of these crimes. The NGOs victimised during the Emergency are not restored to their jobs. Trade union rights are attacked, strikers are beaten in police lock ups. University professors and teachers are to be penalised by the forfeiture of 60 days' salary if they fail to go in for invigilation for a single day.

And now the electricity workers' strike is being suppressed with the arrests of hundreds of workers, and the Government is contemplating an Ordinance to ban the strike. It is known that the other constituents of the coalition are for settling the strike and the CPI alone is standing against it. The CPI Electricity Minister like a capitalist employer demands the withdrawal of the strike before negotiations.

The CPI complicity in the repressive measures of the Kerala Ministry goes ill with their advocacy of the unity of Left and democratic forces and discredits their claims to work for it.

Despite the misdeeds of the Congress Ministries, the Congress (I) appeals to the masses, is active among them and is exploiting every failure of the Janata Party. In contrast the Janata Party has lost its initiative among the masses, does not bring them into the field to combat the propaganda of the authoritarian forces. It has abandoned all responsibility to cultivate the masses and relies solely on the bureaucracy to meet the challenge of Indira Gandhi. It has till now failed to use the exposures before the Shah Commission to bring Indira Gandhi and her caucus to book.

Wranglings in Ruling Party

The big bourgeois Press has started giving wide publicity to the former Prime Minister and her son

Besides, the Janata Party is rapidly losing whatever cohesion it had developed during the electoral battle. The wranglings and conflicts which were confined to the Legislatures and lower ranks have now invaded the topmost leaders of the party. Charan Singh has resigned from the Parliamentary Board of the party. Raj Narain is demanding removal of the President. Jagjivan Ram and Charan Singh are at daggers drawn. This is the unedifying spectacle of a party entrusted by the people to dismantle the Emergency dictatorship and restore democratic norms.

Our Party had always stressed that the radical and democratic elements in the Janata Party will soon awaken from the stupor of victory and examine their colleagues and companions. Our Party expected these elements to take a democratic stand and defend the people against the erroneous policies of their party leadership and the reactionary ideologies of some of its constituents. That process has started. The resistance to the blatant attempts at domination by the RSS-BLD wing, the strong attacks against communal outlook and the defence of secular outlook are welcome developments.

The resistance is further seen in connection with the defence of people's interests and democratic rights. The angry protests from several Janata MPs and MLAs against the continued atrocities against Harijans and above all, the participation of Janata mass organisations in united mass actions and strikes in defence of the economic interests of the masses show that the democratic elements are actively intervening in the situation.

Growing Urge For Unity

The Central Committee warmly welcomes the growing urge for unity among the employees and workers, which is bringing several mass organisations together. Such united actions and strike not only defend the interests of the common man, but also give rise to an alternative force for the masses to rally and prevent the trek to Indira's banner. Today, this urge is rapidly growing.

The new Industrial Relations Bill, the Bhoothalingam Committee, the wage freeze and denial of bonus, the repression of strikes and assaults on trade union rights together with the political demands adopted by the September Convention of Central Trade Unions constitute the biggest rallying point for the working class and the democratic forces. Agitation and movement on this basis offers the way out of the present situation in which we have to fight the policies of the Janata Government and at the same time bar the advance of Indira Gandhi.

The Central Committee warns that angered by the economic policies of the Janata and indignant over its repressive policies, several organisations may forget the danger of Indira Gandhi and delink the economic struggles from the political struggle against the forces of dictatorship. Objectively this is the line which the CPI leaders seek to pursue in the name of united mass actions and Left and democratic alliance.

The Central Committee warmly welcomes the proposed united actions of public sector workers in which all Central Trade Unions are participating. This united action, though confined to immediate demands, will strengthen the unity of the workers. The Committee wishes them success in their united action on June 28.

The Shah Commission has found Indira Gandhi guilty of the crime of subverting the Constitution. The declaration of the Emergency had no sanction from the Constitution. Under cover of the Emergency, she had misused her powers to subvert lawful processes and well established conventions to make appointments of people loyal to her, to transfer judges, to harass and even detain officials who did their duty, to use the income tax department to harass those who were not pliable and for the demolition operations in Delhi and the brutal massacre in the Turkman Gate area in Delhi.

Bring Indira To Trial

The Central Committee calls upon all democratic forces to press the Janata Government to overcome its vacillations and bring Indira Gandhi and her caucus to trial for the innumerable crimes against the people.

The struggle against dictatorship demands that the criminals should be brought to trial. All democratic elements from all parties must raise the demand and compel the vacillating Government to take the bold step and back it by mass support. There should be no cowering down before the threat of civil war uttered by Indira Gandhi's spokesmen.

Foreign Policy Trends

The Central Committee warns the people against the recent trends in Janata Party foreign policy which must cause concern.

When a concerted offensive is there on the part of the imperialists to support the racist regimes of Vorster in South Africa and Smith's Rhodesia and to violently suppress the militant national liberation movements in Africa, the leadership of the Janata Government is found wobbling and compromising. Prime Minister Morarji Desai and Foreign Minister Vajpayee have either chosen to observe silence for a week after the French invasion of Zaire or to make equivocal statements to the effect that the French and the NATO powers were only reacting to the alleged actions of the Cubans and Russians.

Similarly, the indecent haste with which Mr Vajpayee had rushed to Teheran to pacify the agitated Shah over the developments in Afghanistan, to be followed by the Prime Minister's stop over in Teheran for a talk with the Shah and Shahbano of Iran, reveal the pliant nature of the Janata Government which is clamouring for the Shah's aid to the Rajasthan Canal and the like, and is afraid of offending His Majesty's susceptibilities.

The visit of Sri Morarji Desai to the USA therefore must be watched. By unilaterally giving up atomic explosions for peaceful purposes, Sri Morarji has only made an anti-national concession and compromised the nation's honour. The people will not tolerate any further concession to American blackmail.

The Central Committee warns the people that the political situation is full of perils and can be fought only by a growing consolidation of Left and democratic forces. Our Party will do everything to promote such consolidation.

The Central Committee finds that the CPI leadership is backsliding on its earlier declarations and is intent on screening the danger arising from the recent election victories of Indira Gandhi, who openly unfolds a platform in support of one party dictatorship

The earlier criticism of the Emergency and Indira Gandhi is now muted and mass actions, united actions are advocated, evading all mention of the danger of dictatorship

It seems that the sharp criticism of Indira Gandhi at Bhatinda was only a concession made to the mood of the delegates. The refusal of the party leadership and its units to support the demand for the trial of Indira Gandhi makes it quite clear

The policy pursued by the CPI leaders undermines and sabotages the building of a Left and democratic front. It is for the ranks of the CPI to see this and fight for a change in the party line

Our Party again appeals to all democratic forces to rally round a broad platform to defend democracy, to defend civil liberties and effect constitutional reforms to prevent the repetition of dictatorship. The complete rescinding of the 42nd Amendment Act, abolition of Emergency powers, basic changes in the Constitution to be effective only after a popular referendum, withdrawal of MISA, abolition of RAW, placing fundamental rights beyond the mischief of any political party, right to recall and proportional representation—these constitute the main demands of the platform. Realisation of these demands will help in preventing a repetition of the Emergency period

Dismiss Pantnagar V.C.*

**Resolution Adopted by The Central Committee
of CPI(M) in its New Delhi Session on
June 10 14, 1978**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) severely condemns the U P Government as well as the Central Government for the continuing tension and serious situation prevailing in Pantnagar University

After the brutal massacre of the University workers on April 13, an incident reminiscent of the atrocities committed by the Emergency regime in Turkman Gate, Muzaffarnagar and other places, the State and Central Governments refused to concede the universal demand for the immediate dismissal of the Vice Chancellor

The Central Committee notes that the present situation has been created in the University by the return of the Vice Chancellor to the campus with a private army of goondas to terrorise the workers, students and teachers. The continuing refusal of the Government to negotiate their demands with the workers has added to the tension

The Central Committee demands that the Government immediately restore normalcy in the University by dismissing the Vice Chancellor and arraigning him for his complicity in the April 13 massacre, withdrawing all police forces from the campus and negotiating and settling the demands of the workers

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, June 25, 1978

Rupees Five Lakh Central Fund for CPI(M)*

**Central Committee's Appeal Pursuant to
Decision Taken in its Meeting held in
New Delhi on June 10 14, 1978**

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) appeals to all those who are interested in forging the unity of all Left and democratic forces in the country against authoritarianism and in defence of the interests of the working people to contribute liberally to the Rupees five lakh Central Fund of the CPI(M)

The fund is needed for a year's work for further strengthening the all India Centre of the Party and to expand its activities to such States and regions as are in need of a well organised CPI(M) as an integral part of the emerging united front of Left and democratic forces in the country

The Central Committee claims with a certain amount of pride that the CPI(M) has been the most consistent party that has been working for the unity of all Left and democratic forces in the country against the Congress authoritarianism and in defence of the interests of the working people That was why, in the very first general election that took place after the undivided CPI got split, the only two Leftist led non Congress Governments—those of Kerala and West Bengal—were headed by the CPI(M)

That is also why the first large scale attack of authoritarianism came to be directed against the CPI(M) led united front of West Bengal The semi fascist terror established in that State in 1970 71 was the beginning of the drive towards authoritarianism which culminated in the 21 month long Emergency

The C C recalls with pride the sufferings undergone by the Party members, sympathisers and friends of the CPI(M) in West Bengal and though to a lesser extent, in Kerala, Tripura and some

other parts of the country. The murder of 1100 comrades in West Bengal and 300 in Kerala, together with arrests, tortures and even murders in the other States was the price which the CPI(M) had to pay for its uncompromising attitude towards the authoritarian Congress regime, its firm and determined defence of the interests of the mass of the working people.

Tens of thousands of Party members, sympathisers and friends of the Party all over the country could go through this ordeal because they were rallied under a party which based itself firmly on Marxism Leninism and proletarian internationalism. Inheriting the glorious traditions of the international Communist movement, extending over nearly thirteen decades as well as the glorious revolutionary movement in our own country, the CPI(M) has been trying to apply to the concrete conditions of India, the universally valid principles of Marxism Leninism, proletarian internationalism and genuine patriotism. The Party never flinched in the face of repression unleashed by the Government or goondaism organised by the political opponents but boldly defended every Socialist country and the Communist movement in capitalist countries. It however refused to bow to the dictates of any fraternal Party in studying the national and international problems.

We are humble enough to be aware that we have at times slipped here and there, committed mistakes in applying the basic principles of Marxism Leninism to the concrete conditions of India. But, as true Marxist Leninists, we have always tried to make a self critical review of our policies and practices, never hesitating to own up mistakes and rectifying them.

We may however make the humble claim that, despite the mistakes committed here or there, some time or other, we have pursued a by and large correct policy—the policy of allying with any party, organisation or individual who defends democracy, even while demarcating ourselves from the parties and organisations representing the petty bourgeois, bourgeois, feudal or any other non proletarian classes.

A quick look back into the fourteen years of the separate existence of the CPI(M) and the CPI as well as the decade that

has passed since the various Naxalite groups broke away from the CPI(M) would convince anybody that the policies adopted by the CPI and the Naxalite groups are detrimental to the cause of the working class and all other sections of the working people, while the CPI(M) has pursued policies which are by and large correct. That is why, after several years of the separate existence of the groups which at one time had been part of the undivided Communist movement, the CPI(M) has been acknowledged as the genuine representative of India's Communist movement.

The C C is conscious of the additional responsibility which this has thrown on the shoulders of the CPI(M) and desires to assure everyone concerned that we will do our utmost to use the confidence placed by the people on us to further cement the unity of all the Left and democratic forces in the country.

It is obvious that this obliges us to carry on a consistent, principled struggle against the policies pursued by the CPI, the Naxalite groups and various other parties and organisations which have traditionally been known to be of a Leftist complexion. While positively noting the changes that have taken place in the policies and attitudes of these parties, the CPI(M) cannot but regret that the CPI has still to go a long way in liquidating the legacies of the policy of collaboration with the Congress which they have been pursuing for over a decade and a half.

The Naxalite groups, too, have of late been obliged to abandon many of the premises on which they had broken with the CPI(M) and formed their own groups. But they have yet to adopt the correct line of building the unity of the mass of the working people on the basis of a correct application of Marxism Leninism.

Many other Left and democratic parties have their moorings either in Rightwing Social Democracy or petty bourgeois "Leftism." The CPI(M) will, therefore, have to enter into a constant frank and fraternal dialogue with all these Left and democratic parties, so that the united front that is sought to be built will be on the basis of sound principles.

Such a firm ideological struggle with other Left and democratic parties, organisations and groups is not in contradiction to but will supplement the serious efforts at extending the area of cooperation between the CPI(M) and all other Left and democratic forces in the country. For, the unity of the Left and democratic forces, about which everybody speaks and the correctness of which everybody accepts, is a matter of continuous struggle between different points of view, different approaches to the problems—national and international, economic and political in solving which the Left and democratic forces have to come together.

We hold that, just as we have to criticise the positions adopted by other parties and organisations, so will they criticise ours. Let us assure them all that we will be as willing to learn from their criticisms as we hope that they will be to learn from our criticisms. Only such a process of mutual exchange of views, mutual criticism will lay the solid and sound basis on which the Left and democratic forces can unite and provide a viable radical alternative to the Congress, the Janata and other parties of the bourgeois landlord classes.

The growth and strengthening of the Left and democratic forces in our country thus demands that the CPI(M) grows much stronger and extends its influence much more extensively than ever before. The fact that the organisation of the CPI(M) is today confined more or less to a few pockets like Tripura, West Bengal and Kerala, and a few areas in other States, is a big obstacle in the defence and consolidation of the Left and democratic forces in the country as a whole. A much more efficient all India Centre of the Party, a much more effective central organ of the Party, an extensive organisation for the production and distribution of pamphlets, booklets and other publications explaining the viewpoint of the CPI(M) on a number of immediate and fundamental issues—all this is necessary if the by and large correct policy of the CPI(M) is to become an instrument of political action.

Improvement in the quality of work turned out by Party MPs, Party leaders working in the various organisations, Party

members and friends who are capable of carrying on the battle of ideas against obscurantist and decadent forms of culture fostered by the ruling classes—this is another field of activity in which the Party Centre has to engage itself

Above all, the agitational, propagandist, political and organisational activities of the Party should be extended to those States and regions where the Left and democratic movement in general and the CPI(M) in particular is extremely weak

Such are the tasks which the Central Committee has taken upon itself to discharge

The C C has taken a more specific decision that the Party's work in the Hindi speaking region (which consists administratively and from the viewpoint of Party organisation of several States) should be coordinated under the general guidance of the Central Committee. The starting of a Hindi paper and the bringing out of a number of Hindi publications is the first pre requisite for this. Together with this can and should be organised a series of Party schools conducted in Hindi and calculated to train increasingly large numbers of cadres on the policy and tactical line of the Party as well as on the basic theory of Marxism Leninism

The intention is the most rapid possible overcoming of the weakness of the Left and democratic movement in a region which has so far been dominated by one or other party of the bourgeois landlord classes. It is obvious that only through a planned development of the agitational, propagandist, political and organisational activities of the Party can the CPI(M) play its role in developing the Left and democratic movement in this region

This, however, is only one aspect of the importance of extending Party work in areas where it is weak. The same is necessary in some non Hindi speaking States and regions where the Party is extremely weak or even non existent for all practical purposes. The emergence of a radical third alternative in the country as a whole requires the extension of Party work all over the country

The Central Committee at its meeting held in New Delhi from June 10 to 14, 1978 mapped out a plan of action and calculated the necessary resources in cash and cadres to implement this plan. It was found that the financial requirements of the Party Centre to carry out this plan is approximately Rs 750,000 per year towards which the Central Committee has an income of only Rs 250,000. The Central Committee therefore decided to give a call for Rupees five lakh for the current year's expenditure. We hope that all those who are interested in the strengthening of the Party as a powerful factor in developing the united front of Left and democratic forces would help in making this fund drive a success.

The CC makes a specific appeal to the workers, peasants, agricultural workers, middle class employees, intellectuals and all other sections of the people who have organised themselves in their own unions or associations, look upon the strengthening of the all India Centre of the Party and the extension of its activity to new areas as a matter of crucial importance in developing their own struggles. They have seen from their own experience that a well organised CPI(M) can be a powerful factor in strengthening their own class and mass organisations and adding strength to the struggles that they have unceasingly to carry on. Let them realise that what is needed now is not only a Party unit at the local, district or provincial level, but at the all India central level. Only a strong and powerful all India Party can help them face up to the offensive of the ruling classes at the all India level.

The CC calls upon every Party member and Party unit to undertake the task of making this fund collection a success. Although the amount called for may appear to be big and although the masses of people from whom this amount has to be collected are going through extreme financial difficulties, a determined and organised drive will not fail to yield what is required.

This is our experience at the local, district and State levels, whenever and wherever such drives are made by the State or lower level committees, the people have magnificently responded. What is required now is to make the people realise that, without strengthening the all India Centre and enabling its

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activities to expand to newer and newer areas, the Party cannot play its legitimate role as the most important force in the development of the Left and democratic forces. We, therefore, hope that no Party member, no sympathiser, no friend of the Party, no Party unit will lag behind in making their own contributions and collecting from the public.

CPI Whitewashing Emergency Crimes*

**Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) Issued Statement in
New Delhi on June 21, 1978**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on June 21, 1978

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) has noted with interest that the General Secretary of the CPI, C Rajeshwara Rao, sees in the recently adopted resolution of our Central Committee certain positive features, such as the sharp criticism of the Three World theory on the basis of which the Communist Party of China opposes the national liberation movements in Africa as well as the sharp criticism of the economic policies and repressive measures of the Janata Government

If only Rajeshwara Rao and his colleagues had studied the resolutions and statements adopted by our Polit Bureau and Central Committee from time to time and the resolutions of our Party Congresses, they would have seen that this is nothing new. Never has the CPI(M) failed to make a sharp critique of the economic policies of the Janata Party and its Government, nor did it fail to criticise the Communist Party of China whenever we found it was going in the wrong direction.

It is however not necessary for us to enter into a debate with the CPI leaders in this regard. For, they consider us at least now to be adopting a correct view on the national and international issues.

But behind this apparently positive assessment of our policies, Rajeshwara Rao continues his party's policy of whitewashing the crimes committed by Mrs Gandhi and the caucus around her. There is no recognition of the fact that, had it not been for the joint resistance put up by the anti authoritarian forces in 1976-77, the authoritarian forces headed by Mrs Gandhi would have continued

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in power even after the Lok Sabha elections of March 1977. Nor is there any recognition that the attempt to stage a come back to power made by the authoritarian forces headed by Mrs. Gandhi is the biggest single danger facing the country today.

This is best exemplified by the CPI attitude towards the trial of the former Prime Minister for the Emergency crimes. Rajeshwara Rao in his statement accuses us of the CPI(M) leadership of misrepresenting his party's attitude to Mrs. Gandhi. "Let her be tried", he says, "for her crimes during Emergency under the existing laws of our country".

On this question at least Rajeshwara Rao seems to be at one with Morarji Desai who too is for trying Mrs. Gandhi under the existing laws of the land.

We for our part are all for trying the Emergency criminals under the existing laws of the land wherever that is possible. We would however draw the attention of Rajeshwara Rao (and of course, of Morarji Desai) to the fact that the major crime of which the Shah Commission has accused her is that "Smt. Gandhi in her anxiety to continue in power brought about a situation which directly contributed to her continuance in power and also generated forces which sacrificed the interests of many to serve the ambitions of a few. Thousands were detained and a series of totally illegal and unwarranted actions followed involving untold human misery and suffering. In the absence of any explanation, the inference is inevitable that a political decision was taken by an interested Prime Minister in a desperate endeavour to save herself from the legitimate compulsion of a judicial verdict against her."

Does Rajeshwara Rao consider this to be a heinous crime for which the former Prime Minister should be tried and punished? Can this be done under the existing laws of the land? If not, what does he suggest? Abandoning the trial? That probably is in the interest of his party, since a trial will bring to light what all was done by them in extending support to the Emergency.

Since Rajeshwara Rao talks so much about Left and democratic unity, let us remind him that the fight against authoritarianism—whether it was indulged in by the former Prime Minister or will be indulged in by the present or future Prime Ministers—is an

integral part of the Left and democratic programme. For, the Left and democratic forces cannot advance in the absence of a guarantee that authoritarianism will be given no quarter.

This is particularly important today because the former Prime Minister and the party she heads are openly defending the Emergency regime which they established. The Congress (I) leaders, including the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, have issued open threats that, if Mrs. Gandhi is arrested and tried even for the specific offences and in ordinary courts as is contemplated by the Janata Government, they will resist it and that blood will be shed in the campaign against it. Rajeshwara Rao seems to be oblivious of the danger which this poses before the nation. Hence his tirade against us who do not oblige him in treating the Janata Party as the main enemy, but are with all the anti-authoritarian forces including the Janata in getting the 42nd Constitution Amendment repealed and discharging all other remaining tasks of dismantling the authoritarian set up.

It is amazing that Rajeshwara Rao still harps on the theme of the Kerala Government being anti-Indira. Has he forgotten that, while his party supported the Emergency all over the country, the Government headed by his colleague in Kerala carried out the Emergency? Is it honest for him or his colleagues who were in the Ministry in the days of the Emergency to wash their hands off the enormous Emergency crime committed in Kerala, as if all that was the work of the then Congress Home Minister?

Concerning the electricity strike in Kerala, which according to Rajeshwara Rao has the support of only a minority of workers, would he advise his colleague in the Kerala Government who is holding the portfolio to take a secret ballot of all the electricity workers in the State? Would he advise his colleague to give up his obstinate attitude that he will not negotiate with the workers so long as the strike continues, as Morarji Desai is doing?

Since Rajeshwara Rao is comparing his Kerala Government with the Left Front Government of West Bengal, may we ask him what prevents the Kerala Government from holding the much postponed elections to the Panchayats? The West Bengal Government having

faith in the people of the State did conduct the elections. As for Kerala, no Panchayat election took place during the last fourteen years and more.

It is a futile effort to try to explain to Rajeshwara Rao and his party the difference between the Left Front Government of West Bengal and the anti CPI(M) Government of Kerala. They were after all co-conspirators with Indira Gandhi in toppling the U F Governments of West Bengal and Kerala in 1969-70. The present Antony Government in Kerala is a child of that conspiracy.

Developments in the Janata Party*

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Issued Statement in
New Delhi on July 1, 1978

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on July 1, 1978

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its concern that the conflicts inside the Janata Party should have broken out into a ministerial crisis at a time when the authoritarian forces are making a serious effort to stage a comeback. The Janata Party was given a mandate to fight these forces and bar their return to power. The situation demanded single minded devotion to this cause and rapid fulfilment of the electoral pledges.

But instead the party got given by dissensions and indiscipline culminating in the resignation of Home Minister Charan Singh and Health Minister Raj Narain along with several other Ministers of State.

The PB is of the opinion that the two Cabinet Ministers left no other option to their Cabinet colleagues or the Party High Command. It is also of the opinion that Charan Singh must share blame along with his Cabinet colleagues for failure to prosecute Indira Gandhi for her misdeeds during the Emergency. He cannot absolve himself from his responsibility and pose as one victimised for his views.

It is clear that Charan Singh and Raj Narain were campaigning to capture the leadership of the Janata Party for their group and dislodge the President. The coup attempt failed following differences in the ranks of the BLD group itself.

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The whole sordid episode has exposed the dangerous weakness of the Janata Party—lack of cohesiveness and persistence of loyalty to old groupings. This makes the party incapable of facing up to its great responsibilities, and lets down the people. The PB, is of the opinion that the party will not have the homogeneity and the strength required to discharge its jobs unless it renews its promise to fulfil its electoral pledges and unites itself on that basis. It cannot be said that the new balance of force in the party will strengthen the forces of secularism, democracy and progress and enable the Government to pursue a firm policy based on them. Nor can it be said that the crisis will be over. The resignation of several Ministers and Charan Singh's statement foreshadow a bitter inner party fight and conflict extended to State Ministries creating a feeling of instability. All this will bring grist to the forces of authoritarianism led by Mrs. Gandhi.

The real solution for the crisis that has gripped the Janata Party is to turn the attention of the leaders of the party from personal and group disputes on sharing of power to questions of policy affecting the daily lives of our people.

The PB of the CPI(M) brings to the notice of the leaders, members and all well wishers of Janata Party that a far more serious conflict than what led to the present ministerial crisis is coming to the forefront—the conflict between the electoral pledges of the Janata Party and its fraction during the last fourteen months.

It can be resolved only by a change in the policies of the ruling party and the Governments.

The PB appeals to all members and leaders of the party to move in this direction if their party is to remain a viable organisation. The Janata Party is getting estranged from the people. The ministerial crisis further undermines its credibility. Only a rapid orientation towards the people will save the situation.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement*

Issued Following its Session in Calcutta
on July 22-24, 1978

In the last elections, the CPI(M) joined with all forces that had fought and suffered under the authoritarian rule of Indira Gandhi during the Emergency in order to defeat the Indira Congress and thus to foil her attempt to give legitimacy to and perpetuate her authoritarian rule. While the people had defeated Indira Gandhi and her Congress, the authoritarian forces represented by her have not yet been vanquished.

In these circumstances, the Polit Bureau had already expressed its deep concern at the recent developments in the Janata Party and Government—of bickerings and parading of accusations—which took the party to the brink of a split.

While the split has been averted, mutual confidence has not yet been resorted among the leaders of the party. The Government and the party present the picture of a house divided within itself.

This has an adverse effect on the administration, both at the Centre and in the Janata ruled States and the bureaucracy is reigning supreme without any check.

All this can only lead to the strengthening of the forces of authoritarianism in the conditions prevailing.

The PB notes with satisfaction that the sentiments for re-forging unity are growing in the Janata Party. No consideration of personal prestige should stand in the way of making earnest efforts to quickly overcome the mutual differences. They should lose no time in evolving concrete measures in the direction of implementing the commitments that they gave to the people in their Election Manifesto.

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The PB had welcomed the measures they have so far taken by way of restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights. The repeal of the MISA is a significant victory for the democratic forces. Members of the Janata Party had played a significant role in overcoming vacillations in this regard.

The acceptance by the Prime Minister of the proposal to send an all parties' committee of members of Parliament wherever atrocities are committed on Harijans and acts upon its recommendations is a welcome step. The PB is also glad that the Prime Minister prevailed upon the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh to agree to the institution of a judicial enquiry into the attack on Harijans in Agra.

The P B also welcomes the moves to improve India China relations and hopes that these efforts will succeed despite the opposition from certain quarters.

On The Economic Front

However, it cannot but note that on the economic front, the Government has not done anything to give confidence to the people. In particular, the steep rise in the prices of most essential commodities on the one hand and the phenomenal fall in the prices of all commercial crops on the other, have hit the consumers and peasants alike. Even in regard to foodgrains, the peasants are forced to make distress sales.

The appointment of the Bhoothalingam Committee composed of servitors of big Business to make recommendations on the wages, incomes and prices policy and the anti working class recommendations made by the Committee, the mishandling of industrial disputes and the firings on workers on strike, the delay in evolving a bonus policy in the interest of the working class, the anti working class provisions of the proposed Industrial Relations Bill, and the failure to tackle the problems of growing unemployment have caused bitterness among the working class.

These in their turn are helping the authoritarian forces.

The PB calls upon the Government to reverse these policies and adopt policies in the interest of the common people.

It must be noted, however, that in many cases, unity and struggles of the working class, including those organised in

trade unions under the leadership of Janata Party members, have succeeded in reversing some of the anti working class measures

Centre State Relations

The PB expresses its satisfaction at the growing support that the democratic demand for an overhaul of Centre State relations with a view to giving more powers to the States, is receiving from all sections cutting across party barriers. It welcomes the support given to this demand by Jaya Prakash Narayan.

The meeting of the Chief Ministers of the Southern States and their voicing of the demand for a greater share in the divisive pool of Central revenues is a significant development. They also voiced their opposition to the attempts by Central Ministers to impose Hindi on non Hindi speaking people. The CPI(M) had warned that such attempts would lead to the disruption of the unity of India. The PB hopes that the Central Government would put an end to such attempts and strictly adhere to the solemn undertaking given to the non Hindi speaking people in this regard.

The PB welcomes the formation of the Ministry headed by Sharad Pawar in Maharashtra as a blow struck at the Indira Congress. It endorses the stand of the Maharashtra Committee of the CPI(M) that while the Party will not join the Ministry or be a part of any legislative block, it will support the Ministry and strive its best to foil any attempt to topple the Ministry by the Indira Congress. At the same time, the party will defend the interests of the people. This is in conformity with the well known policy of the Party under such circumstances.

The PB notes that this development was facilitated by the decision of the Working Committee of the Congress to break the Congress Congress(I) Coalition Ministry. It also notes the Working Committee's decision to put an end to the talks of unity with the Indira Congress.

The PB is gratified that the Congress Party and its allies had lent their support to the resolution in the Kerala Legislative

Assembly moved by the CPI(M) demanding prosecution of Indira Gandhi on the basis of the findings of the Shah Commission

It regrets, however, that the Working Committee had banned the formation of a Coalition Ministry with all the forces which had fought the authoritarian forces

It is only by breaking completely with the policies that led to the emergence of Indira Gandhi's authoritarian rule, by forthrightly branding the Indira Congress as the force of authoritarianism posing a threat to democracy and the fundamental rights of the people and by joining all the anti-authoritarian forces in the common task of fighting the authoritarian forces, Congressmen can play their role in the struggle for democracy

On the other hand, while the Congress has broken the Coalition with the Indira Congress in Maharashtra, its unholy alliance with the latter and the other parties to oppose the Left Front Government in West Bengal continues. In its blind opposition to the Left Front Government it has gone to the extent of opposing the Land Reforms Bill and spreading the false propaganda of breakdown of law and order in the State

The PB is proud of the energetic measures taken by the West Bengal Government to implement the land reform measures already existing on the Statute Book, its new Land Reforms Act and other measures it has taken to give relief to the people even with the limited powers the State enjoy under the Constitution. The growing support to the Government from the common people has been amply demonstrated in the recent elections to the Village Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads

The resounding victory of the Left Front in the recent elections to the Gram Panchayats all over the State to the Municipality of Agartala also testifies to the increased support that the Left Front Government of Tripura is receiving from the common people due to the popular measures it has adopted

The PB hopes that all Left and democratic forces and all democratic elements in all parties will exert themselves to facilitate the growth of the trend so that the forces of authoritarianism can be fought effectively

Take Democratic Verdict, End Janata's Paralysis*

Statement Dated August 5, 1978 Issued by The
Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in New Delhi

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is deeply disturbed over the unprincipled inner party wranglings of the Janata Party threatening to reach a point of no return. They amount to a betrayal of the mandate of the people who only a year ago gave a massive victory to the party to fight the ravages of authoritarianism. These odious happenings and negotiations cannot be considered to be the concern of the Janata Party only. They only go to bolster Indira Gandhi and smoothen her course to mislead and cheat the people into her camp. All anti authoritarian forces, democratic elements and parties and men of goodwill must come out against this selfish concentration on individual ties and their ego to the imperilling of the entire nation.

The Janata Party cannot look upon with pride its stewardship of the Government over the last year. After restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights of the people, it revealed its weaknesses rapidly. The economic conditions of the people have deteriorated beyond measure. There have been monstrous firings on workers. Land reforms have been stalled. Crude acts of repression and terror against the workers, students, teachers, doctors and above all against the Harijans continue in a number of States. All this helped the authoritarian forces demoralised in the elections, to raise their head once again and influence a growing number of people. The warning was given in by-elections won by the Indira Congress.

Instead of girding their loins to fight this menace, the Janata Party leaders took the people for granted and started their inner

quarrels. The administration has been brought to a standstill. The bureaucracy is on top.

As if this was not enough, the Prime Minister handed over the initiative in Parliament to the Indira Congress by refusing to place his correspondence with Charan Singh on the table in the name of its confidential character. The individualistic stand of the Prime Minister has done immense damage to his party and its prestige.

The PB appreciates the patience and zeal shown by the Janata mediators to bring the organisation to normalcy. It is of the opinion that the best and quickest way to do it is to bury the hatchet and start with a clean slate.

The PB had occasion to criticise the conduct of Sri Charan Singh in one of its earlier statements. The present impasse in the negotiations however seems to be due entirely to the rigid and individualist stand of the Prime Minister.

The Janata Party and Government stand paralysed before this inflexibility, betraying the mandate of the people and helping the authoritarian forces to seize the initiative. Further mischief can be stalled only if democratic norms are enforced and individuals, however tall, are obliged to accept party decisions. No one can claim a prerogative against his organisation or the people. Having striven for a consensus and unanimity and failed, the Janata leaders should take a democratic verdict of their party to end this paralysis. Delay will only frustrate the people who are expecting immediate solution to their urgent demands and bring grist to the mill of the authoritarian forces.

Statement on Current Situation*

Adopted by The Central Committee of
CPI(M) in its Meeting held in
New Delhi on September 27 October 1, 1978

The Janata Party Government, which started with the restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights soon got into the quagmire of internal dissensions, not based on any policy differences but because of conflict of personalities. It, thereby, provided the authoritarian forces with a weapon in their attempt to stage a comeback.

The Shah Commission Report made shocking revelations of how the Emergency was declared without consultation with the Cabinet Ministers and without any report from the State Governments or from any official agency of the prevalence of any abnormal conditions anywhere in the country having been received by the Central Government. It also laid bare the indescribable atrocities committed on the common people and the high handed actions taken by the police and officials at the behest of the then Prime Minister and her son.

Instead of using it against authoritarianism and for mobilising the entire people for the vital amendments to the Constitution, which would prevent the imposition of Emergency rule and the scuttling of democratic rights and fundamental freedoms, the Janata Party and the Government lost all initiative and were paralysed in the last session of the Parliament.

As a result, vital problems of the people and the Constitution Amendment Bill receded into the background and the Congress(I) was able to use that session for the diversionary purpose of focusing all attention on the allegation of corruption, made against the Prime Minister's son and the family members of the former Home

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Minister The Prime Minister, instead of placing the correspondence between him and the former Home Minister on this question in Parliament and putting an end to the controversy and by his obstinate attitude of not agreeing to any reasonable suggestion at every stage, only helped in these diversionary activities. The Communist Party of India also contributed its share in these diversionary activities.

The Janata Government refused to delete the provision for enabling the Government to proclaim internal Emergency. It only proposed an amendment empowering the Government to proclaim Emergency wherever there was armed rebellion. This provision can easily be misused by an unscrupulous Government and Emergency clamped throughout the country. Had the Janata Government accepted the amendment disarming the Government of the power to impose Emergency for internal purposes moved by the CPI(M), Congress and the Communist Party of India, the Indira Congress would have been isolated and the amendment passed with the requisite two thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha.

With Indira Congress Support

The Government amendment retaining the provision for internal Emergency was passed with the support of the Indira Congress.

Similarly, the provision for retaining the power to enact preventive detention laws with some so called safeguards, was passed with the support of both Congress Parties.

The most important amendment moved by the Government was in regard to Article 368, relating to the power of Parliament to amend the Constitution. The amendment debarred Parliament from amending the basic features of the Constitution, including the Fundamental Rights except through a referendum of the people.

Y B Chavan and Kamalapati Tripathi had attended the meeting of the leaders of parties and groups in Parliament as leaders of the then united Congress Party in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, to consult and consider proposals for amending the Constitution. They both had agreed to this proposal and there was unanimous agreement on it of all parties. And yet both the Congress parties joined hands to defeat this vital amendment.

So also the amendment to revoke the power of the Central Government to deploy its police and para military forces in the States and act independently of and without the consent of the State Governments was defeated by both the Congress

The amendment to remove Forest and Education from the Concurrent List and place them in the States' List was defeated by the two Congress parties

Ruling Party's Indifference

With the volume of opinion in the Congress Party in favour of the proposed amendments, some of whose members absented themselves when they were voted upon, these amendments could have been carried if only the Janata Party leaders had done sufficient spadework. Instead, the ruling party exhibited supreme indifference to the fate of its own amendments.

The result is that today, even after this 45th Amendment of the Constitution, the Constitution stands virtually as it was after the 42nd Amendment enacted during the Emergency, in its essential aspects.

The Communist Party of India opposed the removal of Education from the Concurrent List and placing it in the States' List.

Now, instead of mobilising the people for defeating this conspiracy to retain the 42nd Amendment in its essential features, the Janata Government is proposing to get the amendments passed by the Rajya Sabha adopted by the Lok Sabha.

Meanwhile, the economic measures and policies adopted by the Janata Government are becoming more and more anti people. Successive declarations made by the Prime Minister that prices will be brought down within six months have gone the way of the promises made by the previous Governments. Prices of all essential articles of common consumption continue to rise. Promises of establishing an effective public distribution system for the distribution of essential articles to the common people at fair prices have remained paper declarations.

On the other hand, prices of many articles like cement, steel, coal, cloth, etc., were raised by Government. Government also decontrolled sugar. Thereby, the poorer sections who were

dependent on the levy sugar have been forced to pay more for their needs

Prices of agricultural crops are unremunerative to the peasants. Those of commercial crops like sugarcane, cotton, jute, tobacco, etc., in particular had crashed and the peasantry is on the verge of pauperisation. In the absence of any effective machinery of Government to purchase agricultural commodities at fair prices, poorer sections of the peasantry are forced to make distress sales at the time of harvest.

Callousness to Peasantry

The Government was callous to the sufferings of the peasantry when the prices of commercial crops like sugarcane, cotton, jute, tobacco, etc., crashed as never before. It has refused to take any effective steps to compel the sugar magnates to pay the peasants their dues amounting to over ten crores of rupees.

Without making any arrangement for Government purchase of rubber at fair prices, Government has given licence for import of rubber.

As a result, rubber prices have been depressed, the beneficiaries are the four big rubber products manufacturers like Goodyear.

On top of these, many State Governments have, at the behest of the Central Government raised power rates. Subsidies on certain fertilisers and pesticides have also been removed.

Despite the fact that there is a huge accumulation of foreign exchange resources the Government continues the policy of begging for massive foreign aid and foreign debt goes on mounting to dizzy heights.

The textile policy announced by the Government is entirely in the interests of the cotton textile mill magnates. The responsibility of producing standard cloth has been transferred to the mills run by the National Textile Corporation with their outmoded and sometimes dilapidated machines, thus increasing the danger of their being closed down. This has only left the cream of high profits to the textile magnates. On the other hand, the prices of standard cloth which are intended for the poorest sections of the people have been increased. Moreover, export subsidies are increased to enable the big business houses to reap enormous profits. All

promises to help the handloom industry have become illusory in practice

The Industries Minister, who, in public, thunders against the monopoly houses, has taken no steps to curb their grip over the country's economy. On the other hand, the bulk of licences for expansion and new licences have gone to these monopoly houses. Concessions granted in the name of rural development have also been grabbed by these big houses.

Agreements with Multinationals

Government's declaration that foreign collaboration will be sought only in some critical areas where it is absolutely necessary and inevitable and the Government will work for a self-reliant economy is flagrantly flouted. Collaboration agreements with multinationals which proliferated during the last years of the Indira regime increased both in the private sector and in the public sector. The spate of collaborations in the public sector are tending to reduce some of the public sector undertakings to the position of selling agents of multinationals.

On top of these, the open invitation by the Prime Minister to multinationals for massive investment in the country during his visit to the USA has not only been derogatory to the dignity of the country but has emboldened people like Orville Freeman, the Co-Chairman of the Indo-US Business Council, to make statements derogatory to the Government and demand more concessions both to the multinationals and their Indian collaborators, the monopolists. And yet the Government does not protest against these derogatory statements. The US Ambassador, Goheen, threatens the Government of India against going in for deep penetration strike aircraft for our defence needs.

Indigenous research and technology has been the biggest casualty. Researchers in science and technology have been frustrated and demoralised. This is evidenced by the fact that while previously the exodus of scientists never exceeded 20 per year, last year alone about 150 scientists who were working in research institutions left the country and have been readily absorbed by the multinationals in their research laboratories.

Atrocities Against Weaker Sections

The atrocities on people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes continue in the Janata ruled and Indira ruled States. Police atrocities also continue. While Indira Gandhi poses herself and her party as the biggest champions of the minorities, women belonging to the weaker sections of the people are dishonoured in police stations and poor people are ill treated in police lock ups in States ruled by her party. The Indira Congress Government of Andhra Pradesh refuses to accept the demand for a judicial enquiry into these cases and resorts to heavy repression on the demonstrators making the demand.

As for radical land reforms, which alone can solve the problem of rural unemployment on a big scale and provide a big market for consumer durables, the Janata Government refuses to go beyond the measures enacted by the Congress Governments. And in regard to the implementation of even these limited measures, except for exhortations by the Prime Minister to the State Governments, the Janata Government has no policy of removing the grip of the bureaucracy, which is tied to landlord interests by hundreds of threads, and actively associating the peasants and agricultural labourers in implementing the measures.

This, together with the fact that landlord elements are strongly entrenched in most of the States will only make these exhortations futile.

When the Prime Minister writes two letters to successive Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh pleading with them, that 2000 acres of land belonging to the Raja of Challapalli should either be exempted from the Ceiling Act or given greater compensation, what value can be placed on his exhortations to the Chief Ministers!

Janata Governments of two States have unashamedly proposed the raising of the ceiling in the existing Acts!

The Central Government not only vacillated for months before assenting to the Reform Bill giving protection to the share croppers by the Left Front Government of West Bengal, but has so far refused to place it in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution to give it immunity from attacks by landlords in the courts.

As far as the working class is concerned the Government is resorting to more and more repressive measures to suppress their legitimate struggles. The number of firings on workers peacefully demonstrating is daily increasing. In almost every case of industrial dispute, orders under Section 144 Cr PC prohibiting meetings and demonstrations are clamped down, thus making a mockery of its profession to restore democratic rights and civil liberties.

The Madhya Pradesh State Government of the Janata Party has promulgated an Ordinance making strikes by municipal employees and Government employees a criminal offence punishable with seven years' imprisonment. Such a draconian legislation was not there even during the hated foreign British rule. The Ordinance prohibits parties affected by any orders under it from approaching courts on the legality of these orders. The profession of concern for the rule of law on the basis of which the Janata Party fought the election is thus completely shattered.

And now the Law Minister, Shanti Bhushan, advises the State Governments to enact preventive detention laws in the name of curbing anti social elements. Experience has shown that these laws will always be used to suppress mass struggles.

In many States, teachers, students and doctors have been forced into agitations for the fulfilment of assurances given months before.

The Communist Party of India vehemently protests against the anti working class policies and against the repression on workers in Janata ruled States. But the Kerala Coalition Government in which that party is a major partner, unleashed terror on the Electricity Board workers and sought to suppress the workers with heavy repression, instead of conceding their just demands. It is pertinent to note that the Minister in charge of electricity belongs to the Communist Party of India. That Government had amended the University Act providing for the deduction of 60 days' pay if any of its employees resorted to a day's absence from invigilation work. It has also passed a draconian Act providing for three years' imprisonment in the name of protection of public property. No other Government has enacted such draconian laws.

In contrast to all these stands the record of the Left Front Governments in West Bengal and Tripura, where no police firing

has taken place on workers, agricultural labourers, peasants or students and no police interference take place in the struggles of the working people. Land distribution under the existing laws is being done with the active association of the peasants and agricultural labourers and their organisations. The Land Reforms Act has been amended to prevent the lands being kept by landlords under the guise of bogus self cultivation and land is being scurred to the sharecroppers as well as their legal share of the crop through such popular participation.

The Central Committee is happy to note that the initiative taken by our Party and the Left Front Government of West Bengal for reviewing Centre State relations with a view to securing more powers to the States, despite the stiff resistance of the Prime Minister, is receiving wider support. In regard to fiscal relations, the move has received the support of almost all the Chief Ministers at the last meeting of the National Development Council, and the Central Government had to agree to the appointment of a sub committee to go into the question.

And now on top of all the anti democratic measures of the Janata Government, comes the out and out reactionary Industrial Relations Bill introduced in the Lok Sabha. The Government has treated with scant respect all the unanimous recommendations of all the trade union representatives, and even some of the State Government representatives, on the committee appointed by it to examine the Industrial Relations Bill.

The Bill, if enacted, will virtually deprive the workers of the right to strike. Teachers, nurses, employees and workers in hospitals, educational institutions, so called charitable institutions, departmental undertakings, research centres, etc., will not have even the right to form trade unions. Workers and employees in what are called Essential Services such as railways, road transport of all types, shipping, shipyards services, Government employees, scavengers, water supply, power supply, etc., will be barred from resorting to strike.

The Bill also seeks to nullify the judgement of the Supreme Court in regard to trade union rights of employees in educational institutions, hospitals, etc.

The enactment of this Bill means the imposition of permanent Emergency as far as the working class and middle class employees are concerned, and the creation of slave labour condition

The C C congratulates the working class for braving heavy repression and forcing the Government to retreat on many occasions by their unity and united and determined struggles

The Central Committee strongly protests against these anti democratic, anti people policies which would not only spell disaster to the independent economic development of the country, but would also endanger its political freedom and independence

The Central Committee warns the people against the attempts of the authoritarian forces represented by Indira Gandhi to take advantage of these policies and measures of the Janata Party to stage a come back They should not forget the brutal way in which her group sought to suppress the railway strike and other struggles of the workers, teachers, Government employees and agricultural labourers and the complete suppression of all democratic rights during the Emergency, which Indira Gandhi still justifies

The Central Committee also warns the people against the communal tension that is sought to be whipped up throughout the country by disruptive forces Those are intended to divert the people from the main problems facing the people and disrupt their unity and united action in solving these problems

The Central Committee appeals to all democratic organisations and democratic forces to forge unity and mobilise the people against these policies, and for positive policies in the interest of development of the country's economy, removing the grip of the monopolists, both Indian and foreign over it, and for further strengthening the political independence of the country

The C C appeals to all the healthy elements in the Janata Party to realise the danger of the country going under an authoritarian rule as a result of the rising mass discontent arising from these policies, and strive their best to reverse these policies of the Government

On Aligarh Riots*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) conveys its sympathy to the victims of the communal riots that have been raging in Aligarh for the last several days. Eleven lives have been lost, according to official figures, ten in stabbings, etc., and one in police firing. Untold sufferings are being gone through by the people of the city.

The PB denounces the organisers of these riots who, as in other similar riots, have committed unspeakable atrocities on the minority community. They were obviously encouraged in organising these riots by their firm links with the administration.

The PB condemns the U P Government which failed in its duty not only in preventing the outbreak of the riots but also in punishing those who are guilty of the riots and taking speedy measures to bring the situation under control.

The PB appeals to all the democratic and secular forces in the country to take this, along with other incidents of a similar character, as a warning that unless a united campaign is unleashed to bar the path of communalists in their nefarious attempts, the country will be faced with serious riots.

No Valid Ground for Postponing Elections Again in Local Self-Government Bodies in Kerala*

Statement Dated October 7, 1978 Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly disapproves of the reported decision of the ruling coalition in Kerala to postpone the elections to the local self Government bodies once again

There is no valid ground on which this twentyfirst postponement can be justified. The Chief Minister and the Minister for Panchayats have repeatedly promised that the elections will not be indefinitely postponed. These promises include the one made to the State Legislature and to the Ashoka Mehta Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions during the Committee's visit to Kerala a few months ago.

In keeping with these promises, the Government had completed all the preparations for holding the elections in the later half of November. The selection of staff for carrying out the various assignments in conducting the elections had been completed. The statutory notification with which the nominations would begin was to have been issued on October 12. After all these administrative measures were taken has come the decision once again to postpone the elections.

This decision exposes the tall claims made by the leaders of the ruling coalition that the welfare measures undertaken by the anti CPI(M) coalition since it took over in November 1969 have made the coalition so "popular" that the opposition is in utter disarray. It is on the other hand, clear that the various anti people measures adopted, by them during the last nine years, the various concessions

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they made to the landlords, the capitalists and the leaders of the caste and communal organisations, have so isolated them among the people that they do not dare face the electorate

It is significant that this decision has come in the wake of the result of the by election to the State Assembly from Trivandrum East which showed a pattern of voting least favourable to the ruling coalition. The leaders tried to assure their ranks that Trivandrum East would not be repeated in the State as a whole. The planned elections to the local self governing institutions would have been an occasion on which they could prove their claim.

They however knew that this claim has no basis in reality. As a matter of fact, the various constituents of the ruling coalition have of late been talking of "the need for a realignment of political forces in the State." Chief Minister Antony and his party, together with the leaders of the CPI and RSP constituents of the coalition, have been very loud in the talk of the need for "a Left and democratic front." They have been so solicitous towards the CPI(M)—against whom they all joined together along with all other anti Marxist parties, organisations, etc.—that they began to invite the CPI(M) to join the ruling coalition which, they claim, is "a Left and democratic alliance."

The CPI(M) has made it repeatedly clear that if the CPI, the Antony Congress and other constituents of the ruling coalition have realised the need for a genuine realignment of political forces in the State, it [the CPI(M)] would not be wanting in extending its co operation. The question however is whether the leaders of the ruling coalition are prepared to make a sharp break with the policies that they have been pursuing for nearly a decade—policies which pushed them into the hands of the emergency regime headed by Indira Gandhi.

Do they expect the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic forces to join them in pursuing policies which ended up in the notorious Crime Branch terror now exposed in the Viswanatha Iyer Report, in the innumerable acts of repression launched against the struggles of the agricultural labourers, peasants, industrial labourers, middle class employees, etc, in the efforts made to dilute the Land Reform:

Act adopted by the legislature during the existence of the CPI(M) led united front Government, that is, depriving the landless and land hungry poor of the surplus to be distributed to them by amending the Act in such a way as to permit gifts by owners even after the date fixed in the original Act and endorsed by the High Court, etc ?

In other words, the criterion on which the talk of Left and democratic unity, indulged in by the leaders of the coalition, will be tested is whether they are prepared to abandon the anti Left and anti democratic policies pursued by them so far and the adoption of genuinely Left and democratic policies

The PB notes that, while known leaders of some of the constituents of the coalition are talking of realignment in the sense of their unity with the Left and democratic forces, there are others within the ruling coalition itself who are talking of moving towards the Indira Congress whose leader, Karunakaran, has made an open appeal to all the anti CPI(M) elements to come together to fight what according to him is the real threat before the people of the State. Without mincing words, he wants the anti CPI(M) alliance which was forged in 1969 to be restored—of course under the leadership of himself and his all India leader, Indira Gandhi

It is for every constituent of the coalition to consider whether this appeal of the Congress (I) leader should be responded to, or whether the anti authoritarian unity that is today symbolised in Kerala by the Opposition front (consisting of the CPI(M), the Janata, the Opposition Muslim League and the National RSP) should be further strengthened. It will be an act of utter folly for them to nurse the illusion that they can prevent the flow of a large section of their colleagues to the Indira Congress if they do not come forward with concrete measures in the direction of reversing their policies and strengthening the anti authoritarian front

On Election in Chikmagalur*

CPI(M) Polit Bureau's Call for Powerful Political Battle

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press on October 8, 1978 in regard to the forthcoming by election to the Lok Sabha from the Chikmagalur constituency

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) appeals to all the democratic forces in the country to consider the forthcoming by election to the Lok Sabha from the Chikmagalur constituency as a political struggle against the authoritarian forces

The former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her colleagues at the Centre and in Karnataka are using this election to consolidate their forces not only in Karnataka but all over the country. The anti authoritarian forces should, therefore, take up the challenge and transform the election campaign into a powerful battle against authoritarianism and for democracy

It is regrettable that the Swaran Singh Congress and the CPI who claim to be earnest in their desire to fight the Indira Gandhi authoritarianism, have not given any indication that they would throw their full weight into the job of defeating Indira Gandhi in minds them that, if due to Chikmagalur The P B petty prejudices they fail to support and collectively work for the candidate finally chosen by the Janata Party, they would be directly helping the further strengthening and consolidation of the authoritarian forces

The P B hopes that the Janata leaders would select such a candidate as can mobilise the widest possible sections of the people in the struggle against authoritarianism

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The P B reminds all the democratic parties, organisations and individuals that the electoral battle will be a big battle between democracy and authoritarianism which will be having repercussions throughout the country It, therefore, appeals to them all to give their all out support and co operation moral and material, to the election campaign in Chikmagalur

P. B. of CPI(M) Condemns CPI Opportunism*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on October 28, 1978

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) denounces the decision of the Congress Parliamentary Board to give open support to Indira Gandhi in the forthcoming by election from the Chikmagalur constituency of Karnataka

Coming as this did against the background of the former Prime Minister's hectic efforts to regroup the authoritarian forces led by her and emerge as the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the decision enhances the danger of authoritarianism

The P B notes with satisfaction that there are sections of Congressmen who see the danger and are putting their weight against it. The resignation of A K Antony from the Chief Ministership of Kerala along with the resignations of Dr Karan Singh and Chandrajit Yadav from the Working Committee, indicates the resistance to the pro Indira line. Significant in this context are the resignations of several other Congressmen at the State and district levels—all of which, like the resignations of Antony, Karan Singh and Yadav, are in protest against the pro-authoritarian stand of Swaran Singh and his colleagues. This has put them completely on the defensive. The P B hopes that these Congressmen will carry this struggle forward and help in strengthening the anti authoritarian forces.

It is surprising that the leaders of the CPI, who have been talking loud about the need for the unity of Left and democratic

forces and strengthening the struggle against authoritarianism did not have even the ordinary courtesy to welcome the courageous step taken by the Congress Chief Minister when his all India leadership adopted a decision contrary to the interests of the struggle against authoritarianism. They, on the other hand, hastened to direct their Legislature Party Leader in Kerala to assume the office of Chief Minister. They have thus shown that, in spite of their claims, they are pursuing a completely opportunist policy which, while maintaining them in their ministerial positions, will further strengthen the forces of authoritarianism.

Comrade E M S Namboodiripad, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on November 1

The brutal lathi charge resorted to by the Karnataka police against Mrs Nandana, the daughter of Emergency victim Snehalata Reddy, and her associates, who were protesting against the organiser of the Emergency regime, deserves the severest condemnation by all democratic parties, organisations and individuals.

It shows the desperate straits to which the organisers of Indira Gandhi's election campaign have been reduced. I hope that this will steel the determination of those who are working arduously for the defeat of Indira Gandhi in Chikmagalur.

It is heartening to note that former Chief Minister of Kerala, A K Antony, has abandoned all hesitation and decided personally to go to Chikmagalur and campaign against Indira Gandhi's candidature. (This report has since been contradicted—Ed.) His campaign, as that of Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar, would help all those friends in the Congress and the CPI who have been taking an equivocal position as if the leader of the authoritarian forces can be defeated either by maintaining neutrality or by opposing the Janata candidate.

P. B. Mourns Mikoyan's Death*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) mourns the death of Comrade Anastas Mikoyan, an outstanding leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Comrade Mikoyan was a member of the Central Committee and Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, first Deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union and President of the USSR from which post he retired. His entire life was dedicated to the cause of the proletarian revolution and Socialism.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) extends its heartfelt condolences to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the bereaved family of Comrade Mikoyan.

Mete Out Proper Punishment*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its deep sense of abhorrence at the misdeeds of Smt Indira Gandhi revealed by the Parliamentary Privileges Committee. The Committee's verdict states that not only has she been misleading the supreme organ of power but treating it with contempt and preventing it from learning the truth and discharging its duties to the people.

The harassment of officials engaged in carrying out their duty to supply the Lok Sabha with correct information was done to cover up the shady operation of Mauruti Limited with which her son was concerned.

The Polit Bureau considers that Parliament will be failing in its duty if it does not mete out proper punishment to one who dared subvert its authority and mandate. Neither the Congress (I) nor the Congress MPs would be justified in taking an opposing attitude out of partisan considerations. They will be letting down the cherished principle of Parliamentary authority and privilege if they justify her conduct or exonerate her of the serious offence with which she is charged.

The Polit Bureau therefore is of the opinion that Mrs Gandhi should be asked to tender unconditional apology to Parliament, failing which she should be suspended from the Lok Sabha for the present session.

Considering the seriousness of the offences involved this is a very modest punishment. But a punishment meted out under breach of privileges has its own limitations.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, December 10, 1978

It has to be understood that democratic forces are engaged in a prolonged struggle against authoritarianism and its past misdeeds. It requires not only punishment of the individual but punishment done in a manner which isolates the spokesmen of dictatorship from the common people. The entire purpose of such punishment will be foiled if it rouses suspicion in the minds of the people that the Committee is being used to nullify the Chikmagalur verdict.

In this connection, the PB wishes to stress that during the last 20 months the Janata Party leaders had left the initiative in Parliament and outside largely in the hands of Smt Gandhi and her party. The exposures before the Shah Commission were not properly utilised to unmask the corrupt and anti democratic character of the authoritarian regime. There has been lot of dithering and softness when hard political decisions had to be taken. In such a situation to strike heroic and militant poses on the privilege issue and demand extreme action will be counter productive in the struggle against authoritarianism and give an excuse to the opponents to appear as martyrs and claim the sympathy of the people.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) stands for bringing Smt Gandhi and her caucus to trial for her concrete misdeeds during the Emergency. Now that the Supreme Court has upheld the establishment of the Special Courts, there should be no delay in passing the required enactment and instituting a Special Court to try them. The Court of Law is the proper instrument for severe punishment. Trial by a Special Court will meet the needs of justice as well as political struggle against dictatorship.

Jyoti Basu Welcomes Plenum Delegates*

Dear Comrade Delegates,

The Party in West Bengal welcomes all of you who have assembled here to participate in this important Convention convened by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

It is indeed a great honour to us to have been given the responsibility of holding the Convention and hosting the delegates. We are meeting in the background of a great tragedy which has befallen West Bengal consequent on the unprecedented floods and rains, the like of which has not been experienced in a hundred years. We remember with sorrow those who have perished and pay our respectful homage to those ten of our young people who sacrificed their lives whilst rescuing people from the flood ravaged areas.

On the occasion of the Convention, we remember with pride the 1,100 comrades and friends who were killed during the semi-fascist terror regime of the Congress. We take pride in the fact that, despite the trials and tribulations for six long years, the common people did not surrender to the dark forces of reaction and authoritarianism. We pledge anew to carry forward the revolutionary tasks.

In view of the disastrous floods, the Polit Bureau was naturally hesitant in holding the Convention in West Bengal. But the State Committee of the Party, particularly the Howrah District Committee and comrades of Howrah, confidently assumed the responsibility of organising the Convention whilst taking all

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 14, 1979. The Plenum of CPI(M) was held at Salkia, Howrah, in West Bengal on December 27-31, 1978.

measures to ensure that relief and rehabilitation work does not suffer in the devastated areas of Howrah and other districts. The decision was heartily and enthusiastically welcomed by the people of Howrah as is evident from their massive support and enthusiasm in the preparation of the Convention.

It may not be out of place to mention that the District of Howrah has a population of 25 lakhs. Here are concentrated right from the British days several industries, big and small, with a working class population speaking several languages, the majority being non Bengalees.

The CITU has made rapid advances among the workers. From the adjoining villages also, where our Party wields considerable influence, large numbers of rural population have become part of the working class.

This Plenum, where the tried and tested leaders of the Party have assembled, has to discharge an important responsibility enjoined upon it by the Tenth Party Congress. We are fully conscious of the importance of Organisation in the task of implementing successfully the Political Tactical line decided upon by the Tenth Party Congress. We shall discuss the problems of Party Organisation in a spirit of self criticism, understand the strength and weaknesses and arrive at correct decisions. The State Committees have sent in their considered views on the document circulated by the Central Committee and now after discussions by the delegates on the re-drafted document of the Central Committee, final decisions will be arrived at.

In the discussions, we must keep in mind that the Tenth Party Congress resolution states

“The task of functioning as the vanguard cannot be discharged with a weak and scattered party with a membership of a hundred thousand. The Party must strike deep roots among the masses and must gain thousands of adherents every year.” It is further stated “A Party trained in the finest traditions of Marxist Leninism, inspiring the people by its selfless devotion to the cause of revolution and irreconcilable in its opposition to all deviations—such a party alone can meet the needs of the situation, can be the vanguard of revolutionary struggle”

The Tenth Party Congress has given a clarion call to fight against the forces of authoritarianism. And in this fight the Left

and democratic forces must stand in the forefront. In this context the political resolution states "Our Party has to shoulder the responsibility of building the unity of Left and democratic forces"

I am sure while discussing the problems of Organisation, you will take into account the fact that the increased prestige and influence of the Party, the hundreds of new militants who have rallied to the Party in the course of mass struggles and electoral battles provide big opportunities to consolidate, expand and strengthen the Party. We hope that the deliberations and decisions of the Plenum will enable the Party to play the required and expected role.

We assure you that the Party in West Bengal will never, for a moment, forget the role assigned to it by the resolution of the Tenth Party Congress, in which it is stated "In educating and leading the masses, we have a powerful instrument in the West Bengal Ministry representing the alliance of the Left Parties headed by us"

We are aware that, as a Party running the Government, we have to keep strict vigil against alien trends, opportunist elements, self seekers and guard the purity of the Party. In order to do this a correct approach to organisational principles of Party functioning and proper understanding of Democratic Centralism are essential for associating the entire Party with the tasks that are to be carried out.

We know that our enemies are constantly trying to sow confusion in the Party, to distort our views and malign us. But the entire Party as one man has to consciously combat all this and deepen and extend the relationship with the people.

Comrades, unforeseen difficulties are confronting us because of the floods. But we are confident that, with the co operation of the people and help of the Panchayats, we shall successfully perform the task of rehabilitation and reconstruction. Once again, I extend to you on behalf of the Party in West Bengal warm revolutionary greetings.

Long Live the Communist Party of India (Marxist)!

JYOTI BASU
Chairman of the Reception Committee
 December 27, 1978

Report on Organisation*

**Adopted by The Plenum of CPI(M) Held at Salkia
on December 27-31, 1978**

Introduction

1 The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) by a resolution had decided to "convene a Special Plenum to discuss Party organisation" The preamble of the resolution notes how our "Party had been going through a period of stresses and strains even before the Ninth Congress", how it had to face severe repression at the hands of the Congress Government, and how it was subjected to political and ideological attacks from the Right revisionists and others It expresses satisfaction that the Party cadre, sympathisers and masses organised in different class and mass organisations stood the test very well and were able to hold the flag aloft While recognising the fact that the Party organisation is weak except in a few pockets in the country, it expresses the view that the political tactical line pursued by the Party has come to be acknowledged as correct by broad sections of non party people and points out the need and urgency of expanding the Party organisation in a big way to discharge the responsibilities facing the Party today—the responsibility of forging the unity of the Left and democratic forces on a national scale and of bringing about a realignment of political forces in the country

2 The Party Congress resolution on convening the Special Plenum States that "the Central leadership of the Party, the P B and C C had addressed themselves to the functioning of the Party organisation, these efforts, however, have failed to yield the desired results and at no level of the Party organisation have the guidelines contained in the C C resolutions been observed" It also opines

*Published as a booklet

that "the main responsibility for this sad state of affairs as regards organisation is that of the Central leadership of the Party, the PB and the C C though part of it should be shared by the State Committees and their Secretariats as well"

3 The resolution on convening the Special Plenum while referring to the State of the Party Centre, observes that, "the basic requirement of a politically and organisationally functioning central leadership is that there should be a collective team of leaders with authority who will be divested of all their State and local responsibilities, but would devote themselves wholly to the work of the Centre" This, however, could not be achieved and "the utmost that could be achieved was that with all the shortcomings that exist, the Central leadership could address itself to certain minimum questions of ideology and politics, culminating in the evolution of the political tactical line being placed before the Party Congress" "The failure to develop a politically and organisationally functioning leading centre has already given rise to certain incipient trends of federalism—State Committees, going their own way, dealing with the ideological, political and practical problems facing their respective States, almost as if the PB and C C do not exist" Further, it draws attention to the fact that the Right revisionist and Left dogmatist ideologies had crept into the once united CPI and how some of them persisted in the CPI(M) after the split in 1964 It points out the serious lapse in observing several inviolable principles of Party organisation which resulted in the growth of bureaucratic tendencies on the one hand and anarchist tendencies on the other, thus sowing the seeds of factionalism and other harmful trends inside the Party In order to rectify these lapses and mistakes, the PB, C C and the State Committees should undertake the task and convene a Special Plenum to discuss the problem of Party organisation and to decide the course of action in this regard

4 In pursuance of the decision of the Tenth Party Congress, the PB sent out a questionnaire to all the State Committees seeking information from the State Committees on the present state of Party organisation in their States and their views on how to improve it After receiving the replies from the State Party Committees the PB presented a report to the Central Committee which, after a

detailed discussion of the contents of the report, directed the P B to redraft the report in the light of the discussion in the C C and send it to the State Committees for their views. The C C finalised the draft and placed it before the Plenum.

Party Organisation in the Struggle for Left and Democratic Unity

5 As can be seen from what is stated above, it is just a decade since the Party took up the question of organisation for detailed consideration. The Eighth Congress held in 1968 at Cochin was the last occasion when a composite political organisational report was prepared by the C C and adopted by the Party Congress after discussion.

6 The experience gained since then should have been assimilated and assessed at the Ninth Congress held in 1972 at Madurai but this was not found possible. The draft presented before the Madurai Congress therefore, was referred to the new Central Committee which adopted a new document in 1973 at Muzaffarpur.

7 Subsequent developments made it clear that the adoption of the new resolution did not help improve matters. As a matter of fact, the state of the Party organisation went from bad to worse. Meanwhile, certain questions of policy had also come up before the Central Committee and the entire Party, on which protracted debates took place in the P B and the C C as well as in the entire Party.

8 These debates were summed up in the Review Report presented by the C C to the Tenth Party Congress and finalised by the C C as directed by the Congress in the light of the discussions that took place. It was under these circumstances that the Congress could not discuss the problem of organisation which was left for the Plenum to consider and decide.

9 While this would show that the Party organisation continues to be in a sorry state of affairs, the very conclusions arrived at by the Tenth Congress through the Political Resolution lay the basis for radically improving the organisation. For, the discussions on the Political Resolution showed that the Party was increasingly becoming a significant force in the struggle for the unity of the Left and democratic forces that have begun to emerge in the country.

10 The Political Resolution, in fact, laid down as the foremost task of the Party, the bringing about of a radical realignment of political forces in the country, a realignment that brings into existence a nationwide united front of the Left and democratic forces which constitutes at present the only progressive alternative to the two bourgeois landlord combinations—the Congress and the Janata. The resolution states, "To change the existing political relationship and bring about a viable alternative force to lead the masses must be the constant aim of the political activity of the Party. The emergence of such a broad Left and democratic front will strengthen the revolutionary forces which alone can extricate the country from the long drawn out economic and political crisis that has been steadily intensifying."

11 Whatever the length of time it takes to forge such a Left and democratic front and however great the difficulties that might be confronting us in realising this, there is no other alternative to it nor can any other short cut be found. Thirty years of the bourgeois landlord class rule by the Congress Party and the last twentyone months of the same class rule by the Janata Party prove beyond a shadow of doubt, that this class rule can neither solve any basic economic problems facing the country, nor can it ensure a durable democratic political set up in the country.

12 The forging of such Left and democratic unity, however, demands an unprecedented growth in the organisations and struggle of all sections of the working people, in the movements of all those who are interested in the preservation of the country's freedom and democracy. A rapid growth in the number and unity of the fighting organisations of the working class, the peasantry and all other sections of the working people as well as of the patriotic and democratic elements in all classes, strata of society, is, in other words, the basis and essence of the Left and democratic front.

13 This in its turn requires an enormous growth in the strength of the Party of the working class—the number of its members in different States, the militant activity in which they are engaged, their unity with all other anti imperialist, anti feudal and anti monopoly and democratic forces. Lakhs of new members drawn

into the trade unions, kisan sabhas and other organisations of the working people, tens of thousands of active cadres working in these fighting organisations and drawn into the ranks of the Party of the working class, an uninterrupted process of educating the new and re educating the old members of the Party, a system of inter relationship between the higher and lower units of the Party as well as within each unit on the basis of the revolutionary principle of democratic centralism—these are the essential prerequisites for that leading role to be played by the Party of the working class which is necessary for any genuine front of Left and democratic forces. The Political Resolution of the Tenth Congress, therefore, called for the expansion of the Party in a big way.

14 The sustained work carried out by our Party during the last fourteen years, i.e., since the break with the revisionists, has laid the basis for the development of such a Party. For, this is a period in which the Party cadres became steeled in the fire of incessant struggle against the ruling classes in our country as well as against the revisionist and dogmatic theories which got strengthened in the ranks of the Indian Communist movement, thanks to the support given to these two alien trends in India by the powerful Communist Parties in the world. Denounced as "adventurists", "splittists," etc., on the one hand, and "neo revisionists" on the other, our Party had to adopt its own independent class position in uniting the Indian people against imperialism, feudalism, monopoly capitalism and all other reactionary forces.

15 Rarely has a Communist Party, for such a long time as fourteen years, been subjected to such a cruel test, namely, not only fighting against the bourgeois landlord classes, and their political parties, of its own country, but also facing the opposition of the leaderships of the two biggest Communist Parties and their supporters in the international Communist movement. To stand up against these storms and withstand the direct repression from the Congress Government—the arrests and detentions of hundreds of leaders in 1962-63, 1965-66, 1975-76, and the semi fascist terror in West Bengal and severe repression in Kerala during 1971-76—this is no small credit for our Party ranks, its cadres and leaders at different levels.

16 The heroism and self sacrificing spirit shown by tens of thousands of Party members and sympathisers in facing these manifold attacks, is the capital on which we can build and enormously strengthen the Party of the working class based on Marxism Leninism which is an essential prerequisite for forging the unity of all the Left and democratic forces

17 Still another factor which should be put on the credit side of the balance sheet of our activities during the last fourteen years, is that the ideological, political and tactical line adopted by the Party has been proved broadly correct On such questions as whether or not to have relations of collaboration with the Congress, what attitude should be adopted towards India Pakistan relations and Kashmir, events in Czechoslovakia, attitude towards the J P led movement and the line towards the Emergency and Constitutional amendments—on every one of these questions which divided the Right revisionists and us, the revisionist line has been proved by experience to be completely bankrupt and our line by and large correct

18 On the assessment of the ideological political positions adopted by the Soviet and Chinese parties, too, experience has proved that neither an anti China nor an anti Soviet stand would be in consonance with either proletarian internationalism or the requirements of the class struggle in our own country Ours in fact has virtually been the only Party in this country which took an independent class position, loyal to the Socialist world and the international Communist movement, loyal to the interests of the working class and other sections of the working people in our own country

19 This, of course, is not to suggest that there were no shortcomings, mistakes, etc , in the process of working out a broadly correct class policy As the Review Report of the Tenth Party Congress has shown concretely and in detail, there were lags in our understanding which did indeed slow down the advance of the movement These, however, were overcome in the Political Resolution and Review Report

20 This is an unending process since it is impossible for any party at any stage to be free from weaknesses, failures and lags

It is a basic premise of Marxism Leninism that while a Communist Party may commit mistakes, it is necessary to find out and correct them as quickly as possible. Our experience during the last fourteen years reinforces the necessity to understand this and, on its basis, to carry on constant examination and review of the policies as they are evolved and implemented.

21 Still another valuable asset that we have built up during the last fourteen years is the use that we made of the two united front Governments of 1967-69 in West Bengal and Kerala, together with our representation in Parliament and the State Legislatures, to develop the mass movement in the country. While the work of our Party groups in Parliament and the State Legislatures, as well as of the united front Ministries did suffer from lapses and they had to be corrected, the fact remains that our work in this arena helped the strengthening and development of the fighting organisations of the working people.

22 Special mention should be made of the advance registered in the trade unions since the formation of the CITU in May 1970. Even after we broke with the revisionists at the political level, we tried our utmost to preserve the unity of the organisation of the working class, provided the basic condition of internal democracy and the militancy of the organisation were preserved. It was only when the revisionists, through their action, showed that they have no use either for the internal democracy of the organisation or the militancy of the masses, that we decided to break from the AITUC. The very formation of the CITU, however, enormously helped the development of the movement. Along with this, the political influence of the Party also increased among the workers.

23 At the time of our break with the revisionists, we were a powerful force in the AITUC. But the revisionists had a tight grip over the organisation because of the leading positions they occupied—a grip which they used to prevent the democratic functioning of the organisation and militant activities of the mass of the working class. After the formation of the CITU, however, not only did our general political influence grow, the organised strength of the unions led by us also rapidly grew. Even in areas where the Party is nonexistent, the CITU has grown and is

recognised as a fighting organisation led by the CPI(M) Particular mention should be made of the growth of our influence in several key sectors of the economy such as steel, plantations, transport, etc

24 Our trade union influence extends beyond the CITU We have a strong influence in many employees' organisations Some are directly led by our comrades, LIC, banks, mercantile firms, pharmaceutical firms, etc—in all these sections of employees our influence is growing This, of course, is not to deny that our work in the trade unions does not suffer from weaknesses and shortcomings mentioned in the Tasks on the Trade Union Front The Party's task of converting the elementary class consciousness generated by the trade union struggle into Socialist consciousness progresses at a snail's pace No doubt Left democratic political consciousness among workers is increasing under our influence but this is not Socialist consciousness The result of this lag is the continued influence of bourgeois ideology on the workers which strengthens economism in the trade union movement

25 Despite our advance we do not constitute the major force in the trade union movement, though we are a strong component often setting the pace for others

26 Our student movement has also progressed in these years despite the disruptive tactics of the revisionists In West Bengal and Kerala, we have achieved a big advance enrolling thousands in our organisation Our student comrades in West Bengal had to fight a courageous battle in the days of semi fascist terror Our Kerala comrades also had to fight assaults and onslaughts of reactionaries before we could build the present strength of the movement

27 Taking the country as a whole, however, we continue to be weak on this front There are well entrenched student organisation in some States commanding a large following For our progress in other States it is necessary that our weakness, and the strength of other students' organisations have to be taken into consideration and proper tactics of united action have to be worked out

28 Our Kisan Sabha has grown to 23 lakhs However, it has to be remembered that fiftyfive per cent of the membership comes

from West Bengal and the two States of West Bengal and Kerala constitute seventyfive per cent of the membership We are also advancing our work among agricultural labourers and have secured notable success We have to our record a number of kisan struggles, a large number of agricultural workers' struggles and actions of tribal peasants for their demands There is no doubt, that we will be in a better position to advance, now that the weaknesses and shortcomings in our understanding have been removed by the C C Resolution of 1976

29 Although not to the same extent at the CITU, the SFI, the Kisan Sabha and the agricultural labour organisations, a beginning has been made in the organisation of the youth, women and intellectuals

30 Youth organisations have been formed and are functioning fairly effectively in the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Tripura A beginning has been made in some States like Bihar, too The C C has already come to the conclusion that the formation of an all India organisation of the youth would quicken the process

31 Mahila organisations, too, exist in most of the States mentioned above The C C took the initial step of forming a Co ordination Committee of the Party for helping the functioning of the organisations wherever they exist and their formation in other States This, it is hoped, will pave the way for the formation of our all India organisation

32 The intellectuals, writers, artists, scientists and professionals are examining and re examining their roles and a large number of them are taking a radical turn The existence and activity of such organisations as the Deshabhīmani Study Circle in Kerala, the IPTA, the Association of Writers and Artists, etc , in West Bengal, the Progressive Writers' Front in Tamil Nadu, several meetings of Hindi writers in various places (all of them under the direct leadership of our Party), show the great potentialities of the work in this field So too does such a broad non party organisation as the Shastra Sahitya Parishad in Kerala, which is rendering yeomen service in popularising scientific knowledge among the mass of the people

33 Our activity or absence of activity in many of these fields raises several questions of policy and organisation, which unfortunately have not been dealt with by the Party leadership as they should be. Careful discussion and solution of these problems is an essential part of the problem of organisation which is now on the agenda. For, the Party organisation must plan and co-ordinate activities of Party members among all sections of the people. This, however, could not be done at the Plenum which was devoted to the general question of Party organisation. But as soon as the Plenum is over and we are clear about the line of advance in the organisation in general, the C C will have to evolve ways and means by which the comrades working in the respective fields are involved, together with the C C and the representatives of the State Committees, in the discussions on the issues of policy and organisation with which each of them is concerned. What is necessary to state here is only that, if attention is paid to these problems, it will be possible to make our activity in the various fields the basis of a rapid advance of the Party.

Party Organisation as it is Today

34 Despite the favourable factors mentioned above, there are serious weaknesses in the organisation which have hampered the work of the Party in rallying all the Left and democratic forces and in putting up an effective fight against imperialism, feudalism and monopoly capital. The Political Resolution of the Tenth Congress drew attention to the "stagnation in membership" which "must be overcome". A far more vigorous drive for enrolling new members and making them function as integral parts of a well-organised and disciplined party is a "must" if the Party is to be able to discharge its tasks.

35 It would however be wrong and lopsided to isolate the numerical aspect of Party membership from various other aspects of Party organisation. To mention one instance, there are several States which may be considered "weak" in the Party organisation terms if the membership alone were taken into account, but where there has been considerable growth in the membership and organised activity of the CITU, the SFI, the Kisan Sabha, etc.

36 Again, the standards applied by various State Committees for recruiting members vary from place to place. Party membership in relation to the electoral strength of the Party, or to the membership of mass organisations led by the Party, is different from State to State.

37 There are several other criteria to be applied in judging the organisational position of the Party, such as the circulation of Party organs, collection of funds, the extent and nature of Party education, etc.

38 Above all, one should take into account the extent to which the State and District Committees are able to inspire the Local Committees and Branches and draw the entire Party members and sympathisers into the day to day activity of the Party and of the mass organisation. The involvement of the entire Party membership through their own units in the formulation of Party policy from time to time is another important instrument of Party building which too should be considered in assessing Party organisation.

39 It should be the endeavour of the State Committees to make a self-critical examination of the Party's position in their respective States from this all-sided approach to the problem of organisation. In order to help them in this process, we are giving below a summary of the actual position as stated in the replies to the questionnaire received from them, followed by our own tentative comments for the consideration of the State Committees.

Party in Different States

WEST BENGAL

40 The State is at present the most important for the Party organisation in the whole country. Not merely because it has a Left Front Government but also because

- (a) Here there is a large concentration of industrial and other establishments owned by Indian and foreign monopoly capital, and from this angle it is important for our revolutionary movement.

- (b) The Party in the State inherits the best traditions of the anti imperialist and proletarian revolutionary movements and has become the leader of the militant organisations of the working class, peasantry, students and youth, the intellectuals, women, etc
- (c) It has the unique experience of having participated in two united front Governments earlier, going through the semi fascist terror imposed by the Congress Government and joining hands with the anti authoritarian forces in defeating the Congress and forming the Left Front Government

41 No other State has had such an invaluable treasure of cadres, who have been tested in, and come out of such ordeals in the task of building the revolutionary working class movement

42 Though Party membership increased from 11,209 in 1965-66 to 38,889 in 1978, the increase has not been steady

43 There was a steady and uninterrupted increase between 1965-66 and 1972, when the membership slightly exceeded 35,000. Between 1972 and 1976 the membership slightly declined. By 1976 we had lost 20 per cent of the members. It again revived in 1977 when we reached 33,000—two thousand short of the 1972 figures. The figure was exceeded only in 1978—by three thousand.

44 The decline seems to have taken place in the years of semi fascist terror and Emergency.

45 Nonetheless our mass influence has been increasing and our electoral support also growing as was shown in the Parliamentary and Assembly elections. The same record was shown in the Panchayat elections held in June 1978. It would however be wrong to overestimate the results of the elections. The voting percentage of the Party in fact has risen from 18.5 in 1967 to 35.8 in 1977 (June). Even with the addition of the votes polled by our allies, the percentage of votes polled in 1977 (June) by the Left Front comes only to 45 per cent. It was because the Congress and Janata were split, polling 23.4 per cent and 20.5 per cent respectively, that the Left Front was able to win an overwhelming majority of seats.

46 Far more important is the fact that the membership of mass organisations led by our Party has been increasing and today stands

at about 550,000 for the CITU, 12,84,992 for the Kisan Sabha, 234,186 for the Democratic Youth Federation, 113,358 for Mahila Samiti and about 150,000 for the SFI. It is obvious that the total number of members of the organisations led by our Party would be over two million.

47 Over and above there are such organisations as the IPTA, Ganatantrik Lekhak and Silpi Sammelani, People's Relief Committee, United Central Refugee Council, etc. This shows the many-sided activities of the Party which make it a force to reckon with in the socio-cultural life of the State.

48 Production and sale of literature, including Party organs, is an important activity of the Party in the State. The Committee itself runs the evening daily, "Ganashakti", the political theoretical weekly "Desh Hitaishi", the political cultural monthly, "Nandan", the women comrades are running the monthly, "Eksathe". There are besides the Hindi weekly, "Swadhinata" and the Urdu weekly, "Kisan Mazdoor". The Party is also bringing out a number of pamphlets on current as well as fundamental questions. The purpose of these publications is to help the agitation and propaganda among the people as well as the education of Party members. Two such publications were brought out in 1965, eight in 1967 and nine in 1968, seven in 1969, five in 1970, 22 in 1971, three in 1974, five in 1975 and 25 since then.

49 Party Fund collection is organised as a mass campaign. Special funds on occasions like election campaign are organised. The entire Party membership and sympathisers are mobilised in the fund collection campaign.

50 In the face of the most unprecedented calamity of widespread floods which have rendered more than a crore and a half of people shelterless and without any immediate livelihood, our Party with its thousands of members and mass organisations led by it, has thrown itself into the supreme task of relief and rehabilitation. Thanks to this devotion, our Ministry in West Bengal is able to reach urgent relief to the affected areas and maintain the morale of the people.

51 While all this may give satisfaction at the functioning of the Party, there is no reason for complacency. The inner Party

situation is far from satisfactory as could be gathered from the speeches at the Party Congress. The biggest district unit in the State—24-Parganas—having nearly one-fourth of the membership, is sharply divided. The D.C. leadership has sharp differences with the State Committee. Though not to the same extent some other districts also have similar problems.

52. The solution to this problem on the basis of the time-tested principles of inner-Party democracy and centralised leadership is a must, if the Party and the democratic movement not only in West Bengal but the whole country are to discharge their responsibilities at this crucial juncture.

53. It is necessary to draw attention to some other problems as well. For instance, Party membership here is lagging behind the strength of the Party both in terms of its electoral strength as well as the membership of the mass organisations led by our Party. The votes polled by the Party in the 1977 elections were 50,72,000. As for the membership of the mass organisations led by us, as was noted above, it comes to over two million. Less than 40,000 members in a Party which leads mass organisations with a membership of about two million, and which is able to rally more than five million of the voters behind it is obviously too inadequate.

54. The spreadout of the Party membership in the State shows that 23,000 out of 38,000 members come from five districts out of 16 districts in the State. The entire organisation consists of 16 District Committees, 500 Local Committees and 3,500 Branches. Seen along with the 35 per cent electoral strength in the last elections, this would show the big leeway that has to be made up for the Party to become a real striking force in the State.

55. The functioning of the Party Committees and the Committees of the mass organisations leaves much to be desired. As for the mass organisations, the Kisan Sabha offices are mostly located in the Party offices, rather than functioning separately as the offices of mass organisations.

56. The circulation of the daily paper given in the State Committee's reply to the questionnaire as on June 21, 1978, is just 16,000. The average for 1977-78 is just 10,000 (the maximum in 1969-71 was 30,000). The circulation of the weekly,

"Desh Hitaishi" is at present (as on July 1978) 29,000 (the maximum in 1970 February was 61,200) Such a low circulation of the two (the daily and the weekly) organs of the Party, it should be emphasised, is a big handicap for the propagation of the Party's policies and winning over more and more allies and adherents to the Party

57 Another weakness of the Party in the State is the defective class composition of the Party membership The figure for the year 1972—Party members and candidates together—is 6897 workers, 7152 kisan including agricultural labourers, students 1234, middle class 19,109 and women 726

58 This composition stands in strange contrast to the mobilisation of tens of thousands of workers by the Party—not only in economic but also in political and electoral battles The Party's success in the industrial belt shows that the mass of workers have politically voted for it There should be a conscious effort to change the composition of the Party, to proletarianise it, by recruiting proletarian and semi proletarian elements in the rural and urban areas This task requires patience and special care to be taken to nurse them in the Party and to make them function effectively

59 It is quite clear that with this composition of membership, the composition at the leadership level will be still more faulty This weakness cannot be removed unless special efforts are made to train, educate and promote working class cadres to responsible positions

KERALA

60 This State is usually bracketed with West Bengal as a stronghold of the Party The Party here leads mass organisations with a total membership of over one million With the CITU having about 150,000 members, Kisan Sabha 226,443, agricultural labourers 164,152, Youth Federation 258,000, SFI 75,000, Mahila Federation 135,581 The Party has also a network of cultural organisations called the Deshabhimanı Study Circle and is working in other all party organisations such as the Granthasala Sangham, Shastra Sahitya Parishad, etc It is in control of a large number of co operative societies and panchayats, though many of them have been dissolved and taken over by the Government

61 It should however be noted that although ours is the biggest single party in the State, we are not a majority party Our voting strength in 1977 was formally two million, though if our votes we shared with our allies are included, the figure would be three million In the 1971 parliamentary elections we had polled 2.7 million In 1971 we contested a far larger number of constituencies than in 1977 and therefore the figure for 1977, is not an index of our strength among the electorate Even after making allowance for this, it should be stated that there has been some erosion of our popular base in certain important pockets such as Palghat and Alleppey districts This weakness of the Party had been noted in the Election Review prepared by the State Committee after the 1977 elections

62 As a matter of fact, our political campaigns have not made any significant change in the correlation of political forces in the State The anti CPI(M) Coalition that was forged in 1969 continued to block the advance of Left and democratic forces, the little rifts and fissures that came out on occasions did not lead to any major change in the political situation of the State This weakness of our Party should be noted while evolving the political tactical line for the State and in working out appropriate forms of building the mass organisations, leading struggles and consolidating the growing mass movement into a well organised and developing party of the working class in the State

63 Although not to the same extent as West Bengal, our Party in Kerala too had to go through severe tests and trials The toppling of the united front Government led by us in 1969 was the beginning of a furious offensive launched by the combination of the Indira Congress and the revisionists, along with such parties as the Muslim League and the Kerala Congress—an offensive which combines ideological political as well as physical forms of attack No less than 300 of the best cadres of the Party and its strong supporters were done to death by the police and the goondas of the ruling parties

64 It is necessary to strengthen the Party and its leadership over the fighting organisations of the working people For, though not in the same sense as State units of the Party in most other

States, our unit in Kerala also suffers from some weaknesses of the Party organisation. The most important of these weaknesses appears to be the lack of ideological political activity of Party members through their own units.

65 It may be mentioned here that the Kerala Party has to its credit an enormous amount of work by way of preparing the material for the education and re-education of Party members, for involving them in the evolution of Party policy and in the battle of ideas to be waged against the class enemy. The daily "Deshabhimani", (about 60,000), the political theoretical weekly "Chintha" (about 19,000), the cultural "Deshabhimani" weekly (17,000), a number of publications brought out by the trade unions, Kisan Sabha, agricultural labour union and other mass organisations as well as the pamphlets, booklets and bigger books brought out by the Party publishing house should collectively help the Party as a whole in its ideological and political work. This however requires that the Party units at all levels should make it a point to use this immense material for the education and re-education of Party members and sympathisers as well as for waging the battle of ideas for Marxism-Leninism and against alien ideologies.

66 One major weakness of the Party's propaganda work in the State is the low circulation of the Party's central organ "People's Democracy". The reason given for this in the reply to the questionnaire supplied by the State Committee are not convincing. It is not true, as is alleged in the reply to the questionnaire, that necessary leadership and guidance are not available from the central organ for activities in Kerala. As a matter of fact, more space is devoted to Kerala than to most other States (barring West Bengal). The circulation of "People's Democracy" in Kerala, however, is even less than in Karnataka where, as is well known, the Party is far weaker than in Kerala. The other reason given, i.e., the erratic distribution of "People's Democracy" is equally applicable to all States. It is necessary to put it sharply that the necessary efforts are not made to have the central organ of the Party widely circulated.

67 It is precisely here that the weakness of the Party organisation in the State lies. The entire published material is not, consciously and in a planned way, utilised by the Party leadership at all levels for enriching the ideological political understanding of the entire Party. Till very recently there were no sub-committees at the State or district level for using all this material to draw the entire Party membership into the constant process of education and re-education. It is hoped that with the formation of such committees some time ago, this weakness will be quickly overcome. Consequently the task of equipping the Party members and sympathisers with the theory of Marxism-Leninism as it is applied from day to day to the changing developments and problems arising therefrom is neglected.

68 If this weakness is overcome, the Party in Kerala can make still further advances very rapidly. For here are 67,366 members (including candidates) organised in 8054 branches, 803 Local Committees and 81 Taluk or Area Committees. What this system of Party organisation lacks is the process of reporting from the higher to the lower committees and vice versa, so that the entire Party is involved in the evolution and implementation of policies.

69 In the absence of such an involvement of the entire Party in the evolution and implementation of policies, what is called "organisational work" comes to be reduced to some narrow, routine jobs. With this approach to the problems of organisation, divorced from the intense inner Party political activity, even the present membership of 42,000 (plus 26,000 candidates) cannot be activated, and made to function as integral part of a systematically working organisation. The problems of organisation are bound to become still more complicated when a serious effort is made, as is suggested in this document, for absorbing still larger number of militants as Candidates and thus as Party members. Looking at the problems of recruitment and education of Party members on a large scale and making them function as disciplined members of a revolutionary party from the narrow routine point of view, isolated from the ideological political work among Party members, is bound to raise innumerable organisational problems. This weakness of the Party organisation has to be rapidly overcome, otherwise the Party in the State is in for a big trouble.

70. Full figures are not available for the State as a whole regarding Party members, categorised on the basis of their class origin, the mass front in which they are working, the duration of their Party membership, etc. It is, however, clear from the figures supplied districtwise that the overwhelming majority Party members are from the two classes of working class and peasantry (over 12,500 out of 14,802 in Cannanore, over 800 out of 1087 in Wynad, nearly 3700 out of 5238 in Kozhikode, 2000 out of 3681 in Palghat, 6800 out of 7800 in Ernakulam etc.). The peasant, however, has not been categorised as poor, middle, and rich as was suggested in the questionnaire but all of them are clubbed together as peasant. Approximately the same picture emerges when we examine the figures of Party members working in the various mass fronts.

71. Revealing facts are brought out regarding the year of joining the Party. Out of 14,802 Party members in Cannanore district, 12,447 joined the Party after 1964, while another 1885 did so between 1951-64. Only the remaining 469 have the experience of pre-1950 tests and trials. Kozhikode, too, has only 107 out of 5238 who were in the Party before 1950. Almost the same picture emerges in all other districts which shows the need for a massive campaign of educating the bulk of new members of the Party while re-educating the old.

72. Apart from special fund drives for setting up such institutions as the Deshabhimani Press, Publishing house, etc., as well as for the routine expenditure of the Party from top to bottom, collections are made for all the mass organisations, most of which have their own wholetimers maintained out of the collections made by way of membership subscriptions and special funds. It can be safely stated that the entire organisation—Party as well as the mass organisations—is maintained out of the collections made from the fighting people, supplemented to a very marginal extent by donations from better-off sympathisers.

TRIPURA

73. This is the State which is normally bracketed with West Bengal and Kerala as a strong base of the Party. In one sense, it

has outpaced both West Bengal and Kerala, the percentage of votes polled by the Left Front led by our Party in the State elections of December 1977 is even higher than those of West Bengal and Kerala. This, in fact, is the only case in which the CPI(M) and its allies have polled over 50 per cent of the votes polled.

74 It would, however, be wrong to look at this fact in isolation and come to the conclusion that the Party in this State is stronger than anywhere else in the country. For, as is well known to all Marxist Leninists, figures of electoral gains or losses are only a rough indication of its political hold over the people.

75 The Assembly election in Tripura in December 1978 took place in the context of some extraordinary developments, such as the Left Front victory in West Bengal, and the miserable record of the CFD and Janata, constituents of the two Coalition Governments in which the CPI(M) was a participant. The specific context helped us to overcome our traditional weakness among the people of Tripura.

76 Our increased strength in the Bengali section and our continued hold over the tribal people pose new problems before the Party on the solution of which depends whether our Party will continue to have allegiance of both sections.

77 It is known that there is a feeling among sections of tribals that they are being overwhelmed and driven to the wall by the inflow of Bengalees. It is a fact, besides, that lot of tribal land has been occupied by others. It is a very difficult and delicate task to maintain and keep the two sections united. Our cause will be affected if there is the least suspicion that we are yielding to chauvinistic pressure and being unfair to the tribals. We cannot also afford to ignore the tendencies of tribal separatism. A failure to understand the delicate character of the problem, the sensitiveness of the tribals, may do much harm.

78 The Party in Tripura with a membership of 3800 has a long tradition of struggle due to which it has become the leader of the people of the State. The Party has tried to utilise this for building the mass organisations of the workers, the tribal and non tribal kisans and agricultural labourers, the students, youth and women.

79 The membership of the CITU is 12,681 for the year 1977. In the same year, there was a union not affiliated to the CITU but led by the CPI(M) which had a membership of 2200. The two together comes to 15,000 in a small and predominantly agricultural State.

80 The membership of the non tribal Kisan Sabha and the tribal Ganamukti Parishad comes to a total of 40,000 in 1977. Together with the SFI membership of 19,141, and over 21,000 in the Youth Federation (7223 tribal and 13,850 non tribal), the total membership of mass organisations led by our Party thus comes to over a lakh for a State whose total population is less than two million.

81 This is the solid base on which the Party can advance provided it is able to carry on a principled struggle against Bengali chauvinism and tribal separatism among the people of the State which reflect themselves in the Party as well.

82 The State Committee publishes a weekly from its own press with a circulation of 3700. It also gets and circulates Bengali Party organs coming from Calcutta. The Party and the Ganamukti Parishad publish small booklets and pamphlets.

ANDHRA PRADESH

83 This State unit of the Party has a long tradition of revolutionary work and has the heritage of the armed struggle in Telangana. It used to be bracketed with Bengal and Kerala as a stronghold of the Party. The two phases of disruption in the movement—the first caused by the Right revisionists and the second by the Naxalites—have however enormously weakened it. Membership of the Party and of the mass organisations led by it have registered precipitous fall due to these two disruptions. Added to this, the Telangana separatist movement in 1972 and the Andhra separatist movement that followed diverted the attention of the whole people from mass movements to regional bickerings. As a result of these disruptions the Party in Andhra Pradesh could not avail of the opportunities that were open to the progressive movements elsewhere in the wake of the defeat of the Congress in eight States in 1967 and the Congress split in 1969. By 1971, the Party had to encounter the Indira wave in the State.

84 Despite all these hurdles the Party in Andhra Pradesh stood its ground and fought back ideologically the onslaughts of both Right reformist and Left adventurist trends and revived its mass activities. Remaining as the only political party which stood for integrity of the State without swinging towards either of the separatist movements, the Party campaigned against these disruptive movements as a culmination of which two big workers' and peasants' rallies were held in Hyderabad and Vijayawada thereby on both occasions drawing the people's attention from separatism to popular mass demands. With such efforts and on such a basis the Party could overcome the Indira wave and advance towards making use of the changed political situation in the country as a whole and in the State. The correct tactical and political line of forging unity of all anti authoritarian forces since March 1977 have helped the Party win eight seats in the State Assembly.

85 From 1972 to 1978, about 8000 youths, students and Party cadres were given political and ideological education in short time political schools. Apart from undertaking many other campaigns like anti repression, Vietnam solidarity and Kerala and Bengal solidarity, many a struggle was led on the questions of high prices and food between 1972 and 1974. Picketing 35 Government offices by 25,200 facing arrests and lathi charges, and undertaking every year to fight for higher wages for agricultural labourers in about 200 to 300 villages, the Party paved the way for the advance of the mass movements among workers, agricultural labourers, peasants, students, teachers, youth and women in the State.

86 The membership of the CITU is more than 30,000 while that of the Agricultural Labour Union has come to 147,000. The Kisan Sabha for the first time in recent times enrolled about 67,000 members. The Prajathantra Yuvajana Sangham which has been started afresh has enrolled 47,000 members with varied activities in 300 villages. The SFI membership is about 21,000 and Mahila Sangham, the enrolment to which is still going on has up to now enrolled 10,000. The Praja Natya Mandal has been revived under circumstances of the Emergency and its activity is continuing.

87 The Party weekly, 'Prajasakthi', is having a circulation of about 11,000 copies. As for Party membership, it did of course

register precipitous falls between 1964 and 1969 because that was the period when the Party had to fight a two front battle against revisionism on the one hand and Naxalism on the other. After 1969, however, the membership has been more or less marking time, but has now increased to 9600. It will thus be seen that serious efforts are being made to consolidate our growing political influence.

88 The worst tragedy that overtook the State by the cyclone and tidal wave of November 1977 showed that the Party in the State is capable of throwing itself heart and soul in the cause of serving the people.

89 Under these circumstances, a correct stand on organisational questions, together with the correct tactical political line, will help the Party in Andhra Pradesh to take the utmost advantage of the new political situation in the country and in the State which are favourable for the development of the Left and democratic movement.

TAMIL NADU

90 The Party in this State like in the rest of the country is up against the political influence and organised strength of the bourgeois landlord classes represented by the Congress and Janata parties. In addition, it is faced with the task of fighting the Dravidian ideology of the DMK AIADMK organisations. Although, it is fairly strong in the trade union centres of Madurai, Trichy, Coimbatore, Madras, South Arcot, North Arcot, Salem and Kanyakumari districts and although it has made advances in the Madras Chingleput region, it is weak in the State as a whole in the political sense.

91 This is due partly to the fact that we have not been able to wage a successful battle against the Dravidian ideology against these parties who have been championing aggressively the cause of Tamil nationalism. It is also due to the fact that our work among the peasantry is extremely weak. The only area of a mass movement of the rural poor which the Party has in the whole State is Thanjavoor where, however, the movement is based on the agricultural labourers. This means that the mass of peasants, as

distinct from the agricultural labourers, is under the ideological, political and practical leadership of the parties of the bourgeois landlord classes. The student movement has not picked up in the State.

92 Despite this basic handicap of the Party in the State, however, it has become a political force in the State, thanks to the political situation in the country as a whole. Our alliance with the AIADMK helped us in securing eleven seats in the State Assembly and one in the Rajya Sabha. The mass organisations led by us have a total membership of 228,000—Trade Unions 86,000, Kisan Sabha 82,000, Women 30,000, Youth 25,000 and SFI 3000.

93 The Party here has a daily, "Theekkathir", with a circulation of 6000. It is also bringing out a cultural monthly. Around this cultural monthly are rallied a large number of progressive writers who have been organised into a Progressive Writers' Association.

94 The Party here has a regular system of giving annual calls for Party funds which are collected from the mass of sympathisers, rather than from a few individuals.

95 The Party membership in the State is 10,800 in 1978 as compared to 8570 in 1977.

PUNJAB

96 Our Party in Punjab has the distinction of having gone through the various phases of the revolutionary anti imperialist movement, beginning with the pre First World War groups of revolutionaries abroad. Marxism Leninism as an ideology and as a movement therefore came naturally to Punjab. The successive struggles made by the early groups of Communists and the organised Communist Party since it was formed have made the ideas of Communism popular among the people of Punjab. When the CPI was divided into Rightists and Marxists, a large number of veteran Communists joined the CPI(M).

97 This is the capital on which the CPI(M) since its formation has been working to become a political force to reckon with. It has always been in a position to make effective intervention in the politics of the State, because of, by no means negligible, influence which the Party exerts in the rural areas. In the

communally divided politics of the State, our independent position in the rural areas has enabled us to get temporary allies and win elections

98 This however has a negative side. The State's politics is stricken with communal strife and tensions. While it was the question of a Hindu Muslim Sikh communal equation in pre-Independence Punjab, it is today the Sikh and Hindu question. While maintaining a correct approach to the political parties in the State, our own Party has to carry on a consistent ideological struggle against the communal appeals and strengthen democratic values and outlook. Perhaps there has been a tendency to overlook the importance of this struggle and satisfy ourselves with the tactics addressed to the immediate present. This has to some extent hampered our progress.

99 It should however, be noted that the Party is making serious efforts to enrol members into the mass organisations. The growth of the SFI, the youth organisation and the Dehati Mazdoor Sabha should be particularly noted, their membership for the year 1977 being 21,000, 11,000 and 13,600 respectively. The Kisan Sabha is more or less marking time, while the CITU is making slow progress (present membership is 20,000). Out of the eight members in the Assembly and one member in the Lok Sabha it is gratifying to note that five MLAs and the MP come from the Scheduled Castes. This must be fully utilised to strengthen our movement among the agricultural labourers.

100 The party has a membership of 4500. It runs its own daily in the Punjabi language with a circulation of 4000, which after being suspended for some time earlier, has now been restarted. The Party in the State has built up a tradition of collecting funds from the masses, but as the reply to the questionnaire shows, a tendency has of late been growing of depending more on collections from individuals than from the masses.

101 The class composition of the Party membership according to the State Committee is five per cent working class, 15 per cent agricultural labourers, 20-25 per cent poor peasants, 40-45 per cent middle peasants, ten per cent other middle strata and five per cent rich peasants.

ASSAM

102 This has traditionally been included among the weak States in terms of Party organisation. Things however have changed of late. The February elections in 1978 showed that the Party is by no means a negligible force in the State politics. Our electoral support rose from 61,165 in 1967 to 290,385 in 1978. The fact that we could get 11 members elected to the Legislature without alliance with any major political Party shows our strength. Corresponding to this, we have also a membership of the mass organisations as follows: Kisan Sabha 55,000, CITU 10,000, SFI 27,500 and Democratic Youth Federation 9000.

103 These figures together constitute about one sixth of the votes polled by us. The proportion of Party membership to the membership of the mass organisations led by us is about one to 25. The Party has a membership of 3400.

104 This is one of the few States which has supplied the figures regarding the class composition of Party members, from which it is seen that workers are 288, agricultural labourers 60, poor peasants 638, middle peasants 510, rich peasants 55, artisans 29, small traders 152, landlords six and intelligentsia 534. Workers, poor peasants, agricultural labourers and artisans together thus constitute around 1000. The number of women members is 88.

105 Another satisfactory aspect of Party work in Assam is that the weekly brought out in Assamese has a circulation of 6000 to which should be added the circulation of 1000 Bengali weekly "Desh Hitaishi" and "People's Democracy" 761.

106 Assam shares with Tripura the national problem of Assamias versus Bengalis. The electoral gains of the Party in February are influenced by the electoral victory in West Bengal. But, as in Tripura, the anti Bengali feelings are roused only to worsen the relations between the two sections of the people in the State. Here, too, the Party has to carry on a principled struggle against Bengali and Assamese chauvinism.

ORISSA

107 Although a traditionally weak State from the point of view of the Party organisation, Orissa has started overcoming its weaknesses. This, however, had started even earlier. In the 1967 elections, for instance, we had one MLA, the number increased to

two in 1971 and three in 1974. We had also three Chairmen of Panchayat Samities in 1967. Today, we have one M.P., one MLA, one Panchayat Samiti Chairman and 22 Panchayats (two in Mayurbhanj district, eleven in Balasore, eight in Puri and one in Ganjam). Work on the trade union, kisan, student and youth fronts is also being organised but as pointed out in the State Committee's replies to the questionnaire, there are serious lags in the work of the Party in all these fronts. It should be borne in mind that disruption weakened an already weak unit here.

Hindi Speaking Region

108 These States have for long been the traditional strongholds of the Congress Party. The first dent was made in this Congress fortress in the 1967 elections when the Congress was temporarily replaced by non-Congress Governments in most of the States. The Left and democratic movement was however too weak to be able to capitalise on the growth of the opposition forces. The Congress was therefore able to recapture power and consolidate it in 1971-72. But the events which followed once again undermined the base of the Congress which was defeated in the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections of 1977. It is for us to see that this gain of the Opposition is utilised by the Left and democratic movement to further consolidate itself and win new allies from the ranks of the Janata as well as the two Congresses, so that a viable alternative to both emerges.

109 This, however, requires the sustained help of the all-India centre of the Party. For, unlike the other States, here is a region composed of half a dozen States and Union Territories but having a common language. None of the States taken separately can be expected to do some of the essential jobs of Party building, such as bringing out agitational, propaganda and educational material, organisation of schools for the ideological struggle against alien modes of thinking and policies, etc. Hence the need for the Centre sharing a part of the responsibilities of the States in this region which are entirely discharged by the State Committees in the non-Hindi speaking States.

110 That such an effort can transform the situation in this region is proved by some advance registered in some fields of activity or fronts in some of the Hindi speaking States.

BIHAR

111 Bihar is a State in which the CPI is far stronger than us. Almost the entire leadership of the top and middle cadres in this

State went over to them at the time of our break. Out of those who came over to us, a chunk was carried away by the Naxalites. The State Committee had further to conduct the struggle against A. K. Roy and his group and unite the Party against them. Furthermore, as has been pointed out in the Review Report of the Tenth Congress, the Bihar unit of the Party itself suffered from a sectarian attitude to the movement of growing resistance to Indira Gandhi's authoritarianism. Despite all these shortcomings, however, we were able to make certain advances. The PB and CC intervened to correct the shortcomings and unify the State unit to enable it to advance further. Now the Party membership has increased from 3500 to 6350. Trade unions led by us have a membership of 35,000. Kisan Sabha membership is 46,000. SFI more than 6000 and youth above 5000. It is not a small thing that, with practically no alliance, our Party won four seats in the February elections. It has a mass mobilising capacity which was expressed in the massive demonstration held recently in Patna which exceeded 50,000. If only the correction of the political tactical line is carried forward and inner Party unity maintained, the Party has every chance of making rapid strides.

UTTAR PRADESH

112 Uttar Pradesh has always been a weak State for the Left and democratic movement in general and our Party in particular. Ever since our break with the revisionists, we have been marking time. We also had serious losses due to Naxalite disruption. Despite these shortcomings, however, the situation is favourable, since the radical and progressive elements in the State are looking forward to a radical alternative. Some advance is being registered in the mass movement in Western UP. The Eastern UP Committee has succeeded in bringing out a weekly paper which gives good promise. The Party membership in both East and West stands at 4350 and the membership of the Kisan Sabha is 61,000. It is a very big State with a population of about ten crores. Unless our Party makes a big advance, it cannot become a significant political force.

MADHYA PRADESH

113 Our Party had the misfortune of successive disruption and disorganisation. The State Committee at one stage had to be dissolved and Regional Committees formed in its place. These latter, too, could not function properly. Still, the few comrades who were left and were carrying on dedicated work were subjected to heavy repression during the Emergency. After the lifting of the

Emergency, organisational work has been resumed leading to some activity in the trade union field. A regular State Committee has now been formed, which is functioning. Party membership now is 650

RAJASTHAN

114 The Party and the mass movement led by it have been weak. There has been considerable improvement in the trade union work. There has been no advance whatsoever in the kisan front since the Sikar Conference. Recently there is some progress in the work in the student front. The State Committee is bringing out a weekly organ of its own. The Party membership for the State is 1340

DELHI

115 Has been making some progress in its mass work. In such industrial centres as Faridabad and Ghaziabad, the CITU has become a very important force. The successful organisation of a one day general strike in May in which the CITU played the most important role is indeed a creditable achievement of the Party here. In the student field, too, the SFI is increasingly becoming an important force. It has come to occupy a significant place in the Jawaharlal Nehru University, while it is growing in the Delhi University. The Party membership in Delhi is 600

HARYANA

116 Haryana has been, and continues to be, a weak State for our movement. A beginning, however, has been made to overcome the weakness. The student movement has made some advance in the recent period. Some headway has also been made in important trade union centres. The Party membership is 500

117 The varied extent to which progress is being made in the Hindi speaking region emphasises the need for a Hindi paper run by the Central Committee and meant to cater to the needs of the entire region—as also of the Hindi speaking people in several other States. This will help the co-ordination of Party activity in all these States. A paper, pamphlets, books, etc., brought out in Hindi by the Central Committee alone would help the consolidation of the emerging Left and democratic forces in the entire region

118 One important point to be mentioned in this connection is the role played by the CITU and the SFI in these States. The formation of these two organisations followed by the campaigns and struggles led by them have laid the basis for the formation of

the Party in several parts of this region. What is required for the consolidation of these bases is the work of the Party Centre in the production of Party literature, organisation of Party schools, visits of all India leaders of the Party and mass organisations, etc.

119 Before we leave the subject of Party organisation in the Hindi region, it is necessary to mention a special feature of the socio cultural situation in the region which hampers the development of the democratic movement and the Party. This region did not witness a bourgeois social reform movement against outdated customs, beliefs, family relations, etc., to the same extent as States like Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The result is that the hold of the caste organisations, antiquated social institutions, etc., is more in this region than in most other parts of the country. The consciousness in favour of organisation has thus to be created afresh.

120 It goes without saying that the struggle for People's Democracy should include the struggle against these antiquated social institutions, modes of thinking and day to day practices which is very much part of the anti feudal element of the struggle for People's Democracy. The organisations of the students, the youth, the women, the writers and other intellectuals, etc., have a significant role to play in the struggle.

121 Even without any conscious organisation and activity, the Hindi region has witnessed the emergence of groups of radical intelligentsia. The little work that is done by the SFI and groups of radically inclined Hindi writers shows good promise. This can be directed towards a renaissance embracing this whole region and can play a useful role in working towards changing the socio cultural situation in the region.

GUJARAT

122 This State has a Party membership of 150. It has for long remained weak so far as the political influence and organisation of the Party are concerned. Recently, however, the State Committee has been reorganised and the new State Committee has started functioning. The Party has no press of its own, but a fortnightly paper is coming out. Its circulation is between 1200 and 1800. Work in the mass organisations and consolidation of the scattered Party members all over the State has begun. It goes without saying that the Party requires various types of assistance from the Centre.

MAHARASHTRA

123 Although the State was considered to be the cradle of the Communist movement in India, Bombay City and Maharashtra have remained weak even when the Party was united. After the split, our Party has been, in the organisational sense, marking time, Party membership including candidates remained virtually the same for these years since 1968-69 till 1977-78. In 1977-78, however, there has been a marginal increase (from 2264 to 2650).

124 This marginal increase in membership however should be seen against the background of the political prestige and authority of the Party in Maharashtra politics. We played, by no means insignificant role, in getting the Congress defeated in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in 1977 and 1978. With three members elected to the Lok Sabha and nine to the Assembly, we are able to play some role in the politics of the State.

125 Our Party and the mass organisations led by us have also played a significant role in developing the campaigns, movements and struggle of the working class, adivasi peasants, etc. These, however, have not been consolidated into the solid political organisational base of the Party. A State unit of the Party with three members in the Lok Sabha and nine in the Vidhan Sabha is able to bring out only a fortnightly and that, too, with a circulation of just over 1000 copies. The lag in this respect is also reflected in the fund collection and other aspects of Party building.

126 Our Party has to take serious note of the fact that this is the foremost industrial State in the country. Its importance in the political life of the country enjoins us to pay special attention to overcome the present weakness of the Party and the revolutionary movement in the State.

KARNATAKA

127 We have received no reply to the questionnaire from Karnataka. The State Party unit has been in a crisis for years due to the factionalism, indiscipline and defiant attitude of the State Secretary, who had to be expelled. A reorganised Committee with a new Secretary is now functioning.

128 Some advance has been made in the industrial, academic and political centre of the State, Bangalore. This will not be affected by the attempts at disorganisation and disruption by the expelled members. The other centres where there is some Party work and organisation are South Kanara, Kolar (gold fields and surrounding rural areas) and isolated pockets like Bijapur, Tumkur and Gulbarga. The bulk of Party members have rallied behind the reconstituted State leadership.

Problems Facing Us

129 This review of the replies sent by the State Committees reveals that in every State the mass influence of the Party is daily increasing, its members are engaged in multifarious activities and good soil has been prepared for its organisational advance and consolidation. At present the membership of the Party is 1,57,000, the CITU has a membership of about 15,00,000, the All India Kisan Sabha has a membership of more than 23,00,000, the SFI which was started only in 1971 has today a membership of 4,00,000. At the same time the growth in the mass influence of the Party has not adequately reflected itself either in the growth of mass organisations or in expansion of the Party.

130 This means that in part at least, the problems faced by our Party are problems of growth, of how to draw and enrol out of the thousands of people who follow us and our mass organisations in daily battles. But more importantly they are problems created by our past, the past that still haunts us. Our battle against the revisionist distortion of organisational principles and functioning is not over, resulting in a series of distortions hampering the growth of our Party. They are

- (a) There has been a tendency towards federalism which is really the anti thesis of democratic centralism, the cardinal principle of Party organisation
- (b) The Party's growth is severely handicapped by the Centre's failure to engage in a consistent fight against all alien ideologies. Reliance for expansion therefore mainly rests on the consciousness created in elementary class struggles and Party schools and publications on current issues at best. There is no planned efforts to systematically involve the bulk of Party membership into evolving the Party's political line and in implementing it. This leads to instability in the Party membership from year to year.
- (c) In a large number of States the practice of reporting to the unit and reporting back from the unit hardly exists. Equally abandoned is the practice of reviewing mass struggles and campaigns and teaching the Party through the experience of its own activities. This leads to abandonment of

criticism and self criticism inside the Party depriving it of one of the important weapons of constantly rectifying itself and improving its understanding and practice In the absence of constant review and self criticism the practice develops of presenting the Party's activities and reports in a complacent way, justifying everything that is done by the leadership An uncritical one sided presentation of achievements harms the Party's progress and undermines collective will and unity It is necessary to restore criticism and self criticism inside the Party

- (d) In a large number of State Committees there is lack of collective functioning, division of work, leading to individualistic functioning Instead of the Committee, the Secretary functions leading to concentration of power, inefficiency and bureaucratism
- (e) Rank and file members do not feel that they have a role in shaping and reshaping the Party's line and policy, they do not feel that their initiative, understanding and experience are being given proper weight This harms the Party in a number of ways It obstructs the process of the Party's unification It prevents the leadership from learning from the experience of the masses It makes short work of the concept of democratic centralism reducing inner Party democracy to a mere formality
- (f) In spite of our mass activities the class composition of the Party has not changed There has been a persistent failure to orientate Party efforts in this direction
- (g) There has also been a general failure to expand the Party consistent with our mass influence Our mass leaders are not conscious of this responsibility and our Party as a whole has failed to develop the elementary class consciousness of the proletariat into Socialist consciousness and attract large numbers to the Party organisation
- (h) Very few units, besides, are aware of the problems created by fresh recruitment in recent years It has now been revealed that members enrolled after 1964 form the majority of our Party These new members have joined the

Party after our breaking away with the revisionists, and do not share the experience of earlier years. In the absence of proper and strong ideological training, this is likely to lead to undermining the ideological political foundations of the Party.

- (i) Unit functioning in the Party is at minimal level and requires drastic overhauling. The Branches, the main link of the Party with the masses, hardly function as units of the Party.
- (j) Party organs and their editing, etc., often becomes the preserve of a few comrades, many leading comrades do not take seriously the task of contributing to the papers, they are not collectively discussed. Similarly reporting, addressing general body meetings also get confined to a couple of comrades, distorting the development of collective leadership.
- (k) Many State Committees fail to discuss problems of the mass movement, and lay down comprehensive guidelines in terms of the Party line for conduct of mass activities.
- (l) The forum of Legislatures is not used in a Marxist Leninist way to carry forward the battle against the exploiting classes. Its importance is often underestimated under the pretext of devoting attention to revolutionary activity outside. The activity on this important forum is not constantly reviewed to examine whether it is conducted properly. In its absence Legislators are often left to themselves to function on their own.

If these are the defects at State and other levels, the Centre has developed its own shortcomings.

Party Centre and its Role in Party Building

131 It is an accepted Marxist Leninist principle that a real Communist Party, capable of fighting for political power and winning it, can be successfully built only from above, i.e., from the Party Centre. Such a Party Centre alone can build a Party which will be able to make a bid for power against the centralised bourgeois landlord State power. Any talk of building a genuine,

mass Communist Party and a nationwide revolutionary movement, divorced from the building of an effective Party Centre, is bound to be shallow. Similarly, all talk of achieving political, ideological and organisational unity of the entire Party, from top to bottom, is bound to remain empty and formal, without a properly functioning Party Centre, capable of giving effective political, ideological and organisational guidance and leadership from time to time. The absence of a proper Party Centre and the existence of a skeleton Centre is bound to weaken and undermine proper relations between the Central Committee and different State Committees and thus deliver a bodyblow to the most revolutionary principle of democratic centralism. A correct political general line, and a correct tactical line for the country as a whole, can never be worked out without a proper Party Centre. Finally, our Tenth Party Congress Resolution enjoining us to bring about a radical realignment of class forces and to forge a Left and democratic front, as a real national alternative remains a pious wish without building an effective Party Centre.

132 While examining the work of building the Party Centre after the release of our leaders and cadres in May 1966 and in particular after the General Elections in March 1967, it needs to be borne in mind that the tasks enjoined by the Seventh Party Congress had remained unfulfilled till then. It was decided at that Party Congress to review the work on the trade union, kisan and Party organisational fronts, and to chalk out a plan of action to liquidate the legacies of Right reformism and revisionism. The PB and C C resolutions, namely, New Situation and Tasks, Tasks on the Kisan Front, Tasks on the Trade Union Front and the Tasks on Party Organisation were worked out between April 1967 and November 1967. Another key task that had to be discharged by the Party Centre was the organisation of the inner Party debate on ideological differences in the international Communist movement, and to decide the attitude of our Party on these different questions. The PB and C C had prepared the draft, organised the inner Party discussion, held the State Plenums and the Central Plenum with wider participation. The Party's stand on these ideological issues was finally formulated. These were no mean achievements for the

PB, C C and the Party Centre, though all these tasks enjoined upon the C C by the Seventh Congress in November 1964, could not be fulfilled till April 1968 when the Central Plenum at Burdwan, on ideological debate, could be concluded

133 The PB and the C C were not left free to smoothly implement these above key resolutions which in their totality had laid down a broadly correct Marxist Leninist line for our Party. The unavoidable and inordinate delay in discussing and deciding our Party's line regarding the ideological differences in the world Communist movement, a delay of nearly four years between the Tenth Convention held in July 1964, and the Central Plenum at Burdwan in the middle of April 1968, had cost our Party dearly. A section of the Party leaders and cadres were carried away by the Left adventurist point of view, advocated by the Communist Party of China. Thus the two successive splits in the short span of five years between 1963 and 1968 had sapped the strength of our Party organisation in a number of States. Not merely that. The struggle unleashed to liquidate the legacies of Right revisionism got enmeshed with the struggle against the Left adventurist attacks by the Naxalites. As a result of this, neither of these two struggles could be conducted with the single mindedness, determination and thoroughness demanded of us. The powerful backing given by the CPSU to the Right revisionists and the all out support rendered by the CPC to the Left adventurists had definitely weakened our Party's thrust in its forward march. It did impose additional and complex burdens on the shoulders of the PB and C C which were already feeling unequal to the tasks they were facing.

134 Mention also will have to be made here regarding many complex national developments which took place during the 1970-75 period, in quick succession, and exacted a lot of time and attention of our Party Centre. The serious split of the ruling Congress Party into the so-called Indicate Congress and Syndicate Congress, the desertion of the Right CP to the ruling Congress Party and the subversion of the two Left oriented State Governments of Kerala and West Bengal led by our Party, the emergence of the two bourgeois landlord national combinations

of the ruling Congress and the so called Grand Alliance, the general elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislatures in March 1971 and in March 1972 respectively, the war between India and Pakistan over the issue of Bangladesh refugees, the semi fascist terror unleashed against our Party in West Bengal by the ruling Congress with the full support of the CPI, Naxalites and other anti social forces, the separatist movements in Telangana and Andhra regions to dismember Andhra Pradesh, the resistance movement against the Congress misrule led by Jaya Prakash Narayan in 1974-75, and the imposition of the Emergency and the enactment of the 42nd Amendment Act to institutionalise the authoritarian rule by Indira Gandhi and her party, etc, had put the Party leadership to severe test and trial. Our Party had the distinction of facing all these above narrated national political problems standing alone, without allowing itself either to become the camp follower of the ruling Congress or the oppositional "Grand Alliance" which subsequently merged into JP's resistance movement. In the midst of all this, new controversies of a serious nature arose on the agrarian front, on the trade union front, on questions of Party organisation and on the contents and comprehension of the Statement of Policy document of 1951. Though new resolutions were adopted on all these questions by the C C and though these resolutions were sought to be understood by us as an extension and further elaboration of our 1967 resolutions such as Tasks on the Kisan Front, Tasks on the Trade Union Front and Tasks on Party Organisation, they did not result either in giving our Party a unified understanding on these questions or in implementing and translating them into action.

135 The correct political ideological line forged and adhered to by the Party, in clear demarcation from both the Right revisionists and the ultra Leftists, had enabled our Party and its leadership to weather all these storms. It, no doubt, helped us to arrive at broadly correct decisions on all the turbulent questions that confronted the Party during these years of 1970-75. However, serious note should be taken of the fact that this entire process involved prolonged and tense inner PB and inner C C discus-

sions, some of the decisions were arrived at belatedly, and some others were halting and mistaken, and these inner PB and inner CC struggles over issues of policy and tactics had seriously strained the unity and cohesion of the PB and CC, the unity and cohesion that had enabled them to stand up as one man against both the Right and Left revisionist attacks, against the blackmailing of the leaders of the CPSU and the CPC, and against the two rival bourgeois landlord combinations in our country and their systematic attempts to cudgel us into rallying behind one or the other combine as their camp follower. The political, ideological and organisational unity that was demanded of the PB and CC in face of the innumerable challenging problems, had been weakened. Thus the weakness of the Party Centre, the weakness that we had inherited when we broke away with the revisionists and formed the CPI(M), was further aggravated.

136 The newly set up Party Centre following the March 1967 general elections had severe limitations. Five out of the total of nine PBMs had to spend a greater part of their time and energies either in the two States of West Bengal and Kerala or in Delhi, looking after the work of our group in Parliament. The remaining four PBMs including the General Secretary were left to conduct the work of the Party Centre. The very idea of only four full time functionaries running a Party Centre, like that of the CPI(M), looks fantastic. And yet that was what we had to reconcile with, and we attempted to carry out the tasks enjoined upon the Party Centre. When the CC and PB were constituted, it was hoped that the dual membership of the PB and the State Committees would be terminated in the course of time, and more PBMs would be available for work at the Party Centre. What actually happened was the reverse. With the accumulation of political organisational differences and their remaining unresolved for long periods, two out of the four PBMs functioning at the Centre had left the Centre, after 1971-72. They were only attending the PB and CC meetings, discharging jobs allotted to them from time to time. Such was the state of affairs with the work of the Party Centre on the eve of the Ninth Party Congress in June 1972, and it further

deteriorated by the time we convened our Tenth Party Congress in April 1978. To put it sharply the work of the Party Centre had become minimal, attending to only absolutely necessary and pressing political organisational jobs. One can easily conclude as to what the consequences of this would be for a Party guided by the inviolable principle that a real revolutionary working class party can be built only from above.

137 The great uneven development of the Party, which we had stated in *Our Tasks on Party Organisation* in the year 1967, did not merely remain where it was, but was greatly aggravated. The simple fact that sixty to seventy per cent of the total membership of the Party, of the total membership of the class and mass organisations, of the total votes polled in any election and of the agit prop literature produced and consumed, came from the two States of West Bengal and Kerala speaks volumes about the great unevenness of the Growth of the Party and its political influence. These two States together are populated by 80 million or so while the country's total population stands around 600 million and more. The Party Centre did hardly do anything to overcome these grave shortcomings. In fact, placed as it was, it could not undertake this task.

138 Apart from our Party's weak position in most of the States and vast areas in our country, our weakness in the huge Hindi speaking areas, is particularly striking. During the last fourteen years since the formation of the CPI(M), our Party had made no progress in these areas or only made scant progress in some pockets. These vast areas populated by hundreds of millions of people are under the political influence of the bourgeois landlord parties. Any talk of bringing about a radical realignment of class forces in the country without making a big dent in the Hindi speaking States and areas is devoid of substance.

139 Because of this, several urgent and pressing tasks outlined for the Centre in the 1967 and 1973 resolutions could not be fulfilled. The sharp inner PB differences added to the difficulties, leading to interminable discussions on the trade union line. Finally the C.C. adopted a resolution but it did not settle the differences.

140 The discussions on kisan problems which had led to the resolution of 1973, had to be subsequently re examined. The directive to improve "People's Democracy" and "Swadhinata" could not be carried out. There was no discussion on the student problem in the PB and the C C.

141 The political ideological unity demanded of a revolutionary working class party can never be achieved if regular reports are not sent to the Party Centre and if there is no co ordination and check up between the State Committees and the Party Centre in the matter of running Party journals, publishing books and pamphlets and the conducting of theoretical, ideological education, etc. The malady that was persisting since long in the united CPI, and about which we were extremely critical in Our Tasks on Party Organisation of 1967, and which was re emphasised in the C C resolution of 1973, can be best illustrated if we cite certain passages from these two C C resolutions on Party organisation.

"It is in theory admitted that a centrally well organised Communist Party alone can lead the Indian revolution by confronting the centrally organised and powerfully built State apparatus of the bourgeois landlord combine. But in practice, this awareness is found often lacking while the tendencies of a federal outlook are gaining ground. A sort of "State exclusiveness" and the absence of all India consciousness is gaining currency in the Party leadership, let alone the bulk of our Party members." (Page 61, 1967 Resolution)

"One of the major defects of our central leadership's functions is its ignorance about what is being written in the State organs in different languages.

"There have been articles written in different papers in the States, which are not in consonance with the Party line. Though normally the PB has endorsed the editors of different State organs, it is in total darkness about the contents, political line these papers are pursuing. The PB is unable to help them to correct or give suggestions for improvement. But, for a centralised revolutionary party like ours, this is a dangerous development. This can be remedied only if the Centre, gets more

cadre to work at the Centre, who can process the material appearing in the papers of different States, with their own estimation of the weak and strong points in them ” (Page 12, C C Resolution 1973)

The State Committees “are finding it difficult to spare immediately cadre to functioning at the C C Centre But without a large number of cadres, devoting most of their time functioning at the C C Centre, the Centre cannot effectively discharge the tasks it is normally expected to discharge The Central Committee decides that the State Committees, within a short time, should reorganise their work, and develop necessary cadre for their own States and giving priority to spare necessary cadre for the Centre ” (Page 29, C C Resolution 1973)

142 The grave shortcomings and weaknesses of the Party Centre, and the dangerous tendencies of federalism, sharply pointed out and criticised in both the C C Resolutions of 1967 and 1973, are not yet rectified In fact they have been further aggravated The political ideological unity among the bulk of our Party members as well as among the members of the leading Party Committees, is not what it should be The long period of our failure to build a strong Party Centre and also its further weakening in the period following 1971 72 has done immense damage to our Party to unify and consolidate the Party around our political line and to expand the Party in order to meet the growing requirements of the revolutionary movement

143 The great unevenness in the development of the Party in the country, which we noted in the 1967 and 1973 resolutions, has further grown during the last 14 years In States such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, U P, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Karnataka and all the States of the north eastern region our Party is not a “political force” to be reckoned with In some, marginal improvement has been registered during the period between 1964 and 1978, but in most of these States there was either stagnation or even some setback Such a state of affairs not only prevents our Party from becoming an all India political force, with striking power but it does become a serious drag on the further advancement of our

movement in the existing strong States such as West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. The semi fascist attack on the Party in these strong States during the years 1970-75 and the utter inability and helplessness of all other State units to come to their assistance in fighting against repression had shown the danger inherent in this uneven development. This unevenness poses another danger to our Party, the danger of serious imbalance in the composition of all India bodies, from Party Plenums, Conferences, Congresses, the Central Committee and the Polit Bureau, and imbalance that may adversely influence the all India decisions on political, tactical, organisation and other issues connected with the mass movements—decisions and resolutions which may fall too short of the needs of the advanced pockets and which may be too far ahead of the weaker States. Without a conscious and determined effort to overcome the prevailing uneven development of our Party in the country, the dangers pointed above are bound to grow, to the great detriment of our Party's progress. We should realise that the national campaigns which we are now contemplating and our failure to organise such campaigns which we are now self criticising, are bound to remain "local campaigns" if, in a greater part of the country our Party remains extremely weak or non-existent, and is incapable of organising such campaigns.

144 In examining the shortcomings of our work in the matter of Party organisations and in reviewing it, so that we might chalk out the future tasks in this regard, the two C C resolutions on Party Organisation, one in November 1967 and the second in March 1973, assume a central place in our discussion. These two C C resolutions, particularly the first one, Our Tasks on Party Organisation, adopted in November 1967, contain many basic and correct decisions on a number of questions connected with Party building. They correctly pin pointed the disastrous effects of Right revisionism on the Party organisation, and emphasised the need and urgency of liquidating the legacies of Right revisionism in Party organisation. It was on this basis that we had been struggling to rebuild our Party since 1967, and the second resolution of 1973 is only its continuation, with special emphasis on certain aspects which were uppermost in the discussions of our

PB and C C , during the 1969 72 period It is not necessary to describe here, in detail, the positive achievements of these resolutions, nor to repeat and reproduce what was stated in these two resolutions These two resolutions, the resolution of 1967 in particular, still continue to be our general guidelines for Party building and most of the basic propositions made therein remain valid

145 However, on a closer examination and review of our work on the organisational front, in the light of our experience during the last ten years since the C C Resolution, Our Tasks on Party Organisation, in 1967, some serious shortcomings and mistakes reveal themselves The Calicut C C Resolution has dealt with the topic of “Uneven Development of the Party and the Organisational Problems it Poses”, in five full pages, between pages 49 and 53 Conspicuously enough neither in these five pages nor in the rest of the resolution, is the question of building an effective Party Centre and its role in the consolidation and expansion of the Party in order to eliminate the weakness of unevenness is even raised Secondly, the said resolution does not underline the fact that ours is a very small party in a very big country, and the consequent need and urgency of expanding it to make it a really nationwide Party, with a big mass base Thirdly, the resolution which, in passing observes, “that the proletarian revolutionary movement and the Communist Party are extremely weak in States and areas in which Hindi and its dialects are spoken by people, who are around 200 million people out of the total of 500 millions of the country’s total population”, does not discuss and suggest the ways and means to overcome this biggest drawback Lastly, the concept of “developing movements in some compact and contiguous groups of villages or talukas or districts in a State, so that those struggles are effectively guided, organised and fought”, etc , which was first projected in our “Tasks on the Kisan Front” document of April 1967, is elaborated and developed into a full fledged thesis on Party organisation This idea of work in the compact areas is further concretised and the new concepts, “priority areas”, “political bases” and “all front movements in these areas”, are spelt out in the Muzaffarpur Resolution

on "Immediate Organisational Tasks", in March 1973. By the middle of the year 1975 the same concept becomes more specific and concretised in one document. Here the problem of uneven development of our Party and revolutionary movement in the country was sought to be overcome by the concentrated work in some select areas, zones, bases and States and was linked with the Statement of Policy of 1951 and its immediate bearing on the building of the Party and mass revolutionary movement.

146 The issue is not one of emphasising our work on a planned basis and the utilising of the available cadre and organisational resources in a most effective manner, instead of getting drawn into spontaneous and unplanned work. Such a planned work of consolidating our strength in some industries, areas and fronts, etc., according to the given conditions, is always necessary. However, this idea of concentration and extension should neither be restricted to few areas and States where today our Party is relatively strong nor is it to be directly and immediately deduced from the Perspective Tactical Line, laid down in the Statement of Policy.

147 This entire issue and the controversy centering round it occupied the inner Party discussions between the years 1969-72. Then the whole controversy was placed before the Central Committee for discussion and decision. For several reasons the C.C. could not discuss and decide the issue till 1975-76 when the Government led by Indira Gandhi had imposed the Internal Emergency. The relevant passages from the Central Committee Resolution of 1976, on the subject are:

"We worked out the Tasks on Party Organisation in November 1967. In that initial stage, taking into consideration the tremendous uneven development of the Party and its mass base, the document directed that the movement be built in compact and contiguous areas.

"Since that document was written, the mass movement has grown in West Bengal and Kerala. It is the strongest force and has a wide mass base in these two States. In Tripura also, the Party has a wide mass base but it is a very small State.

“This development has frightened the Government. It unleashed semi fascist terror in West Bengal and savage repression in Kerala and Tripura

“The defence and further advance of these advanced movements require the extension of the movements to ever new areas, new States and industries. This has become an urgent necessity

“The development of the mass base in the other States requires the intervention of the Party as effectively as possible in the popular movements that have been developing there and are bound to develop in the future

“The documents of 1967 as well as the organisational resolution of the C C in Muzaffarpur were first attempts by the C C to orientate our current work on different fronts to the Perspective Tactical Line. They were prepared without either a collective discussion of the TL or a common understanding arrived at on it. Their basic orientation was correct but we cannot stick to every formulation made or to stick to the letter of the position regarding ‘priority areas’ or ‘strategic areas’ without making provision for the possibilities of developing our movements and influence on a wide scale through intervention in struggles that break out because of objective conditions. The TL document directs the creation of a wide mass base all over the country and organisation of the working class on an all India basis and winning over the majority in the strategic industries all over the country. Experience has shown that it is not possible to defend and expand the advanced movements in the face of semi fascist terror without all India support

“It must be realised that mass struggles are breaking out in various places where we are weak. In the absence of our Party other reactionary parties take leadership of these struggles and hence these struggles do not get oriented towards the democratic revolution. Every effort must be made to establish the Party’s links with these struggles, help them to spread further, and politically influence the masses involved in these struggles in the direction of the democratic revolution. It must be remembered that a situation of widespread crisis is an essential element which

itself is produced by widespread struggles and other forms of militant resistance

“It is in this connection that widespread political propaganda and development of the movement by the Party in the country as a whole not only in the priority areas and strong States—become a must

“.. It must also be realised that at present the growth of the popular democratic movement lags far behind the growth of popular discontent While discharging its tasks on the trade union and peasant fronts and while intervening in popular struggles when and where they break out, the Party has to give attention to organise and lead movements of students, youth and women

“These weaknesses must be quickly overcome ”

148 Our Party, drawing on the innumerable lessons from our own experience and from the experiences of different Communist contingents in the world, should strive its utmost to overcome the difficulties, to correct the shortcomings and mistakes and to discharge numerous political and organisational tasks that confront us at present The reports from the States make it clear that more than 50 to 60 per cent of our total PMs in the country are members recruited after the year 1964, and their political ideological level will have to be raised in a big way Reports also reveal that the desired inner Party political ideological and organisational unity is lacking Some States have serious inner Party problems to be tackled We do know that bureaucratic tendencies, the tendencies to be little the principle of democratic centralism, the tendencies of federalism, the absence of regular reporting from top to bottom and from State Committee to the Central Committee, the persistence of parliamentary and legalistic illusions and the absence of revolutionary awareness and organisation to meet all contingencies, the unsatisfactory state of affairs with Party schooling, with running of our weeklies and dailies and in bringing out necessary agit prop literature and above all the great weakness of the Party over the greater part of the country, that are facing us, demanding immediate attention of the entire Party

149 All these can be discharged only by a properly functioning well built and effective Party Centre, in close co operation and unity with all the State Committees, the leading State Committees in particular. The present Party Centre with four to five PBMs and two or three CCMs cannot discharge even a fraction of the tasks that confront it and have to be discharged. It is fit and proper that all of us remind ourselves of the famous statements of Lenin that “in its struggle for power, the proletariat has no other weapon but organisation”, and “the proletariat can, and inevitably will become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism, reinforced by the material unity of organisation, which wields millions of toilers into an army of the working class ” (One Step Forward, Two Steps Back)

150 The proletarian organisation that Lenin was speaking of was nothing else than the revolutionary Communist Party and revolutionary working class movement around it. If we realise the fact that these two or three strong States of our Party about which we are all proud, are far from becoming such “an invincible force” as Lenin was speaking about, we can well understand how stupendous are the tasks that face the CPI(M) in our country, and what determination, steadfastness and will are demanded of us to proudly discharge these tasks.

Tasks before the Party

151 Now that we have assessed the organisational situation in the background of our mass movement, political activities and achievements, examined our weaknesses and our strong points, we should outline our immediate tasks at various levels, so that the organisation takes further strides.

The mass movements led by our Party in the States, our electoral and political activities have created favourable circumstances for expanding the Party and making it growingly the trusted leader of the masses.

The growth of the mass influence and the expansion of the Party creates new problems and limitations, accompanied by the influx of new elements in the movement who bring with them their alien, wrong petty bourgeois and bourgeois

ideologies, politics and concept of organisation. They will hamper and obstruct the progress of the Party unless they are tackled.

Already in the Party, in most of the States the pre 1964 membership is far outnumbered by the post 1964 membership who does not share the experience of the battle against the revisionists.

The growth of the Party will be hampered unless this new factor is borne in mind and corresponding steps are taken to raise the quality of membership through Marxist education, fighting against the dilution brought in by the new influx. This will also drastically reduce the large percentage of drop-outs which is to be found in a big proportion even in Kerala.

152 All of us who have the experience of working in a much smaller party under conditions entirely different from the present one will be unable to absorb and utilise the services of the large mass of new members unless we adopt ourselves to the new conditions. This calls for a change in the style of functioning at all levels and giving up of habits borrowed from the earlier period. There will be new greater need of political discussions to carry conviction, considering the different levels of consciousness, the level of the new members, their feeling of lack of participation, and also their lack of basic concepts of Party organisation. Lot of initiative will have to be developed in the ranks and they have to be helped to grow through their own experience.

153 We often fail to make revolutionary use of the legal possibilities available to us. A review of our work in Parliament, the State Legislatures, local self Government institutions will reveal that we do not always rise to the occasion and use these forums in a Marxist Leninist way.

No doubt in these legislatures, etc., our voice is raised on behalf of the people. We oppose all anti people measures. But this is not enough for Communists. These institutions should be for us a big forum to expose and unmask the class policies of the ruling classes, demarcate us from others and win new allies.

It cannot be said that the choice of candidates for Legislatures is done keeping in view these tasks of ours.

Efficient and effective functioning in the Legislatures to discharge our responsibility as Communists requires constant preparation and attention on the part of our MPs and MLAs. This is often neglected. Several of our MPs pay hardly any attention to Parliament and even fail to attend important sessions. Our intervention in Parliamentary debates and proceedings is not effective.

The MPs seem to be neither under the control of the C C nor the State Committees and they fail to take tasks allotted from the Centre for all India work. The MPs in both the houses of Parliament will have to work under the direct guidance of the P B and C C so far as their parliamentary work is concerned.

154 Our trade union influence has grown all over India not only through the CITU but through other organisations also, of employees of banks, public sector, railways, docks, etc. Many of our comrades head big mass organisations—organisations whose leadership is composite.

Yet, it cannot be said that the Party and Party members have succeeded in doing Communist work in these organisations. The tasks on the trade union front warned against the deep rooted tendency of economism. The Party and its members have not succeeded in elevating the consciousness generated in the trade union struggles to higher Socialist consciousness. A large section of the workers under our influence has not gone beyond Left democratic consciousness, though consistently voting for our Party and the Left in general.

Party members themselves often fail to develop the trade unions as the democratic organisations of the working class with the workers themselves democratically deciding all policy questions. Guidance by Party Committees, at all levels, to improve this situation is necessary. We should review the working of the C C. resolution on Fractions. The experience gathered by the Fractions and the State Committees has not been pooled. It is also necessary to realise that the increased mass work in trade unions requires more efficiency, understanding of the concrete problems facing each section, by the Party Committees and leaders. This urgent necessity to improve the situation is stressed.

by the fact that the trade unions led by the Party members are heading for big united actions along with others. The fructification of these actions will unleash the enthusiasm of tens of thousands of workers who will have to be trained by the Party. Mistakes like those relating to the BMS in the post railway strike period will cost the Party dearly. And leaving the entire thing to trade union leaders on the spot will mean abandonment of the political tactics of the Party.

It should be realised that in dealing with trade unions we are dealing with our own class. If our Party fails to develop Socialist consciousness from the Left and democratic consciousness created by the present day trade union struggle, no one else will. Our Party alone can create the consciousness in the best cadres of the working class that the proletariat has to play the vanguard role in the revolution, and that for this the best among the trade union militants be organised and trained to be brought into the Party.

155 Our Kisan Sabha has grown to 23 lakhs. However, it has to be remembered that 55 per cent of this membership comes from West Bengal and the two States of West Bengal and Kerala constitute 75 per cent of the membership. The bulk of the rest is shared among the three States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab. Despite achievements in a few States, the weakness of our kisan movement is patent and constitutes a grave shortcoming. Neglecting immediate concrete demands and emphasising basic propaganda slogans, failure to understand the importance of unity in action with other kisan organisations, failure to review our own mass movements and inability hitherto to pick up the multifarious issues facing the peasantry constitute the source of our weakness. Another reason has been our failure to carry on ideological propaganda against the feudal barriers—caste, etc.—to bring about unity among different sections of the peasantry.

Many of these weaknesses were assessed in 1976 and the effort is being made to overcome them.

The Tasks on the Kisan Front, adopted by the C C in the year 1967, was aimed at liquidating the legacies of Right revisionism in the kisan front and also to make a Marxist Leninist assessment of Congress agrarian reforms. That resolution of the C C. notes

that “as a result of the inroads made by capitalism into agriculture and the agrarian reforms carried out by the bourgeois landlord Government, certain changes are brought about in the class structure of the rural areas”. Narrating some of the changes and pointing out how “two kinds of class antagonism exist side by side firstly, antagonism between the rural workers and employers, and the second, between the peasantry as a whole and the landlord class as a whole”, and how “the second antagonism has the most vital and urgent practical significance”, the resolution enjoins on us that, “it is on these lines that our Party was called upon to make a concrete study of the class changes brought about in the countryside, assess them properly and work out its agrarian strategy and tactics” It is further emphasised that “it is imperative that we study the present agrarian conditions more closely and carefully, so that our efforts to tackle the complex and difficult problem of peasant unity should succeed and the unity of the entire peasantry is forged anew on a new and correct class basis ”

Neither the State Committees nor the C C could undertake such a study of the agrarian problem so far, even though it is more than ten years since we undertook it. But it so happened that without either such a concrete study of the class relations in the rural side or reviewing our work on the kisan front following the adoption of the “Tasks on the Kisan Front”, the C C had to take up another set of new problems posed in 1972-73 and to adopt another resolution, “Certain Agrarian Issues”. This also did not help in making a breakthrough in the kisan front. The C C therefore adopted another document in 1976. The Political Resolution of the Tenth Party Congress states

“In the document adopted by the C C in 1976 after pointing out how the central slogan of land redistribution still remains a propaganda slogan and has not yet become a slogan of action, it is stated that the kisan movement led by our Party, while projecting the land seizure and its redistribution slogan as the central propaganda slogan, and while organising struggles for waste land, forest lands and the so called ‘surplus land’ under the ceiling Acts, will have to channelise many other agrarian currents like the

question of wages for rural worker, the issue of rent reduction, the abolition or scaling down of peasant indebtedness, fair price for agricultural produce, the reduction of tax burdens, and the abolition of landlord and police zoolum, against corruption, etc , so that all these currents might be harnessed into one big agrarian stream Otherwise the maximum peasant unity isolating the handful of landlords and their hirelings cannot be achieved

“These corrections should no doubt help the kisan movement to move forward However, it is necessary to correct another shortcoming also The Kisan Sabha has made very little efforts to pursue the line of united action and agitation with other organisations or groups, local or Statewide and has chosen to remain within its own shell ” (page 48, Political Resolution)

Certain proposals and discussions in the PB and CC about formulating two prices for agricultural commodities, one for the toiling peasants and the second for the landlords, and the proposal for organising the poor peasantry in one organisation along with the agricultural labour, thus converting the Kisan Sabha into an organisation of middle and rich peasants, etc , were the outcome of the lopsided and wrong outlook pointed out above This too was corrected in the CC resolution of October 1976

The 1967 Resolution on Tasks on the Kisan Front gave a correct orientation regarding the agricultural workers Our comrades have been moving to organise the agricultural labourers However, it cannot be said that we have achieved big successes in this direction Experience in some States has made the State Committees concerned to arrive at the conclusion that while forming part of the general kisan movement, separate organisations of agricultural labourers should be formed The advanced movement in some States demands an all India organisation of agricultural labourers Recognising the dual nature of agricultural workers, the agricultural workers’ organisations where they are separately organised must co ordinate their activities with the Kisan Sabha They should also have growingly closer relations with the trade union movement

156 Our work among the students, youth, women has no doubt grown, especially among students Here also it is unevenly

spread We have had no time to review our work and assess its strength and weakness But the valiant part played by our student, youth and women's organisations and the importance of the mass influence they have secured has to be recorded Here, again, our problem is how quickly and by what means the Party is to be spread among these sections Special attention is needed to ensure this

Overcome the Ideological Weakness

157 One of the weapons of converting elementary class consciousness into political consciousness, of gathering the fruits of the elementary mass movement is organisation of national political campaigns with the PB, CC and State Committee leaders participating in the campaigns

But the most important is continuous ideological propaganda of the Party which has been lacking

A Leninist Party cannot be built by just popularising the Party's programme and the fundamentals of Marxism It must continually battle against non Marxian or anti Marxian ideologies in the country, religious obscurantism, Gandhism, Gandhian Socialism, Nehru Socialism, national chauvinism, regionalism, casteism, minority and majority communalism, educating the new cadres and the people in the nature of the class origin of these ideologies The fight against caste and communal obscurantism is all the more necessary as the ruling classes and their henchmen are constantly using these weapons to divert the people and disrupt the unity of the toilers

This is essential to convert elementary democratic consciousness into Socialist consciousness It is the task of the central leadership to reply to the challenge of the reactionary ideologies by exposing their class roots Lack of this ideological struggle is perhaps one of the reasons for the large number of drop outs and the failure to build a hard ideological core

It is therefore of utmost importance that there is centrally directed ideological propaganda through pamphlets, etc

It is further necessary that the Centre runs a Party school at least three times a year to train teachers and equip them to fight the

ideological battle as defined above Besides, it will be necessary to have regular schools for trade unions, Kisan Sabha and other fronts It is these schools that will introduce to those attending them the Party line in mass organisations and the expertise in mass organisations developed by the Party Periodical meetings of editors of Party organs and those contributing to them are necessary to check whether the organisation is speaking with the same voice to the people It should be the responsibility of the Centre to call such meetings and ensure the effectiveness of the journals as vehicles of Party line and ideology To develop ideological unity it is further necessary to have a theoretical and ideological journal This is an absolute necessity in the present situation The journal may be a quarterly in the beginning

The three the journals, the ideological struggle and the schools—will meet the need of educating, training the large number of new Party members, militants and activists whom the mass struggles are throwing up and enhance the quality of Party members

Streamline the Party Organisation

158 To streamline Party members' activities it is further necessary to insist that every Party member loyally carries out the responsibilities as are laid down in the Party Constitution

At present even the minimum duties are not carried out by a large number which reduces the Party to an amorphous conglomeration of individuals and saps the basis of the Party

Here it is the direct responsibility of the State and lower committees to ensure this discharge of responsibilities, receive regular reports on it and take proper steps to improve the situation

The present mode of Party functioning does not produce a sense of participation among Party members in shaping Party policies This finds expression in conferences, etc , where alone a large number get the opportunity to express themselves

This is due to two causes (1) reporting to the lower units and reporting from the lower units is not carried out systematically in time and Party members do not feel that their opinions and

criticism are taken into consideration by the higher committees, (2) there is no review of mass struggles and campaigns conducted by the Party and all opportunities to learn through their own experience are denied to Party members. This should change. Reporting from above and below should be made a systematic affair to ensure democracy and exchange of views. Review of Party activities should be regularly circulated. State Committees should think of introducing the system of Party Letters for this purpose. The State Committees should see to it that at least the most important questions raised by Party units are dealt with in the Party organ itself or a special publication meant only for Party units. Once this practice comes into vogue in at least six or seven States, the all India Centre should bring out a publication dealing with such questions.

This method of functioning without reporting, without review of mass struggles and political activities leads to the elimination of criticism and self criticism in the Party—a basic principle of Marxist Leninist functioning.

The violation of the principle is often so deep rooted that there is sometimes dogged resistance to the correction of mistakes, to review Party policies self critically. Self justification replaces self criticism.

This has to end and criticism and self criticism should be fully restored to create a democratic sense of all round participation in Party's activities including shaping of its policies.

In the absence of job division in various committees, one or two comrades, especially the Secretary, often function in the name of committees leading to (i) concentration of power and bureaucracy, (ii) inefficiency, (iii) undermining of the important concept of collective leadership.

In the absence of review and discussion those who are assigned special jobs tend to be autonomous. Party journals often tend to be the preserve of a few comrades—the State and other Committees very rarely discussing them. Even at the Central Committee level Party journals, their contents, etc., are not discussed.

All this undermines the unity of the Party and obstructs the development of the united Party will.

It is therefore necessary not only to divide jobs at each level, stop the over concentration of responsibilities in a couple of comrades and seriously work for collective leadership which will check every activity of the party—from journals to conduct of mass organisations, political line and Party building

It is necessary to organise a separate department for the important activity of agitation and propaganda and the comrades concerned would be charged with the work of production of ideological and agitational literature and its distribution

To activate every Party member to discharge his minimum responsibilities, it is necessary to tackle the question of the efficient functioning of the base unit—the Branch. While the General Body meeting has to be utilised under present conditions, the Branches have to be nursed, given special attention so that by and large they learn to discharge their minimum responsibilities. Lack of efficient Secretaries, etc., and the low level of comrades constitute difficulties in the way of Branch functioning. They will have to be gradually overcome by repeated training and advice to the Branch Secretaries.

In this situation oral propaganda, speeches, etc., through General Body meetings and otherwise should play a big role in educating the Branches and Secretaries. The General Body meetings should be effectively used for this purpose. But the tendency to substitute the General Body for the Branch should be vigorously fought. The Branch must function as the basic unit of the Party and the General Body should be considered only as an aid to such functioning. There is a proposal to increase the number in a Branch. Taking all things into consideration normally the number should not exceed nine.

A mechanism should be created in every district where the Branch Secretaries in a particular area or locality are called once a month where a Party leader from the District Committee makes a report on current developments and the burning problems of the day, so that the Branch Secretaries can use this report for their own reporting in the Branch. These meetings of the Branch

Secretaries should also be used for collecting the views and comments of the Branches on the discussions held earlier with the Party leader from the district who should answer the points raised by the Branches to the best of his ability. The particular Party leader should then report to the District Committee on the political points raised in the Branches, the replies given to them, etc.

The Party must have a proper cadre policy—policy of promotion of young cadre and looking after them and attending to their needs. In most of the states the Party wage is so low that it is very difficult for one who has no other support to live on it. This automatically excludes most of the working class and agricultural worker cadres. In promoting young cadres special care should be taken to promote cadres from the workers and semi proletarian sections.

Special attention needs to be paid to the ideological needs of growing cadres coming from the working class and the toiling sections.

It is common experience that young fighting cadres soon get routinised, immersed in day to day work without awareness that this work alone will not elevate their consciousness. Deprived of proper ideological training, and special attention to them they become go getters, or organisational bosses and do not succeed in rising to the level of Party leadership. This enormous waste of cadres can be arrested if the promising young elements are given special opportunity for ideological training, are supplied with requisite material for self development and their progress assured from time to time.

Role of the Party Centre

159 The growth of the Party with old methods of functioning and at times inability to carry on political conviction, all combined are producing bureaucratism inside the Party, undermining the principle of democracy. Party members are often afraid to freely express their differences. They are often afraid to vote according to their choice, afraid of vindictive treatment at the

hands of leaders. Along with this phenomenon is the phenomenon of liberalism where a weak leadership is compelled to tolerate the free style working of some comrades. Factional tendencies also are making their appearance. All State Committees have to vigorously re-examine their own methods and assert the supremacy of the Party's principles and fight out all anti-democratic tendencies as well as liberalist outlook.

It is an elementary principle of Party organisation that the revolutionary party of the working class is built from above. The correctness of this Marxist Leninist principle is confirmed by the concrete correlation of class forces in present day India where the ruling classes have a highly centralised economic, political and administrative system. No party trying to intervene in the socio-economic and political life of the nation can remain divorced from the highly centralised activities of the political administrative organs of the ruling classes. If the Party of the working class is to be able to face the class enemy it is necessary for it to have a centralised organisation armed with Marxist Leninist outlook and based on Marxist Leninist principles of organisation.

It is because of this that the Calicut Resolution of the Party sharply attacked the tendency towards federalism. It stated, "Clearly connected with the principle of democratic centralism inside the Party organisation is the question of proper Party relationship between the Central Committee and the State Committees. It is in theory admitted that a centrally well organised Communist Party alone can lead the Indian revolution by confronting the centrally organised and powerfully built State apparatus of the bourgeois landlord combine. But in practice this awareness is found often lacking while the tendency of a federal outlook is gaining ground. A sort of 'State exclusiveness' and the absence of all India consciousness is gaining currency in the Party leadership, let alone among the bulk of our Party members.

"The crudest form in which it is expressed at present is that no State Committee considers it its bounden duty to send periodical reports of its activities to the Central Committee and even Central Committee members attached to the State Committees do not

deem it their duty to keep the Party Centre informed of the activities at the State level

“What we have to realise is that the tendencies of federalism and the erroneous concept of democratic centralism are neither crudely formulated and upheld by any amongst us nor can they be eliminated by simple directives of “do’s and don’ts” from the top committees. They are present in the objective class conditions surrounding us and they so constantly erode our consciousness as to undermine the principle of democratic centralism and all its rich content and thus obstruct the building of a really centralised united Communist Party. Hence the need for constant education and check up over this principle and practice.”

An effective Centre is the urgent demand of the situation, immediate steps are necessary in the first place to streamline the functioning of the PB and the C C and overcoming the present lag in their activities

Functioning of the Polit Bureau and Central Committee

160 In the organisation of Party committees from top to bottom basic principles of Party organisation should be observed

The PB members should devote themselves exclusively to the tasks assigned by the PB and the C C, dual responsibility should be ended at the earliest

To fight the tendency towards federalism it is necessary in the first place to strictly observe the existing rules and norms, which are violated. But this is not enough. The Centre should act as a real centre, giving effective guidance to the States. At present all important issues affecting the States are decided by the State Committees with hardly any guidance from the Centre

To be able to function as an effective all India guiding centre it is essential that the C C and PB should constantly discuss the problems of the mass movement and their guidance. The lack of such discussion and resolution of the C C leads to a frontist outlook among the mass leaders which is harmful

It is further necessary that the State Committees should send regular reports on their activities to the C C

In the context of the present immediate tasks it is necessary that the State Committees should send reports about the steps they are taking to train, recruit and promote working class cadres, also on how they are running schools to train Party members

The Centre should pay special attention to how the Party committees and leaders of trade unions and other mass organisations and Party members working in them carry out their responsibilities to enrol Party members and expand the Party

It is in the main the responsibility of the Centre to carry on incessant ideological struggle as defined earlier fight against non Marxian anti Marxian Indian ideologies, feudal ideologies, etc Apart from using Party organs, etc , a stream of pamphlets must be continuously issued to ensure the successful conduct of the fight

It is one of the primary duties of the Centre to intervene in international ideological controversies, defend Marxism Leninism and fully educate the members regarding international ideological developments At present the non intervention of the Centre either paralyses Party opinion or leaves individuals free to express as they wish This adds to the federalist tendency

In the present context it is one of the immediate tasks of the Centre (1) to prepare a common syllabus for Party schools, (2) to hold Party schools on the basis of this syllabus, (3) to hold special schools for the Hindi region considering its importance

This brings the Party to the vital question of expanding and strengthening the central apparatus If the Party Centre has to be built to discharge its minimum responsibilities expected of it, it requires an increase in the number of PBMs and CCMs undertaking exclusive central responsibilities

Besides different Sub Committees manned by a number of PBMs and CCMs will have to be formed to look after (1) the Party organs, (2) agit prop work, (3) trade union work, (4) kisan work, (5) international, (6) education, (7) Party organisation, (8) work of the parliamentary group, etc

Apart from the increase in the number of PBMs and CCMs all this requires expansion of staff to help the C C work "People's Democracy" is undermanned There are no comrades at present in any other work including that of keeping track of the press opinion and a proper Information Bureau

The C C office is completely undermanned and the secretarial staff requires immediate expansion

All this means priority should be given by all State Committees to supply the necessary cadres to the Centre

It is the common task of all to restore collective functioning at all levels Above all, it is the task of the C C and the P B to ensure collective functioning and eliminate all manifestations of individual functioning

Resolution on Organisation*

Adopted in The Plenum of CPI(M) Held
at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978

Discussing the organisational situation, the many lags and weaknesses, the Plenum takes note of the notable achievements of the Party on the ideological and political front during the years of review

The Jullundur Congress of the Party endorsed the general orientation of the political line of the Party since the Madurai Congress while nailing down its weaknesses and vacillations. It is at the same time recorded the increase in the prestige and political influence of the Party all over India—a development which facilitates the task of expanding the Party organisation and spreading it to wider areas

2 In studying the present organisational situation the Plenum notes that the 1964 split with the revisionists and the 1968 disruption brought about by the Left adventurists undermined the Party organisation seriously in a number of States and the Party had to be built from scratch—both politically, organisationally, and its contact with the masses re established by fresh work among them

3 At the same time the Party had to engage in a grim battle with the leaderships of the two big Parties of the international Communist movement—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of China—expressing the Right revisionist and Left adventurist deviations respectively. The battle did not remain on the ideological plane so far as the Naxalites were concerned. It developed into a campaign of assaults and murders against our members. The revisionists also

*Published as a Booklet

took a hand in the game of murderous assaults against us. The Party at one time was under furious attacks and only the concentrated attention of the Party Centre to repel and rebuff these could save it from disruption.

4 The Burdwan Plenum of 1969 could result in a victory for the Party's ideology only after strenuous efforts of the Central Committee and the P B in educating the Party ranks. But the battle did not end there. The Plenum only armed the Party to go ahead confidently in the fight against the two deviations. A persistent struggle had to be continued after 1968 inside the Party to meet the ideological attacks of the two Parties. The Plenum notes this big achievement without which there would have been no independent existence of our Party.

5 The period besides was one of stormy developments in Indian politics putting to severe test the independence, ideology and the Marxist Leninist understanding of the Party. It witnessed the emergence of our Ministries and the conspiracies against them, the break up and re building of the United Front in West Bengal and Kerala, the semi fascist terror in West Bengal and intense repression in Kerala and the rise of the movement led by Jaya Prakash Narayan and finally the imposition of the Emergency with its one party dictatorship and the united opposition to it in the last elections.

6 The continuous attacks against our strong bases demanded concentrated attention to defend them. The fight against the ruling Congress drive for one party dictatorship against which the Madurai Congress warned the country, and the conspiracies of the ruling party against us diverted attention from a close pursuit of the tasks of party building and Party expansion by the Party Centre.

7 The 1967 Calicut Resolution on Organisation gave sound direction to the Party. It concretely pinpointed the disastrous effects of Right reformism and revisionism on Party organisation and emphasised the need and urgency of liquidating the revisionist heritage. It strongly warned against the federalist tendencies which were rampant under the revisionist leadership. It tried to

restore the sound Marxist Leninist organisational principles, protect the class character of the Party and emphasised the principle of democratic centralism

8 However, there were certain weaknesses and obvious lacunae in the resolution. The stress on the building of an effective Party Centre and its role in the consolidation and expansion of the party in order to eliminate the weakness arising from uneven development is missed in the document. Secondly, the resolution does not underline the fact that we are too small a party for a big country like India and does not stress the urgent need of expanding the Party to make it a nationwide party with a big mass base. It notes in passing the weakness of the Party in the Hindi speaking area but does not suggest a way out. And finally a correct idea to utilise our limited resources and cadre to help the movement in compact and contiguous areas and lead the mass struggles effectively was lopsidedly emphasised bordering on a new thesis on Party organisation.

9 The pre occupation of the Central and State Committees with the battle for ideological and political unification led to the inevitable neglect of the many correct directives given by the Calicut Resolution. It may be said that several of the directives remained unimplemented, there being a failure to systematically pursue them as part of the Party's basic organisational line.

10 The concentrated attention to defend the advanced States under attack led besides to the neglect of the weaker areas leading to increased lag between the advanced States and others.

11 And, finally, the weakness of the resolution contributed to the weakening of the concentrated efforts to build a strong Centre with the result that federal tendencies could not be fought but continued to gather strength.

12 The P B again undertook discussion on Party organisation in March 1969. After discussions extended over a period of four years, the C C resolution of March 1973 "Immediate Organisational Tasks" was adopted. The 1973 resolution, it should be noted, was adopted without a proper review of the 1967 resolution on Tasks on Organisation. It was in the 1973 resolution that the concept of contiguous areas and zones was

further elaborated and concretised, directly deducing the immediate organisational tasks from the Perspective Tactical Line of 1951

13 The Perspective Tactical Line document directs the creation of a wide base all over the country and organisation of the working class on an all India basis and winning over the majority in the strategic industries as an indispensable condition to develop working class hegemony, to develop proletarian initiative to defend the peasantry. It further calls for a workers' and peasants' alliance for building a People's Democratic Front and developing a mass Communist Party. Experience has shown that it is not possible to defend and expand advanced movements in face of semi fascist terror without all India support. This calls for widespread political propaganda and development of the movement by the Party in the country as a whole instead of sticking to priority areas and strong States.

14 The concept of contiguous areas, political bases, etc., in the 1973 Resolution was based on the immediate and direct application of the Perspective Tactical Line, it hampered the Party's intervention in the democratic struggles sweeping the country, and did violence to the understanding of the class tactics of the Perspective Tactical Line.

15 However, the Central Committee took a long time to disentangle itself from the errors in the Resolution. It was bogged down for months in debates, more than a year of the Emergency period being absorbed by them.

16 During the C C discussions it became clear that the point at dispute was not certain organisational measures and suggestions, but the entire understanding of the political situation and of the Perspective Tactical Line and its bearing on the class and mass organisations.

17 The Party could not have developed a correct understanding about the tactics to be pursued during the Emergency and subsequent supplementary tactics during the elections without settling accounts with the wrong understanding underlying the Resolution.

18 The 1976 Resolution of the C C cleared the way for the Party to effectively intervene in the democratic movement to develop new allies and increased the political prestige of the Party all over India. With this increased prestige and the increased mass strength of the Party in almost all States, new opportunities are opening before the Party to push forward with its immediate task of building the unity of Left and democratic forces. The organisational efforts of the Party must now match its political responsibilities and opportunities.

19 This is possible only if the weaknesses of the present period are quickly overcome. Instead of an effective Centre the previous years saw a growingly weak Centre with the majority of the PBMs not working at the Centre, with dual responsibility continuing as before. The work of the Party Centre became minimal, the Centre attending to only absolutely necessary and pressing political organisational jobs. This led to individualistic functioning on the part of P B members undermining collective functioning and adoption of collective decisions.

20 This provided fertile ground for federalism with the States failing to send reports on their activities to the Centre. The political ideological unity demanded of a revolutionary working class party cannot be achieved if regular reports on Party activities are not sent to the Party Centre and if there is no coordination and check up between the State Committees and the Party Centre in the matter of running Party journals, publishing books and pamphlets and the conducting of theoretical ideological education, etc.

21 The situation in fact can be described in the words of the 1967 Resolution "It is in theory admitted that a centrally well organised Communist Party can lead the Indian revolution by confronting the centrally organised and powerfully built State apparatus of the bourgeois landlord combine. But in practice, this awareness is found often lacking while the tendencies of federal outlook are gaining ground. A sort of State exclusiveness and the absence of all India consciousness is gaining currency in the Party leadership."

22 To near a Leninist Party it is necessary to combine the political and practical struggles of the Party with unremitting ideological struggle against all indigenous, anti Marxism and non Marxian ideologies Without such a struggle the superiority of Marxism cannot be established The failure to carryout this all sided struggle is one of the reasons for the continuous lag between the influence of the Party, the strength of mass organisation led by it and the actual recruitment of Party members

23 Without it the elementary economic conciousness generated in the economic struggles cannot be converted into Socialist consciousness Lack of ideological struggle is one of the reasons for the large number of drop outs and the failure to build a hard ideological core It is of course necessary that the mass of the workers, peasants, etc , under our influence play a growing role in the political struggles of the people Their economic and political activity must be helped and elevated by the Party's ideological struggle

24 The expansion of the Party and the education of Party members are part of the same process of Party building The task of raising the consciousness and quality of Party members requires urgent attention The efforts to build a mass revolutionary Party will bear no fruit if earnest efforts are not made to raise the level of the Party members and new entrants

25 In this connection the fact that the majority of Party members have joined the Party after 1964 is highly important

26 These thousands of members have seen innumerable struggles, faced police repression and upheld the banner of the Party under the most difficult circumstances and have fully deserved their membership But the party has not been able to do justice to them Deprived of the experience of the earlier years of fight against Right and Left deviations, they required special attention especially education in the basic principles of Marxism If this lag is not overcome, it is bound to result in ideological confusion and dilution

27 The wholetimers and cadres of the Party constitute shining examples of self sacrifice and devotion to the cause of

the Party. But they have to survive on a miserable pittance called Party wage. In most of the States the Party wage is extremely low, half the wage of the most unskilled worker in a factory. It is very difficult for the wholtime to survive on this wage unless he has other resources. This automatically excludes the possibility of recruiting large numbers of working class and agricultural worker cadres as wholtime workers.

28. It is common experience that young fighting cadres get routinised, immersed in day-to-day work without awareness that this work alone will not elevate their consciousness. Deprived of proper ideological training and special attention to them, they become go-getters or organisational bosses and do not succeed in rising to the levels of Party leadership. This enormous waste of cadres can be avoided if the promising young elements are given special opportunity for ideological training and are supplied with requisite material for self-development.

29. The review of the replies sent by the State Committees show that in every State the mass influence of the Party is daily increasing. Its members are engaged in multifarious activities and good soil has been prepared for further political and organisational advance.

30. At the same time, the review shows that the growth in the political and mass influence of the Party has not been adequately reflected either in the growth of mass organisations, or expansion of the Party.

31. This means that in part at least the problems faced by our Party are problems of growth, of how to enrol members out of the huge mass of people who follow us and our mass organisations in daily battles.

32. Apart from certain organisational slackness and neglect of the task of Party building, in essence the problem is one of converting the elementary consciousness of the daily struggle into political and Socialist consciousness, which demands intense and increased political activity of the Party directly among the masses and above all, a persistent ideological struggle against all feudal, semi-feudal, anti-Marxist bourgeois ideologies. This task has to be discharged both by the Centre and State Committees.

33 The present state of Party organisation is due to our past, due to the fact that our battle against revisionist distortions of the organisational principles and functioning of the Party is not over, resulting in a series of deviations hampering the growth of our Party

34 The basic principle of CPI(M)'s Party organisation is democratic centralism Without firm adherence to this basic principle, without being able to combine inner party democracy with centralism, a Marxist Leninist party cannot be built

The tendency towards federalism corrodes this basic concept of Party organisation, Democratic centralism is being attacked and impaired in other ways also in the practical functioning of the Party

35 The democratic functioning of the Party, the feeling of all being responsible for the formulation and execution of the Party line, has been badly impaired This is due to the fact that in a large number of States the practice of reporting to the lower units and reporting back from the units hardly exists The doubts and questions raised by lower units are hardly answered

36 Equally abandoned is the practice of reviewing mass campaigns and teaching the Party through its own activities

37 This leads to the abandonment of criticism and self criticism inside the Party depriving it of one of the important weapons of rectifying itself and improving its understanding and practice

38 The growth of the Party with old methods of functioning and at times inability to carry on political conviction—all combined are producing bureaucratism inside the Party, undermining democracy inside the Party

39 Party members are often hesitant to freely express their viewpoints

40 Along with this phenomenon is the phenomenon of liberalism where a weak leadership is compelled to tolerate slackness of discipline factional tendencies develop under these conditions

41 Collective functioning has been badly affected in a large number of State and District Committees There is lack of job

division, leading to absence of collective functioning. This results in concentration of authority in the hands of a few and leads to individual functioning. The Secretary often functions in place of the Secretariat and the Secretariat in place of the State Committee, with the latter reduced to just a deliberative body. This leads to bureaucratism and error in political judgment.

42 No State Committee has directed serious attention towards developing a proper class composition of the Party.

43 Party organs and their editing often become the preserve of individual comrades, most of the leading comrades do not contribute to the papers. The conduct of the Party organs and their contents are not collectively discussed by the Committees.

44 Addressing of general body meetings is often confined to a couple of comrades weakening collective leadership.

45 In many States there is failure to discuss problems of mass organisations and mass struggles which leads to frontism. It is also found that there is often a failure to function the mass organisations democratically. This hampers the development of experience and new leadership in mass organisations. The functioning of the Fractions and the Fraction Committees, their over all supervision by Party Committees leaves much to be desired. All this leads to ineffectual guidance of mass organisations by the Party.

46 At present even the minimum duties laid down in the Constitution are not carried out by a good number of Party members which reduces the Party to an amorphous conglomeration of individuals undermining its capacity as an active revolutionary party.

47 The Plenum is of the opinion that the idea of restricting Party membership and opposing expansion to build a mass revolutionary party is a wrong idea. The Plenum following the formulations of the Perspective Tactical Line considers that without a mass revolutionary party, the working class cannot successfully lead the Indian revolution.

48 The idea that a mass party necessarily means a reformist social democratic party, that it necessarily means influx of low consciousness in the party is a wrong idea.

49 The struggle for a mass revolutionary party enjoins on the Party the necessity of continually elevating the consciousness of the members before and after recruitment and enhancing the Marxist Leninist quality of members. Expansion of membership and enhancement of consciousness must go hand in hand to achieve the objective. Militant participants thrown up during mass struggles should be organised in Auxiliary Groups and these Auxiliary Group members should be recruited as Party members and trained and educated.

Enhancement of consciousness of course includes conscientious discharge of duties and obligations of a Party member, as laid down under the Constitution, submitting oneself to the discipline of the unit, accepting the principle of the minority submitting itself to the majority and the lower committees carrying out the decisions of the higher committee ensuring the disciplined functioning of the Party members through their units.

50 The Plenum is of the opinion that all obstacles to the expansion of the Party coming from a wrong ideological stand and organisational priorities must be removed. The Party should work for expanding its membership and expanding itself into a mass revolutionary party, combining the task of expansion with that of raising the ideological level of the members.

51 The Plenum directs that an end be put to the present dangerous drift which undermines and corrodes the concept of a strong centralised Party which alone can act as the vanguard of the working class.

52 Priority must be given to the task of building an effective Centre capable of discharging the ideological, theoretical, political and organisational tasks facing the Party including the task of effective guidance to the mass movements and mass organisations.

53 Only such a Centre can further consolidate the ideological and political unity of the Party which has been achieved after a prolonged and bitter struggle against the two dominant deviations in the international Communist movement.

54 This means in the first place that the Centre must have at its disposal an adequate number of effective cadre to help it in

discharging its tasks. There is paucity of cadre for running People's Democracy and other activities of the Centre. The States, especially the strong States, must bear the main responsibility of meeting the cadre needs of the Centre.

55 The functioning of an effective Centre demands that an increased number of PBMs should devote themselves to central work. They should be helped in addition by a number of CCMs with central work as their main responsibility.

56 Profiting from recent experience it should be collectively ensured that the leading organs of the Party are not reduced to forums for interminable discussions and that decisions of the majority are given a fair trial before calling for review.

57 To fight the tendency towards federalism it is necessary in the first place to strictly observe accepted norms and rules which are in practice violated. But this is not enough. The Centre should act as a real centre giving active guidance to the States. At present all important issues affecting the State are left to State Committees for a decision with hardly any guidance from the Centre.

58 It is the special responsibility of the Centre to conduct and guide the ideological struggle against all alien ideologies, religious obscurantism, separatism, feudal ideologies of casteism, communalism, national chauvinism exposing their class roots and class role. The fight against caste and communal ideologies is all the more necessary as the ruling classes and their henchmen continually use these to divert the people and disrupt the unity of the toilers.

The Centre should equip the State committees to conduct this struggle.

59 It is necessary to further consolidate the ideological and political unity of the Party secured through prolonged struggle, it cannot be denied that there are serious ideological lags at various levels of Party organisation and that intense efforts are necessary to remedy this state of affairs. To achieve this objective the Plenum considers the following steps to be urgently necessary.

60 (a) Regular Party schools to train teachers for schools in States.

(b) Besides there should be schools for cadres in trade union, kisan, students, youth and women's organisations to educate them in the Party line regarding their respective mass organisations and in the running of mass organisations along the guidelines of the Party

(c) The Centre should prepare a common syllabus for Party schools

(d) Periodical meetings of editors of Party organs and those contributing to them should be called at least once a year to ensure unity of political and ideological propaganda and the effectiveness of Party journals as vehicles of Party line and ideology

(e) The Centre brings out theoretical and ideological quarterly journal to develop ideological unity This is an absolute necessity in the present situation

(f) It is one of the primary duties of the Centre to intervene in ideological controversies in the Communist movement, defend Marxism Leninism and educate the members regarding the international ideological developments The failure to intervene in time paralyses Party opinion The theoretical journal will help to discharge this task

(g) The Centre should undertake national campaigns on important issues from time to time National campaigns must be considered to be an important aid for Party building and the development of an effective Centre

61 It is necessary for the Centre and the State Committees to take special measures for the education and training of the post 1964 members who require immediate attention

62 The Plenum directs the Centre that while giving due attention to the all India situation and the problems of the advanced States, it should assume the responsibility for the advance of weaker States It should insist on having regular reports from all States and discuss them in the Central Committee meetings It should have a proper plan of work drawn for each State, taking into consideration the strength of the Party, and other peculiarities of the State concerned While continuing to guide the stronger States it should make special endeavours to bring the weaker units in line with the advanced ones

63 In particular the wide Hindi speaking area comprising of several States should be given immediate attention considering their political importance as well as the prospects of speedier growth. The virtual neglect of these States weakens the all India movement beyond measure. As part of this task, (1) the Centre should immediately start a Hindi weekly, (2) hold party schools in Hindi for teachers and cadres alike, (3) undertake political campaigning in these States, and (4) production and distribution of political and ideological literature in Hindi.

64 Our trade union influence has grown not only through the CITU but through other organisations of workers and employees in various industries and commerce. Many of our comrades lead big mass organisations whose leadership is composite and who claim allegiance of tens of thousands.

Yet, it cannot be said that the Party and the Party membership have yet succeeded in doing Communist work in these organisations. The Party has not succeeded in elevating the consciousness generated in the trade union struggle to higher Socialist consciousness which leads to spread of economism.

65 Our student movement—SFI has grown strong. It has outstripped the AISF and now has membership of more than four lakhs. Our youth and women's movements are growing.

66 Our Kisan Sabha has grown to 23 lakhs. It has to be remembered, however, that 55 per cent of the membership comes from West Bengal and the two States of West Bengal and Kerala account for 75 per cent of the total membership. The bulk of the rest is among the three States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab.

Like the advancing trade union movement, the advancing kisan movement has its own weakness. Neglecting immediate concrete demands and emphasising the basic propaganda slogan, failure to understand the importance of unity of action with other kisan organisations, failure to carry out ideological propaganda—these are some of the weaknesses noted by the 1976 C C resolution. The Kisan Sabha comrades are endeavouring to overcome these weaknesses quickly.

Our understanding about the democratic functioning of mass organisations is often defective and suffers from sectarianism. Several committees and comrades handle mass organisations as if they are subsidiaries of the Party and pay scant attention to functioning them democratically. At the same time there is another harmful tendency in evidence. Several Party members leading mass organisations tend to function them independently, by passing the party.

67 Further rapid progress, overcoming of the weaknesses in these mass organisations, cannot be achieved unless the Central Committee periodically discusses the problems of mass organisations, their all India experience, tactics and offers effective guidance. But this has been a weakness and failure of the Party Centre which should be overcome. The State Committees have a similar responsibility. Besides, it is necessary that the Central and State Committees ensure democratic functioning of the mass organisations and effective supervision over the functioning of Fraction Committees to enable the Party to fulfill its guiding role in relation to the mass organisations.

68 The Centre should ensure a proper functioning of the Parliamentary Group. Failure to use parliament as an effective political forum undermines the purpose of our Parliamentary activity.

Efficient and effective functioning in the Legislatures to discharge our responsibilities as Communists requires constant preparations and attention on the part of our MPs and MLAs. This is often neglected. Several of our MPs pay hardly any attention to Parliament and fail to attend important sessions. This must change. The MPs must be completely under the discipline of the Centre in discharging their parliamentary responsibilities.

69 The State Committees must ensure that the forum of State Legislatures is used in a Communist way to advance the case of our movement and the MLAs carry out the tasks assigned to them and devote time and attention to discharge their tasks in the legislatures.

70 The entire body of wholetimers needs to be properly looked after. Their party wage requires to be raised. Quick

promotion of the growing young cadres to the position of responsibility in the Party and mass organisation must be ensured by all Committees as part of the process of building and expanding the Party. It is clear that without an army of devoted wholetimers working for the Party and the revolution, the Party cannot discharge its historic responsibility.

71 Attention must be paid to the ideological needs and development of young cadres coming from the working class and other toiling sections who have hardly any opportunity for self development.

It is necessary to avoid the enormous waste of cadres through routinisation because of lack of proper care to develop them.

72 The State Committees should wage a fight against federal tendencies in their midst with a view to eliminating them. They should help the process of building an effective Centre by sending their reports regularly, by observing all the rules and norms laid down by the Party Constitution.

73 It is absolutely essential that reporting from above and below is made the common practice at all levels to ensure democracy and exchange of views inside the Party and promote among members the feeling of participation in shaping the Party's policies.

74 Review of mass struggles and Party activities must be accepted by all committees as their obligatory duty towards maintaining democracy inside the Party, through criticism and self criticism.

75 The State Committees should think of introducing the system of Party Letters for this purpose. The State Committees should see that at least the most important questions raised by the Party units are dealt with in the Party organ itself or in a special publication meant only for Party members.

76 All State Committees aided by the Central Committee must combat the evils of bureaucratism, liberalism and factionalism. The State Committees should examine their own methods of functioning, assert the supremacy of the principle of democratic centralism and safeguard its daily practice.

76 A All State and District Committees should re educate the Party members regarding democratic functioning of the Party, rights and duties of Party members and the obligations towards higher committees so that all manifestations of bureacratism as well as indiscipline are successfully fought

77 Immediate steps should be taken to restore collective functioning at all levels and put an end to individualist functioning with the Secretary functioning in place of the Secretariat, with the Committee reduced to formal existence and decision making authority concentrated in the hands of one or two individuals Clear division of jobs, individual responsibility for the work assigned and responsibility for collective decisions—these must be restored The State Committees should normally meet at least once in two months and the Secretariat should meet at least once in a fortnight This applies to the District Committees and Secretariats also

78 The State Committees should recognise that there has been a general failure to take steps to ensure a correct class composition of the Party Steps should be taken to ensure recruitment, training, education and promotion of cadres from the working class and other toiling sections

79 Party organs and their editing must become the collective responsibility of the Committee concerned Their contents must be periodically discussed to ensure that the Party line is properly presented through them

80 There is hardly any supervision of higher committees over the collection and expenditure of Party funds A machinery should be established to check the income and expenditure of Committees at all levels The State Committee should be in a position to get reports about the financial conditions of the units This will help the committee to work out proper guidelines regarding revenue and expenditure, wages of wholetimers etc

81 The State and District Committees should ensure that every Party member under their jurisdiction loyally carries out the responsibilities assigned to him under the Party Constitution

82 To activise every Party member to discharge his minimum responsibilities it is necessary to tackle the question of efficient

functioning of the primary unit—the Branch. Notwithstanding the present difficulties the Branches have to be nursed, given special attention so that they gradually learn to discharge their responsibilities as the basic political unit of the party.

This means that the higher committee must devote prior attention to educate and train the Branch Secretaries, raise their ideological level so that they can effectively lead the branches. To achieve this objective it will be necessary to hold regular meetings of Branch Secretaries of a given area, to report to them on current developments so that they can in turn report to the branches.

83 The Branch must function as the basic unit of the Party and the tendency to substitute the General Body for the Branch must be fought.

But at the same time speeches made and reporting done to the General Body meetings should play a big role in educating the Party members and keeping them in live contact with the activities of the Party and in initiating mass campaigns.

84 The General Body meeting may include sympathisers. Questions should be invited at such meetings and answered. Such meetings should be fully used for purposes of education and enlightenment.

To effectively use the General Body as an instrument of education and training, it is necessary that a number of comrades undertake the task of reporting on the basis of common reporting points. At present these gatherings are generally addressed by one or two leading comrades which affects the frequency of meetings thus covering only a small part of the membership each time. Besides, it leads to the weakening of the practice of collective functioning at the level of State and District leaderships.

85 And finally, to properly tackle the organisational situation it is necessary that the ideological level of all committees and ranks should be raised, and that means, above all, a continuous study of Marxism-Leninism for self-development. Those who give up self-education for development cannot lead the Party's struggle for organisational rectification.

On Martyrs*

**Resolution Adopted in The Plenum of CPI(M)
Held at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978**

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) pays its revolutionary homage to the martyrs who laid down their lives in the cause of the Communist, working people's and democratic movements

Among them are Comrades Sahanı Mahato, Majhi Soren, Khokan Biswas, Jumman Ali, Moluy Sekh, Nemaı Roy, Bharat Dabui, Jaharlal Dutta, Mongal De, Mohan Ghosh, Abdul Malek Sekh, Mongal Mohato, Md Sayeb, Ali Ajim, Rahen Mondal, Kesto Marandı, Mongal Soven, Based Sekh, Sankar Ganguly, Kashinath Singh and Romen Deb of West Bengal They were Party, trade union, Kisan Sabha and Youth Federation activists, agricultural workers and share croppers from various districts of the State They were murdered by jotdars, armed gangs of the Congress and by anti social elements

In Kerala, Comrades Raju Master, Pavitran, Sadanandan and Krishna Pillai were killed by RSS men, Suchindran by CPI elements, Vasudevan and Rajappan in Idikkı by Congress CPI elements, and Thankachan by Indira Congressmen protesting against her punishment by the Lok Sabha They were Party militants, teachers, plantation, handloom and agricultural workers

In Bihar, Comrade Kedar Pande, Mine Workers' leader was murdered in Nırsa by goonda elements hired by opponents of the Party

In Assam, Punaram Gogoi, leader of the Fertiliser Corporation of India Union in Namrup was brutally killed by an executive of the plant

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374 *Documents of The Communist Movement in India*

The Plenum is proud of these comrades who fought in the cause of the Party and the working people, remained steadfastly at their posts and laid down their lives

The Plenum pays its homage to them and sends its heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyred comrades

On Houari Boumedienne's Death*

**Resolution adopted in the Plenum of CPI(M)
held at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978**

This Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its deep sense of sorrow at the demise of Houari Boumedienne, Present of the Popular Democratic Republic of Algeria and Chairman of the Council of Revolution of Algeria.

Boumedienne was one of the outstanding leaders of the liberation struggle of the Algerian people against French imperialism. From 1954 when the National Front for Liberation began its revolt, Boumedienne had been among the leaders of the Front who organised and carried on the armed struggle. After the liberation of Algeria in March 1961, Boumedienne was in the Government and in 1966 became President of the Republic.

Under his leadership Algeria continued to strengthen its friendly relations and cooperation with the Socialist countries which had been established during the days of the liberation struggle itself. He was a champion of the anti-imperialist cause and took up a consistently anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist stand on West Asia, giving firm support to the Palestinian Arabs. All this earned for him a leading position in the non-aligned movement.

His death is a big loss to the anti-imperialist and non-aligned world.

This Plenum sends its heartfelt condolences to the Revolutionary Council and the Government of the Popular Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M), visited the Algerian Embassy on January 2, and placed a wreath on behalf of the Party in Homage to Houari Boumedienne.

On Yella Reddy's Death*

Resolution adopted in the Plenum of CPI(M)
held at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978

This Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its deep sorrow at the passing away of Comrade Baddam Yella Reddy, one of the foremost leaders of the Telangana people, at the age of 74

He was one of the foremost leaders who organised the Andhra Mahasabha in the Telangana area against the Hyderabad Nizam's feudal regime during 1926-30. He was the first to lead the rural poor in his district in 1930-32 for food and against vetti (forced labour) and landlord zoolum. He had joined the national struggle against British imperialism in British India and all the struggles against the Nizam during the 1930s.

He along with his colleagues joined the Communist Party of India in 1940 and helped to develop the Andhra Mahasabha as a militant united organisation of the Telangana people to fight the Nizam's regime. He stood with the Telangana peasants in their fight against forced labour and against evictions and for land to the tiller during 1940-52 and the armed struggle. He was a member of the Secretariat of Andhra State Committee of the Communist Party of India during 1946-1964. He was elected to the first Parliament in 1952 and to the Andhra Pradesh Assembly for three terms. He suffered imprisonment both under the Nizam Government as well as in Independent India under Congress rule. He remained in the CPI when the united Communist movement split in 1964.

In November 1977, he suffered a stroke and passed away on December 27, 1978.

This Plenum sends its deep condolences to the family of Comrade Baddam Yella Reddy.

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On Autonomous District Council in Tripura*

**Resolution Adopted in The Plenum of CPI(M)
Held at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978**

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes with concern that the Central Government refusing to set up a Tribal Autonomous District Council in the contiguous and compact areas of Tripura, as provided in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India, has created great discontent among the Tribal minorities of the area

The background in which the tribal people of Tripura have raised this demand is well known. The continued influx of Bengalee refugees has converted the tribals into a small minority in the once tribal majority State. The tribals who are not in trade or services due to their backwardness, have lost also their best land. The Congress Government which failed to rehabilitate the Bengalee refugees in industry, played them against the tribals to maintain their rule and exploitation and terror.

The Plenum is happy to note that the Left Front in its Election Manifesto accepted a four point charter of tribal demands, and assured the tribal minorities that, if voted to office, the Left Front Government would not only restore all lands illegally transferred to non tribals but would press for setting up an Autonomous Tribal District Council in the contiguous tribal compact scheduled areas of Tripura, as provided in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. After assumption of office, the Left Government got a resolution adopted in the Tripura Assembly recommending to and requesting the Central Government to agree to the just demand of the democratic people of Tripura. The Tripuri language "Kok Borok" has also been recognised as another State language in Tripura.

The refusal of the Central Government to accept the demand for creation of an autonomous district council is encouraging the reactionary and disruptive forces in the State to launch their anti democratic, chauvinistic and separatist activities. Under inspiration of foreign agencies, the Upajati Yuva Samity has threatened a violent movement. At the same time, Ananda Margis under the flag of "We Bengalees" (Amra Bangalee) have given a call for bandh on January 17, 1979, to oppose the implementation of the just four point demand of the tribals. It is no wonder that the movement, launched by both these organisations, have their main direction against the Left Front and its year old Ministry, which has taken a number of steps that have weakened the hold of the vested interests in land in Tripura.

It is also not surprising that the reactionary circles in the Congress, Janata and CFD, have given their blessings to these movements and "struggles".

The Plenum fully supports the four point charter of demands adopted by the Left Front Government and appreciates the steps taken by them uptill now for the implementation of that programme. The Plenum requests the Central Government to lend its help immediately to set up an Autonomous Tribal District Council for the tribal compact areas of Tripura. At the same time, the Plenum warns the democratic masses of Tripura against the violent chauvinistic and separatist movements threatened by the anti democratic divisive forces, and appeals to the people to strengthen democratic unity further, for the implementation of the programme undertaken by the Left Front Government.

The Plenum urges upon Party units to launch a countrywide campaign in favour of the tribal demands in Tripura, and to expose the reactionary forces which are conspiring to disrupt the democratic unity of the tribal and non tribal toiling masses of Tripura, which is the solid basis of the Left and democratic Government.

Resolution on West Bengal*

Adopted in The Plenum of CPI(M)
Held at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978

Several States in the country were, this year, affected by severe floods, but the ravages in West Bengal were the worst. Flood waters came in three successive waves in August-September last, taking a toll of 1824 in human lives, uprooting families in millions, laying waste vast areas and destroying crores of rupees worth of crops, livestock and property.

The Plenum condoles the deaths of the flood victims and extends its heartfelt sympathy to their bereaved families and to all those affected by the flood.

This Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) congratulates our Party in West Bengal and mass organisations, trade unions, kisan sabha, organisations of students, youth, women, State Government employees, PRC, etc. for the selfless and untiring work that they did in rescue and relief work. The Plenum pays its homage to the eight comrades who lost their lives while engaged in rescue work.

The Plenum congratulates the Left Front Government of West Bengal for the humane, efficient and orderly manner in which it organised immediate relief through the newly elected Panchayats and is planning for the rehabilitation of the victims of the floods and of the State's economy. This would not have been possible without rousing the people and drawing them into active work. Unlike in other flood-affected States, prices of essential consumer articles were not allowed to go up in West Bengal.

In living memory, West Bengal has not been visited by a calamity of such an enormous dimension. The tasks before the Government of the State are stupendous and difficult.

Considering the vastness of the problem of rehabilitation—housing and employment for hundreds of thousands, reclamation

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of lakhs of acres of land for cultivation, rehabilitation of the rural landless, restoration of the economy and so on—the Government of West Bengal made to the Centre only the extremely modest request of Rs 350 crores as budgetary grant over two years, Rs 130 crores as loans from financial institutions and in addition 200,000 tonnes of foodgrains for gratuitous relief and 450,000 tonnes for the food for work programme. The State Government would have been fully justified in asking for much more.

The Plenum welcomes the assurance given by the Central Government that what had befallen West Bengal was a national calamity and money would be no consideration in the matter of relief and rehabilitation. But the Central Government has not yet agreed to concede the modest demand of the State Government. The actual help that is being given is not commensurate with the assurances and the Plenum urges the Centre to immediately accede to the State Government's demand.

The Plenum congratulates the State Government for generating a climate of self help and mobilising the widest sections of the people in the task of reconstruction, and organising relief and reconstruction work through the panchayats.

The Plenum once again congratulates the members of the Party, various mass organisations and other parties of the Left Front in West Bengal whose conscientious work in a grim situation not only gave confidence to the people but also had a big impact on the usually callous officialdom.

The Plenum notes with appreciation the help extended by the Governments and people of various states and different organisations who have directly contributed to the West Bengal Chief Minister's Relief Fund and the funds of other organisations.

The Plenum congratulates the Party units outside West Bengal for the role they played in mobilising the people in their areas and sending money and material, medical teams and medicines to give relief to the people of West Bengal.

The post flood problems that West Bengal, its people and Government are facing are immense and assistance from outside is still necessary.

The Plenum appeals to all Party units and the people to contribute to mobilise all help for West Bengal.

Resolution on Stalin Birth Centenary*

Adopted in The Plenum of CPI(M)
Held at Salkia on December 27 31, 1978

This Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) endorses the Central Committee's call to observe the Centenary Year of Stalin's Birthday

The Plenum pays its homage to the memory of Joseph Vissarionivich Stalin, leader of the international working class movement, of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the Soviet State, and outstanding Marxist Leninist theoretician

Joining the revolutionary movement in his youth, Stalin worked as a member of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and closely following Lenin's guidance soon became an outstanding leader of the Bolshevik Party in Lenin's life time

In 1912, Stalin wrote his book on Marxism and National Question which was highly appreciated by Lenin

Stalin played an outstanding role in organising the October Revolution and in defeating the counter revolutionaries during the Civil War

After the death of Lenin, new responsibilities fell on the shoulder of Stalin and the Bolshevik Party and Stalin rose to great heights in meeting them His fundamentals of Leninism (1924) expounding the fundamentals of Leninist doctrine not only established Lenin's great contribution to Marxism but correctly assessed the worldwide importance of Leninism when he defined it as Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and social revolution

This struck a mortal blow at all shades of revisionists who were intent on treating Leninism only as a Russian phenomenon, turning Marxism into a doctrine of class collaboration and parliamentary struggle This preserved for the working class the

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revolutionary core of Marx's teachings enabling it to apply Marxism to the concrete conditions under imperialism

Stalin heading the Bolshevik Party fought the distortions of Trotskyism—its underestimation of the role of the toiling peasantry in the struggle for Socialism, distorted conception of dictatorship of the proletariat, and its lack of faith in the victory of Socialism in one country. It was a hard ideological battle inside the Party and only a person and party armed with full faith in Marxism Leninism could have won it.

After Lenin's death, Stalin, standing at the head of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, became a continuator of Lenin's teachings, defending Leninism from the attacks of Left and Right deviations inside and outside the Soviet Union and enriching it in the process. His writings on national, colonial and agrarian questions are valuable contributions to Marxist Leninist theory. Stalin waged a continuous struggle to guard the Marxist Leninist concept of the dictatorship of proletariat, the vanguard role of the Party and proletarian internationalism. In his writings he made a masterly exposition of dialectical and historical materialism.

As an outstanding leader of the Communist International, Stalin played a prominent role in rearing the young Communist Parties in the Capitalist and colonial countries, linking the national liberation struggles with the world Socialist movement in conformity with Lenin's teachings.

The Bolshevik Party led by Stalin achieved one of its great triumphs with the success of the First Five Year Plan and building of Socialist economy. The successful Socialist planning proved before the eyes of the masses the superiority of the Socialist system over the anarchy of capitalism.

Understanding that the Soviet Union was encircled by a hostile capitalist world, the Bolshevik Party headed by Stalin based its planning on the building of heavy industry to enable the Soviet Union to achieve quick Socialist industrialisation and develop self reliance in providing for the defence and security of the Soviet State. Hitler's attack against the USSR proved the correctness of Stalin's line. The big achievements of the three

Five Year Plans laid the basis of victory in the anti fascist struggle

During the years of anti fascist struggle Stalin again played a prominent role in all matters including military tactics and strategy The posthumous tributes paid by various generals to him reveals his deep knowledge of military affairs

The vanquishing of the fascist armies was not only the victory of indomitable will and revolutionary patriotism of the Soviet people, it was also the triumph of Marxist Leninist guidance given by the Bolshevik Party headed by Stalin

The defeat of the fascist forces by the Red Army opened a new chapter in world history shifting the world balance of forces in favour of freedom, democracy and Socialism Its concrete proof was the great Chinese Revolution and Socialist revolutions in a number of countries, with one third of the world coming under Socialism, accompanied in the course of years by the fall of the old colonial order Stalin, heading the CPSU and the USSR played a historic role in this world shaking event

This life of innumerable triumphs in the cause of World Communism, this great Marxist Leninist theoretician was not free from certain errors and big mistakes Towards the end of his life he suffered from certain deviations like cult of personality, impairing of inner Party democracy and violations of Socialist democracy which led to costly errors and did harm to the cause he so dearly cherished The CPI(M) while taking note of these blemishes has always held that his contribution to Marxism Leninism far outweighed the mistakes appearing at the end of his life It is necessary that these negative developments should be deeply studied by the international movement so that proletarian regimes can avoid mistakes of a similar type

At the same time the CPI(M) considers it necessary to fight all those revisionists and reformists who exploits Stalin's mistakes to denigrate the revolutionary concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, vanguard role of the Party and preach the parliamentary path

The Plenum once again salutes the revolutionary memory of this great proletarian internationalist whose name will always be remembered as one of the greatest revolutionaries of the Twentieth Century

On The Present Political Situation*

Resolution Adopted by The Plenum of CPI(M)
Held at Salkia on December 27-31, 1978

The Tenth Congress of the Party had noted the widening gap between the promises of the Janata Party and the practices of the Janata Government. Since then the gulf has further widened.

The Government dragged its feet on the question of dismantling the authoritarian structure that had been erected by the Congress Party when Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister through the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution during the Emergency. The Janata Party refused to mobilise the masses for this purpose, but instead went in for agreement on constitutional amendments with the very forces that had put up the authoritarian structure.

The result was that the Congress (I) using its strong position in the Rajya Sabha was enabled to scuttle the 45th Constitutional Amendment in its essential aspects such as power to declare Internal Emergency, to unrestricted right of Parliament to amend the Constitution and subservience of Fundamental Rights to directive principles. As a consequence of this, provisions of the Constitution which could be used for re-imposition of an authoritarian regime basically remain.

The Tenth Congress of the Party had also noted that the Janata Party composed of disparate elements has no cohesion and its basic policies are no different from those of the Congress Government. In the absence of a cohesive socio-economic policy in the interest of the toiling masses, and directed against the monopolists and the multinationals collaborating with them and against the landlords which alone will be in the interest of the nation, personal rivalries of leaders had come on top. The country witnessed the amazing

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spectacle of the Home Minister demanding enquiry into charges of corruption against Kanti Desai, the Prime Minister's son, and the Prime Minister, in retaliation, hurling charges of corruption against the Home Minister's relatives

The adamant attitude of the Prime Minister on the question of referring these charges to an independent body to clear the cloud of suspicion was utilised by the Congress (I) to virtually paralyse the functioning of Parliament

The ouster of Charan Singh from the Cabinet added to the crisis of the Government and the Janata Party

Naturally, all these have tremendously corroded the credibility of the Janata Party and Government

Further, the bureaucracy has come on top and the administration stands virtually paralysed

The vested interest have been emboldened to take the law in their hands and act with impunity

Landlords have mounted barbarous attacks through hired goondas on landless labourers, the overwhelming majority of whom are Harijans and tribals. Their huts are burnt and looted. Harijans—men, women and children, have been burnt alive. Many have been shot dead or seriously wounded. A reign of terror has been let loose on them, leading to fleeing of whole Harijan populations from their villages.

Attacks on the minority Muslim community have also become common, culminating in the ghastly riots in Aligarh where many Muslims lost their lives. The role of the local leaders of the RSS in this ghastly riots is sought to be screened by the Janata leaders and Government. In the Ujjain meeting of their party, the Janata leaders unscrupulously exonerated the RSS from any involvement in the riots.

While the Janata Party in its Election Manifesto solemnly promised to take steps to bring down the disparity in income and break the concentration of wealth, the policies pursued by the Government have been in the opposite direction.

The bulk of the new industrial licences has gone to Big Business houses. Collaboration with multinationals in the name of acquiring sophisticated technology are on the increase both in the private

and public sectors Multinationals are being allowed even to establish industrial units in so called export oriented industries

This policy of encouragement to collaboration and import of technology has naturally led to scuttling of indigenous research and development The dismantling of the CSIR has been followed by attempts to abolish the Electronics Commission, which would pave the way for burying the indigenous development in electronic that has already taken place and the fund of knowledge gathered by our scientists This would lead to large scale import of electronics instruments from the multinationals The proposed 25 year collaboration between BHEL and Siemens for import of technology for development of all electrical products and in many other fields will not only bury the indigenous development that had already taken place, but also put an end to research and development in the electrical industry

With the unilateral declaration of the Prime Minister that India would not resort to nuclear explosion even for peaceful purposes nuclear research had considerably slackened The setting up of an Indo-American Commission to work out safeguards in nuclear installations would lead to a virtual end of nuclear research The setting up of this Commission is a negation of the nationally accepted policy that there can be no question of safeguards and inspection so long as the nuclear powers do not agree to stop nuclear tests and to destroy their nuclear arms pile

With such policies, it is no wonder that while Indian scientists working in foreign countries with the multinationals are anxious to come back, there is an increasing exodus of our scientists and engineers

Prices of cloth, cement, steel, coal and other articles of common consumption are continuously rising At the same time, prices of agricultural products, like cotton, sugarcane, jute, tobacco and paddy have fallen steeply leading to the distress of vast sections of the peasantry

These policies, in the interest of wholesalers Big Business and multinationals naturally, have led to mounting attacks on the working class Firing on striking workers and banning of strikes are being increasingly resorted to

The notorious Bhoothalingam Panel on incomes, wages and prices and the new Industrial Relations Bill are the clearest manifestations of the anti working class policy of the Janata Government

The authoritarian forces headed by Indira Gandhi have naturally sought to take advantage of these developments. She poses as the Champion of the Harijans and the minorities. The hypocrisy of this claim is proved by the fact that during the 11 years of her regime, not only nothing tangible was done to uplift the Harijans and minorities but their conditions actually worsened. Violent repression and atrocities are being mounted by the police in the Congress (I) ruled Andhra Pradesh on the agricultural labourers under the pretext of fighting Naxalites. The outbreak of communal clashes in Hyderabad and Adoni, where the police passively looked on, exposes how the Congress (I) Government failed to protect the minority community.

Indira Gandhi's concern regarding the Janata Government strengthening the position of monopolists and multinationals also lacks credibility in view of the fact that during her regime of eleven years, the monopoly houses had grown much faster than before and the multinationals had been given a big entry into the country's economy, despite all her thundering against them.

All these only demonstrate that the authoritarian forces are making frantic efforts to strengthen themselves and stage a come back.

Her pretended concern for the supremacy and sanctity of Parliament stands exposed by the call to indulge in undemocratic activities against the punishment meted out to her by Parliament. The hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane by Congressmen demanding release of Indira Gandhi and the withdrawal of all criminal cases against her and Indira Gandhi's justification of the hijacking highlight the threat to democracy and the grave danger of re imposition of authoritarian rule over the country, if she succeeds in staging a come back.

The leading lights of the Congress Party (Swaran Singh) who broke away from the Indira Congress, without any programme and failing to mobilise the people against authoritarianism, are making all out efforts to rejoin the Indira Congress, which is abject surrender to the authoritarian forces.

The Plenum appreciates those Congressmen who stubbornly oppose this move and are seeking to mobilise the rank and file to fight the authoritarian forces

The Plenum notes with satisfaction that in these conditions, the working class has repeatedly gone forward with united struggles in several industries, Statewide and all India wide, against the policies of the Janata Government and often succeeded in winning demands and frustrating the Government's efforts to impose wage freeze and the most reactionary piece of legislation which would take away the right to strike. The biggest ever convention in Delhi on November 19 of representatives of all trade unions and the biggest rally of workers from all over the country on the 20th have forced the Government to have second thoughts on the Industrial Relations Bill. Conferences, rallies, marches and other struggles by peasants demanding fair prices for their produce, cheaper prices for inputs, relief from heavy debt burdens and against evictions have taken place in many States.

While the Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the growing association of mass organisations including those led by the CPI, in common struggles, it appeals to the CPI to give up its hesitations and vacillations in organising common resistance to the growing menace from the forces of authoritarianism. The CPI's failure to recognise this danger of authoritarianism emanating from the Indira Congress often lands it in a stand which objectively helps these very forces of authoritarianism. The struggle for the unity of Left and democratic forces will be strengthened if the CPI overcomes these vacillations.

The growth of such forces, and the fact that the call by the Congress (I) for bandhs to protest against Indira Gandhi's imprisonment, went unheeded by the general mass of people all over the country, clearly demonstrate that if the Left and democratic forces unite and act together they can roll back the anti people policies of the Janata Government and frustrate the efforts of the authoritarian forces to stage a come back.

The entire development during the last few years underline the very deep crises of bourgeois policies. These policies have been proved to be bankrupt and they cannot take the country out of the

very deep economic crisis, nor can they give any solution to the problems of growing poverty and unemployment of the common people. These policies can only aggravate them.

The emergence of a viable Left and democratic alternative is the urgent need of the hour.

The emergence of the two Left Front Governments in West Bengal and Tripura and the measures they have taken in the interest of the people, particularly the tenants, agricultural labourers, Adivasis, and the working class, even within the severe limitations of the Constitution, will tremendously help to rally the Left and democratic forces.

The Plenum calls upon all those forces which exist in all parties to come together on all issues concerning the common people, mobilise them jointly and against the authoritarian forces, and in this process strengthen their unity. This alone will lead to the emergence of a powerful Left and democratic alternative.

The Plenum calls upon all Party units to strive for united mobilisation of the people along with other Left and democratic forces not only on every issue affecting different sections of the common people and against all communal, casteist and other disruptive forces but also on issues of Government's industrial, agrarian and other economic policies, and thus facilitate the emergence of a powerful Left and democratic alternative.

On The Plenum On Organisation*

B. T. Ranadive

The Plenum on Organisation called by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) endorsed the Report and Resolution placed before it by the Central Committee and cleared the way to the Party's further advance on the organisational front

The Plenum met at Salkia, in Howrah, West Bengal. The entire responsibility for organising it, for looking after the 240 delegates was undertaken by our valiant comrades of the Howrah district which was one of the worst sufferers of the recent floods

But working with the same zeal and challenging mood with which they battled against the raging floods, our Howrah comrades were able to make perfect arrangements for the Plenum, looking to every detailed need of the delegates. And in this they were assisted by the help they received from all District Committees of the Party in West Bengal which vied with each other to show their love and regard for the Central Committee and the delegates from all over India. The account given by Comrade Naresh Das, the indefatigable Secretary of the Howrah District Committee and member of the West Bengal State Secretariat, showed how all districts had worked for the success of the session.

The Report and Resolution adopted by the Plenum showed not only the capacity of our Party to make sharp criticism of its own mistakes and weaknesses, but its determination to overcome them on the basis of accepted organisational principles of Marxism Leninism.

It was obvious that in assessing the past there would be differences and clash of views. Discussing the organisational

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 14, 1979. This is a political review of the work done at the Plenum of CPI(M) held at Salkia, in Howrah, West Bengal.

problems after a long period, examining the practices current during the course of these years, and trying to understand the organisational needs of the present when both the influence of the Party and its responsibilities have increased, differing views were bound to be expressed and they were freely expressed by the delegates

The Report and Resolution were subjected to scrutiny, analysis and there was no tendency to bypass any weakness in the formulations in the C C documents. The experience and opinions of the various States, units and individuals, were cited to enrich the discussion and the understanding of all. At the same time there was no tendency to make negative criticisms. All this enabled the Plenum to come to a united decision and adopt the Central Committee documents with no one voting against them. This understanding was reached after Comrade E M S replied to the criticism and doubts and removed many misconceptions which were expressed during the discussions.

The Plenum was called in pursuance of the directive of the Tenth Party Congress of Jullundur which could not discuss the organisational situation because the C C could not present an organisational report.

Background Developments

The Plenum examined the organisational situation in the background of the Party's notable political and organisational achievements. It recalled the grim fight against the leaderships of the two big parties of the international movement—the fight against revisionist and dogmatic deviations, the fight against the revisionists and Left adventurists in our country, and the defence of Marxism Leninism against their onslaughts. It also recalled that the period, besides, was a period of stormy internal developments leading to the formation and break up of United Front Ministries headed by the Party, the break up and reorganisation of the Left Front in West Bengal, the semi fascist terror in West Bengal and unprecedented repression in Kerala, the institution of one party dictatorship against which the party had warned, broad electoral unity to defeat it and again the emergence of the West Bengal and Tripura Ministries as the rallying point for Left and democratic forces.

These developments called for intensive activity of the Party and its Central leadership and put to severe test the Marxism Leninism of the Party fighting the direct attacks of the ruling party, the disruption of the revisionists who landed themselves in supporting the Emergency, and the Naxalites whose Left adventurism led them into individual terror and a campaign of murders against us

Correctness of Political Line

The Party came out of this ordeal successfully with the Central Committee waging a relentless fight against the ruling classes and the two deviations which helped them. The Jullundur Congress of the Party in its Review Report emphasised the correctness of the party's political line, though it did not spare the weaknesses and vacillations in understanding and implementation.

But the Plenum noted that the same thing cannot be said of the organisational achievements of the Party in this period. The necessity of concentration in meeting the ideological and political attacks led to a weakening of the attention and vigilance on the organisational side, creating a certain imbalance between the Party's political prestige and mass influence, its new responsibilities and its organised strength. The Plenum's efforts were directed to overcome this imbalance and decide on concrete measures in that direction.

Self Critical Examination

This however could not be done without examining self critically the functioning of the Centre and the State Committees and the directives of the organisational resolutions which hitherto guided the Party. The Central Committee's report and resolution directed searching criticism on the functioning of the Centre, exposing its weaknesses, lacunae and deviations. They also pinpointed the deviations and distortions in the functioning of the State Committees and lower Party units as gathered from the reports of the State Committees.

The Central Committee's documents correctly stated that the 1967 Resolution on "Our Tasks on Party Organisation" contained

many basic and correct decisions on a number of questions connected with Party building. It correctly pinpointed the disastrous effects of Right revisionism on Party organisation and emphasised the need for liquidating these legacies. It was on the basis of these correct and healthy directives that we have been trying to rebuild our Party.

The 1967 Resolution warned against federalist tendencies and tried to restore sound Marxist Leninist principles of organisation and protect the class character of the Party. However, it suffered from a number of weaknesses one of which was that a correct idea to utilise our limited resources and cadre to help the movement in compact and contiguous areas and lead the mass struggles effectively was lopsidedly emphasised bordering on a new thesis on Party organisation. The 1973 Resolution carried forward and magnified the weaknesses of the 1967 resolution when it further elaborated and concretised the concept of contiguous areas.

Wrong Postulates

The concept of contiguous areas, political bases, in the 1973 Resolution was based on the immediate and direct application of the Perspective Tactical Line. Some of the political postulates of that resolution were wrong. It hampered the Party's intervention in the democratic struggles that were sweeping the country and did violence to the understanding of the class tactics of the Perspective Tactical Line. These self-critical formulations and the assessment of the two resolutions led to lively debate and exchange of opinions.

Many comrades felt that the Central Committee documents were throwing all blame on the two resolutions of 1967 and 1973 for the present state of Party organisation. Many others felt that the concept of priority, contiguous areas, etc., elaborated in the Calicut Resolution (1967) and further expressed in the 1973 Resolution was a correct one and that it had helped the Party to advance. They also felt that this was a departure away from the direction pointed out by the Perspective Tactical Line and would land the organisation in reformist and revisionist practices.

Lively Discussion

Others felt that what the central documents were advocating was just dispersal of the Party's strength in running after spontaneous movements instead of having a plan for organisation starting with strong areas and spreading out in contiguous areas. Every one appreciates the concern shown by several comrades to guard the revolutionary content of the Party organisation, the attention to the Perspective Tactical Line and the necessity of planned work in the matter of organisation.

At the same time several delegates recounting their own experience supported the Central Committee's assessment of the two resolutions and pointed out the weaknesses especially of the 1973 Resolution. The delegates from some States narrated the harm done to the organisation by an exclusive attention to the concept of priority etc.

It was pointed out by Comrade E M S on behalf of the Central Committee that the criticism that the two documents held the two resolutions responsible for the state of Party organisation was incorrect. The documents not only did not say so but they attributed the present state of affairs to earlier revisionist practices, and also partly due to problems of growth.

Expansion of The Party

Secondly, it was pointed out the exclusive concentration on contiguous areas actually delinked the Party from the growing mass struggles in the country. "The issue is not one of emphasising our work on a planned basis and the utilising of available cadre and organisational resources in a most effective manner instead of getting drawn into spontaneous and unplanned work. Such a planned work of consolidating our strength in some industries, areas and fronts, etc., according to the given situation is always necessary. However, this idea of concentration and extension should neither be restricted to few areas and States where our Party is relatively stronger, nor is it to be directly and immediately deduced from the Perspective Tactical Line, laid down in the statement of policy.

"It must be realised that mass struggles are breaking out in various places where we are weak. In the absence of our Party the

reactionary parties take leadership of these struggles and hence these struggles do not get oriented towards the democratic revolution. Every effort must be made to establish the Party's links with the struggles, help them to spread further and politically influence the masses in the direction of democratic revolution. It must be remembered that a situation of widespread crisis is an essential element which itself is produced by widespread mass struggles and other forms of militant resistance.

"It is in this connection that widespread propaganda and development of the movement by the Party in the country as a whole— not only in the priority areas and strong states becomes a must "

Exaggerated Emphasis

In fact it was pointed out that this exaggerated emphasis on contiguous areas disoriented the Party's work from the tasks put before it by the Perspective Tactical Line document.

The Perspective Tactical Line document directs the creation of a wide base all over the country and organisation of the working class on an all India basis and winning over the majority in strategic industries as an indispensable condition for developing working class hegemony, develop proletarian initiative to defend the peasantry, build the workers' and peasants' alliance and a mass Communist Party. This calls for widespread political propaganda and development of the movement by the Party in the country as a whole instead of sticking to priority areas and strong States.

The 1973 Resolution, its exaggerated and exclusive emphasis on priority areas became an obstacle in the way of moving in the direction of the class tasks emphasised in the Perspective Tactical Line. It is because of this erroneous concept, and an unthinking attachment to the priority, etc., concept that several comrades who expressed their deep faith in the Perspective Tactical Line, openly opposed the objective of a mass Party. Many comrades felt that with the mass influx inside the Party, with widespread membership from among the masses, there was every chance of the Party's ideology and revolutionary spirit getting diluted. They reminded the C C that in the united party also this slogan was given and in

practice it meant opening the doors of the party to all and sundry. Many pointed out that at present also the level of consciousness of ordinary members left much to be desired and with a rapid increase in membership it will definitely compromise the quality of membership for the sake of numbers.

This concern for guarding the ideological purity and the revolutionary integrity of the Party was appreciated by all. Everyone agreed that if only numbers were to decide the mass character of the Party, then it would inevitably lead to dilution of Party's ideology and its revolutionary perspective.

Expansion with Quality

But the Central Committee's Resolution clearly dispelled all such fears. It said, "The struggle for a mass revolutionary party emphasises on the Party the necessity of continually elevating the consciousness of the members before and after recruitment and enhancing the Marxist Leninist quality of members. Expansion of membership and enhancement of consciousness must go hand in hand to achieve the objective. The Party should work for expanding its membership and expanding itself into a mass revolutionary party connecting the task of expansion with raising the ideological level of the member."

Expansion cannot be done in isolation from the class struggle. The resolution calls for recruitment in the Party of militants thrown up by struggles after putting them in Auxiliary Groups.

To consider that a mass Communist Party must necessarily be a reformist party is a wrong sectarian idea. It is based on the belief that a vast number of toilers from amongst the masses can never master Marxism Leninism and will be unable to form part of the vanguard.

Class and Party

It is very correct to say that every striker cannot be automatically enrolled in the Party. It is also correct to say that the slogan of mass party should not obliterate the distinction between the vanguard and the class. A mass party does not mean that every member of the mass or class is to be recruited. Nor does it mean

that an overwhelming majority of the class will form part of the vanguard. And yet it has to be a mass party with its hands reaching all points of social activity—from factories and field to commercial, educational and other institutions. Without this widespread character it cannot perform the task of leading the revolution.

Revolutionary Consciousness

It is obvious that a mass Communist Party does not grow in a day, that it grows through years of continuous struggles which raise high the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. It is equally obvious that at each stage the Party will grow in conformity with its mass influence and the revolutionary teaching it is able to impart to the masses and its own class.

The immediate problem as posed in the resolution is how to overcome the lag between the growing influence of the Party, the growing number of mass struggles it is leading and the actual recruitment inside the Party. This is the immediate problem and its solution will clear the way to further rapid advance of the Party.

The report said, "The State Committees' reports reveal that in every State the mass influence of the Party is increasing, its members are engaged in multifarious activities and a good soil has been prepared for its organisational advance and consolidation. At present the membership of the Party is 157,000. The CITU has a membership of 1,500,000. Besides, Party comrades are leading big organisations not affiliated to the CITU and they have a following of lakhs. The Kisan Sabha has a membership of 2,300,000 and the Students Federation has a membership of four lakhs. There are thousands of youths and women enrolled in organisations led by us.

At the same time this growth in the mass influence of the Party, secured through innumerable struggles is not adequately reflected in the growth of the Party. In fact even our mass organisations do not reflect the growth properly.

Problems of Growth

Why is it so? The resolution answers: "This means that in part at least the problem faced by our Party is a problem of growth, of how to enrol out of the huge mass of people who follow us and our mass organisations in daily battles."

Why has this problem arisen? Firstly because of the fact that the battle against the revisionist distortion of the organisational principles and functioning of the Party is not over resulting in a series of deviations hampering the growth of our Party

Apart from this the problem is in essence one of converting the elementary consciousness of the daily struggle into political and Socialist consciousness which demand increased and intense political activity of the Party directly among the masses and, above all, a persistent ideological struggle against all feudal, semi feudal, anti Marxist bourgeois ideologies current among the masses

As the Resolution correctly puts it "To rear a Leninist Party it is necessary to combine the political and economic struggles of the Party with unremitting ideological struggle against all indigenous anti Marxist and non Marxist ideologies Without such a struggle the superiority of Marxism, cannot be established The failure to carry out this all sided struggle is one of the reasons for the continuous lag between the influence of the Party, the strength of mass organisations led by it and the actual recruitment of Party members "

The fight against alien ideologies includes struggles against religious obscurantism, casteism, communalism and the bourgeois ideologies of Gandhism, Nehruism, etc The fight against the communal and caste ideologies is all the more necessary as they are being used by the ruling classes to disrupt the daily struggle of the toilers The class roots and class role of these ideologies have to be consistently exposed rescuing the masses from their pernicious influence The Plenum directed the Central Committee to organise this struggle and also help the State Committees in carrying it on

The Plenum welcomed the Central Committee's sharp criticism in regard to the functioning of the Centre It is axiomatic that against the highly centralised bourgeois landlord State the proletariat can have the guarantee of its success only in a highly centralised party based on democratic centralism, that deviations from it, all excuses for federalism in the name of India's peculiarities, only weaken the proletariat and its Party in the battle against the bourgeois landlord rule And yet federal tendencies have been gaining ground despite the strong warning of the Calicut Resolution

Weak Centre

These tendencies were accentuated by the weakening of the Centre "Instead of an effective centre the previous years saw a growingly weak centre, with the majority of the PBMs not working at the Centre, with dual responsibility continuing as before. The work of the Party Centre became minimal with the Centre attending only to absolutely necessary and pressing political and organisational jobs"

This was progress in the reverse direction

The consequent lack of close attention to weaker States, the uneven development and concentration of attention on the advanced States further contributed to the growth of federalism with the State Committees failing to send regular reports of their activities to the Centre

This sharp criticism both of the Centre and the States of the diversion from the basic idea of building a centralised party, was again agreed to by all. It is recognised by all that a Marxist Leninist Party has to be built from above. The resolution of the Plenum therefore sharply said, "The Plenum directs that an end be put to the present dangerous drift which undermines and corrodes the concept of a strong centralised party which alone can act as the vanguard of the working class "

Priority must be given to the task of building an effective Centre capable of discharging the ideological, theoretical, political and organisational tasks facing the Party including the task of effective guidance to the mass movement and mass organisations

Emphasis on Education

The Plenum charged the Centre to further the ideological and political unity of the all India party and decided that the Centre should hold regular schools for Party members, for trade union, kisan cadres, prepare a common syllabus to be used all over India in educating Party ranks and bring out a theoretical and ideological journal and educate the Party ranks in the current of thought in the International Communist Movement

Besides, it directed that the Centre should periodically call meetings of Editors of Party organs and journals in all States to

ensure unity of political and ideological propaganda and the effectiveness of Party journals as vehicles of the Party line and ideology

The Plenum further directed the Centre to overcome its lopsidedness in concentrating attention on the stronger States and pay due attention to States where the Party is weak. In particular, it asked the Centre to pay special attention to the widespread Hindi areas and hold special Party schools, start a Hindi weekly, produce propaganda literature in Hindi and undertake political campaigns in these States. The neglect of this vast area in the past, and the exclusive attention to the advanced States has done a lot of harm to the Party.

The programme suggested by the Central Committee and adopted by the Plenum will certainly halt the growth of federalist tendencies and set the Party on the road to build an effective Centre and a centralised Party. It speaks of the earnestness of the delegates to wage an irreconcilable fight against bourgeois federalism and restore the Marxist Leninist concept of a centralised Party.

In the fight against federalism the Plenum also directed that all State Committees should observe all the rules and norms laid down by the Party Constitution, regarding their obligations towards the Centre. At present these are violated by a number of State Committees. The failure to send regular reports contributes to the growth of federalist tendencies. The Centre also must play its part by effective guidance and intervention on important issues affecting the States.

Class Composition

The Plenum noted a general failure on the part of the State Committees to ensure a correct class composition of the Party. The figures supplied by the State Committees made it clear that hardly any attention was paid to this all important question and that over the years there has not been any material change in the class composition of the Party. The Plenum called for immediate steps to ensure recruitment, training, education and promotion of cadres from the working class and other toiling sections. Without this the Party will not be able to act as the vanguard of the working class.

This means that attention should be paid to the ideological needs and development of young cadres from the working class and other toiling sections who have hardly any opportunity for self-development.

It called for a proper outlook towards wholetimers and young cadres. It said, "It is necessary to avoid the erroneous waste of cadres through routinisation because of lack of care to develop them." How many hundreds have been wasted, unable to rise above the ordinary daily work, none can tell. But the fact that there is a growing famine of cadres despite our widely increased mass activity, shows that the loss is enormous and telling on the health of the Party. The inability of many cadres to deal with the multifarious responsibilities facing them is due to this callous failure to equip them to shoulder higher responsibilities. They are neither nursed nor equipped to assume responsible posts either in mass organisations or in the Party.

Need for Struggle

The Plenum has laid its finger on one of the soarest spots in Party organisation. The Party has no chance of meeting its increased responsibilities if due attention is not paid to this problem and the problem of paucity of developed cadres is not overcome. The present attitude is virtually one of waiting on the spontaneous development of cadres, which is ruinous both to the Party and the cadres.

The failure to carry out criticism and self-criticism, the neglect of collective and democratic functioning—all of which are practices rooted in revisionism and reformism were sharply nailed down in the Plenum Resolution. It is to be noted that the Calicut Resolution precisely asked the Party to deal with these deviations. But the deviations seem to be deeprooted to be eliminated without a relentless struggle against them.

Reviews Neglected

How are the norms about self-criticism and democratic functioning violated? The resolutions says, "Equally abandoned is the practice of reviewing of mass campaigns and struggles and

teaching the Party through its own activities. This leads to the abandonment of criticism and self criticism inside the Party depriving it of one of the weapons of rectifying itself and improving its understanding and its practice "

All Committees from top to bottom, all Committees leading mass organisations must ask themselves how many campaigns and struggles have been reviewed in the light of the Party's line and objective, and what experience has been imparted to the entire Party from such review. It is here that the ranks have an opportunity to enrich the understanding of the Party by contributing their direct experience and correct the shortcomings of the higher leadership. Criticism and self criticism is a continuous process and not one to be resorted to only on the occasion of Party Congress or Plenums. This is denied when the review of mass struggles and Party activities is not done regularly. It denies the ranks their democratic right to have their say in discussing the shortcomings in Party activity.

The principle of democratic centralism is violated often in other ways also. Regular reports to the lower committees on Party's activities and line, and reporting back to the higher committees of the opinions of the lower committees constitutes a cornerstone of democratic functioning and helps in building the unity of the Party. And yet this important feature of Party organisation has been sadly lacking in many States, leading to bureaucratic functioning. As the resolution says, "The democratic functioning of the Party, the feeling of all being responsible for the formulation and execution of the Party line, has been badly impaired. This is due to the fact that in a large number of cases the practice of reporting to the lower units and reporting back from units hardly exists. The doubts and questions raised by lower units are hardly answered "

Warning Against Bureaucratism

The accumulated criticism bursts forth in conferences and wider meetings, sometimes belittling the positive achievements of the Party. The Plenum took serious note of this and warned against bureaucratism and called for restoration of reporting and review by all committees, without which there cannot be any democratic centralism.

All this naturally led to undermining of collective functioning, with individuals functioning sometimes in place of committees and emergence of bureaucratic tendencies with the ranks hesitating to express their frank opinions in Party discussions. The Plenum also took note of the fact that simultaneously liberal tendencies, lack of discipline, etc., are also rearing their head. The Plenum has directed that these deviations be immediately overcome. In order to fulfil its vanguard role the Party must be in a position to lead the mass organisations and mass struggles. It was not possible at this Plenum to discuss the problems of mass organisations and examine the implementation of the Party's line conducting them. It was promised that this would be done in the near future.

Mass Organisations

At the same time the Plenum referred to some of the shortcomings in the conduct of mass organisations. The mass organisations have grown, they have added to their strength and prestige and yet our work in them needs lot of improvement before it can be called Communist work. "Further rapid progress and overcoming the weaknesses in these mass organisations cannot be achieved unless the Central Committee periodically discusses the problems of mass organisation, their all India experience, tactics, and offers effective guidance. The State Committees have a similar responsibility. Besides, it is necessary that the Central and State Committees ensure democratic functioning of mass organisations and effective supervision over the functioning of Fractions and Fraction Committees to enable the Party to fulfil its guiding role in relation to the mass organisations."

Study and Self Development

One of the important directives to all leaders and ranks is the call for self development, for continuous study of Marxism Leninism. It says, "Those who give up self development cannot lead the Party's battle for organisational rectification." What was the net achievement of the Plenum? The discussion served to unify the Party on the question of immediate steps to streamline the Party, to nail down erroneous concepts of Party organisation and the

deviations and distortions obtaining in its functioning over a period of years

It is obvious that without giving up wrong notions and overcoming the manifest departures from Marxist Leninist principles of organisation, the Party will not be in a position to consolidate and expand itself. With the success of the Party's political line, with the increased prestige and mass strength of the Party in almost all States, new opportunities are opening before the Party to push forward with its immediate task of building the unity of Left and democratic forces. The organisational efforts of the Party must now match its political responsibilities and opportunities.

But this cannot be done unless the weaknesses are overcome.

The Plenum unitedly calls upon all to give up wrong practices, wrong theories and fight federalism, develop an effective Centre, and above all, the norms of democratic centralism. It nails down the fact that recruitment is lagging behind the Party's influence and this Lag must be overcome by persistently waging ideological struggle against all alien ideologies. It calls upon all to give up the fear of a mass party and have faith that a huge number from among the masses are capable of grasping the truths of Marxism Leninism and functioning worthily in the vanguard.

Unity of the Party

This unity achieved through discussions and the determination to overcome the lapses developed over years, will steel and unify the Party still further and put it on the road to successfully discharge the immediate task facing it. The great love of the people of West Bengal for the Party, the huge rally and the transparent devotion of the cadres and the great height to which our Party in West Bengal rose during the flood calamity stand out as symbols of the unity of our Party which the Plenum decisions will further strengthen and consolidate.

On Developments in Kampuchea*

Statement Dated January 17, 1979 Issued by
The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its sympathy and solidarity with the people of Kampuchea. For years the people of Kampuchea along with the people of Vietnam and Laos fought against the imperialists and their puppets. At last they were able to defeat American aggression, clear the country of imperialists and establish a Government of their choice.

The people expected the new Government to consolidate the achievements of freedom, maintain fraternal relations with its Socialist neighbours and forge ahead with the task of re building the country for prosperity and advance.

Unfortunately the Pol Pot Government failed to discharge its mandate and took to the mistaken path of hostility towards the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It also failed to develop the economy inflicting unnecessary sufferings on the people in pursuit of its erroneous policies. The result was the growing alienation of the Government from the people and the collapse of the economy and repression on the people.

The Kampuchean people had to pass through another fiery ordeal to overcome these developments and replace the Government. This ordeal has at last come to an end with the fall of the Pol Pot Government and formation of a new one with the full support of the people behind it.

These facts should amply prove the untenability of the charge of Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea. The fact is that the Kampuchean people have staged a revolt against the Government.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 21, 1979

On China's Attack on Vietnam*

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Expresses Grave Con

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India expresses its grave concern at the attacks launched by armed forces into Vietnam.

In this connection one cannot but remember Deng talk about punishing Vietnam in the course of his USA. The present action seems to be more of a punishment than an outcome of any genuine border dispute.

Besides, this sequel to a supposedly border dispute work of all talk of Panch Sheel and peaceful disputes between States. And one may add, the between two Socialist States undermines the proletarian internationalism to which all Marxist-Leninists should adhere.

The P.B. calls upon the Peoples Republic of China to take the necessary steps, withdraw its forces and settle the dispute.

which had lost its support. To describe this as aggression of Vietnam is an attempt to malign both Vietnam as well as the people of Kampuchea.

The Polit Bureau warns the people against imperialist designs to exploit the Kampuchean situation and pursue its nefarious game of aggression and intervention. The charge of aggression levelled at the U N against Vietnam brings grist to the mill of imperialist conspirators.

It is the duty of all anti imperialist and Socialist countries to reply to the slander and frustrate imperialist designs to exploit the Kampuchean situation to its own advantage. The P B supports the stand of the USSR and other Socialist countries in defence of Vietnam and the people of Kampuchea, rebuffing imperialist intervention.

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The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its grave concern at the attacks launched by the Chinese armed forces into Vietnam

In this connection one cannot but remember Deng Xiao Ping's talk about punishing Vietnam in the course of his visit to the USA. The present action seems to be more of a punitive character than an outcome of any genuine border dispute.

Besides, this sequel to a supposedly border dispute makes short work of all talk of Panch Sheel and peaceful settlement of disputes between States. And one may add, the armed clash between two Socialist States undermines the very basis of proletarian internationalism to which all Marxist Leninist Parties should adhere.

The P B calls upon the People's Republic of China to retrace its steps, withdraw its forces and settle the dispute peacefully. It calls upon all Socialists and anti imperialists of the world to express their solidarity and sympathy with Vietnam. It supports the reasonable peace proposals put forth by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, February 25, 1979

China Must Resile From Suicidal Step*

**Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Issued Statement
Dated February 26, 1979 in New Delhi**

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) expresses its fraternal solidarity with the people of Socialist Vietnam and their leaders for their heroic defence against the invading Chinese forces who have been penetrating into their country for the last ten days. As in the earlier acts of self defence, so now against the Chinese, the Vietnamese people are organising the defence of their national independence and sovereignty.

The Polit Bureau is glad that the Government of India and all the political parties in the country who in spite of their political differences have joined their voices with the democratic and peace loving peoples throughout the world in demanding that the Chinese armies should withdraw in order to facilitate the settlement of issues in dispute between China and Vietnam. It is shocking that in spite of the universally expressed indignation of the freedom and peace loving people throughout the world, the Chinese leaders continue to pursue their course.

The imperialist powers are, of course, glad that their game of making Asians fight Asians has succeeded so well and they lend their support to the Chinese attack on Vietnam.

It is ironical that the very leaders of China who have been campaigning against "hegemonism", are now trying to establish their own hegemony in the neighbouring region. The P B demands that the Chinese leaders resile from this suicidal step, stop the war and order immediate withdrawal of their forces.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, March 4, 1979

Demonstrate Solidarity With Vietnam*

**Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Issued Statement
in New Delhi on March 8, 1979**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) warmly congratulates the fighting people of Vietnam on their glorious resistance to the attack on their country by the armed forces of the People's Republic of China. Mustering all their fighting and heroic traditions they are defending the freedom and independence of their Socialist country, ready to sacrifice everything for it.

Only four years ago, the people of Vietnam had succeeded in defeating the military might of the USA and frustrated its designs to dominate over South east Asia. No wonder once again in the present conflict the entire progressive humanity stands solidly behind Vietnam.

The P B welcomes the announcement by the People's Republic of China that it is withdrawing its forces from the soil of Vietnam and that it has no territorial ambitions. The sooner this insane aggressive conflict is ended the better for Asia and all humanity.

The People's Republic of China must take quick and convincing steps to ensure all that its announcement is genuinely meant and not made to mislead world opinion. None can blame the Vietnamese if they are skeptical about immediate complete withdrawal of the Chinese forces.

No recent act of the People's Republic of China has isolated it so completely and thoroughly from all anti imperialist, Socialist and progressive forces of the world. It should draw lessons from the fact that its only supporters are the British, Japanese and U S

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi March 11, 1979

Governments Its insane act has supplied ammunition to the reactionaries to fire one salvo after another against Communists and slander the Marxist Leninist doctrine In India it has activated the anti China lobby and given a strong setback to the process of normalisation of relations between the two countries

The crime will be enhanced if the Chinese side continues to talk of further retaliation and successful punishment mission and lays down conditions for withdrawal and negotiations The withdrawal of forces must be complete, unconditional, and based on the already accepted norms by the two countries and their ruling parties The P B appeals to the people of China to re assert the basic principles of international relations, peaceful settlement of disputes, Panch Sheel and repudiate the violation of these by their leadership

The Vietnamese Government has generously responded to the call for negotiations, laying down only one condition unconditional and total withdrawal of Chinese forces from their soil This is also the demand of the democratic forces all over the world and the P B fully supports it The Vietnamese Government's expressed desire to re establish fraternal ties between the two peoples shows awareness of genuine proletarian internationalism, awareness of the ties of brotherhood between peoples of all countries Such people are invincible The P B calls upon all Party units to hold meetings to demonstrate solidarity with the people of Vietnam and demand unconditional withdrawal of the Chinese forces from Vietnam

Fight Back The Anti-People Taxation Measures*

*The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)
issued the following statement in New Delhi on March 7, 1979*

The expectations that the Janata Government's third budget would give some relief to the people has been belied

It proposes the heaviest ever dose of fresh taxation of over Rs 600 crores and an unprecedented deficit financing of over Rs 1300 crores. The axe has fallen on even such elementary needs of life like kerosene, soaps, tooth paste and tooth brush, which the Finance Minister has chosen to call "luxury goods"

The huge hike on excise duties on petrol and high speed diesel would put up transport cost for the common people and would even drive small transport owners out of business

This is in addition to the suffering of millions of commuters resulting from more than doubling of season tickets by the Railway Budget in all the suburban areas

The Finance Minister has not spared even bidis, used by the common people

The P B decisively stands for giving urgent relief to the rural masses. It appreciates the removal of the excise duty on unmanufactured tobacco and the scaling down of excise duty on light diesel used by the agriculturists for pump sets, and the scaling down by half of the excise duty on indigenous chemical fertilisers and the import duty on imported chemical fertilisers. However, it cannot be said that this relief reaches the bulk of the peasant masses. In fact they are being ruined

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, March 11, 1979

Prices of commercial crops like cotton, sugarcane, potatoes, jute have crashed. Peasants growing foodgrains have been forced into distress sales, because the Government has not made any arrangement to purchase their produce on an adequate scale even at the minimum prices fixed by it, which themselves are inadequate. As a result the entire peasantry is in the grip of speculators and moneylenders. The budget makes no proposals to relieve the peasantry from this miserable plight. No adequate provision has been made for procurement of their produce at remunerative prices.

It is significant that while the prices of almost all commercial crops have crashed and the prices of other agricultural products have fallen, the index of wholesale prices has registered a rise of one per cent. This only shows that in contrast to the crashing of the prices of primary produce, prices of manufactured articles have registered an increase. The claimed stabilisation of prices has been at the expense of the primary producers. On the other hand, the consumer price index has registered a rise of 4.6 per cent. All these show that both the peasants and the consumers have been squeezed by industrial magnates and big traders, resulting in further acceleration of disparities in income between the top strata and the common people.

The fiscal measures proposed in the budget, namely, the heavy taxation, including the general increase of five per cent of excise duties on all commodities, and the large deficit financing, would lead to increase in prices, restrict the purchasing power of the common people and curtail their consumption of the most essential goods. On the other hand, this would result in a further accumulation of income and wealth in the hands of the upper classes, thus further widening the disparities in income and wealth contrary to the promises of the Janata Party in the election manifesto.

Already because of the erosion of purchasing power of the masses, industrial growth had registered a precipitous fall from seven per cent to 3.4 per cent this year. The further erosion of purchasing power resulting from these budget levies, will lead to greater stagnation of industry and attendant increase in

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unemployment While imposing heavy tax burdens on the common people in the name of collecting resources, the Government does not hesitate to squander one thousand crores and more on the fad of prohibition

The P B demands a drastic change in the tax proposals and in particular the removal of taxes on matches, kerosene, petrol, high speed diesel, soaps, tooth paste, tooth brush and scaling down of excise duties on articles of common consumption

The P B calls upon all Party units and mass organisations to launch a massive campaign of protest against these anti people taxation measures

The P B calls upon all democratic organisations and individuals to come together and launch a massive campaign to compel the Government to change these taxation proposals in favour of the people and to take effective measures to guarantee the peasants remunerative prices for their produce and fair wages to agricultural labourers

CPI(M) Central Committee Communique*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in New Delhi from April 4 to 7, 1979 Comrade A Balasubramaniam, Member of the Polit Bureau presided

As the Central Committee began its session, reports arrived that the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had been executed. The Committee denounced this act of the military regime of Pakistan as a political murder and conveyed its condolences to the bereaved family.

The C C sent a cable to the racist and fascist South African Government demanding the commutation of the death sentence on Solomon Mahlangu. It learnt with shock and horror that this militant freedom fighter was hanged by the racist regime, defying world public opinion, including that of the U N and its Security Council.

During the four day meeting, the C C reviewed the work of its members in the Students' Federation of India, and the All India Kisan Sabha, whose all India conferences were held in February and March 1979 respectively, the former in Patna and the latter in Varanasi. It noted with satisfaction the progress of the work in these two organisations and approved the line of action chalked out in these two conferences.

The C C also reviewed the situation in the country's trade union movement and gave broad guidelines to the Party members who were working in the Centre of Indian Trade Union (CITU) whose conference is being held from April 11 to 15, 1979, in Madras, after four years.

World Communist Movement

The C C took into consideration the critical situation that has arisen in the World Communist movement following the invasion by Socialist China's troops of the territory of Socialist Vietnam on the absolutely untenable plea of punishing Vietnam. These aggressive activities of the Government of China are, in the view of the C C the outcome of the erroneous policies pursued by the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, the policies that came to consider the USSR as social imperialist, to be fought as the principal enemy of world peace and mankind, and policies which clearly depart from the fundamental principles of Marxism Leninism.

Uncompromising struggle against the forces of imperialism and solidarity with all those who fight imperialism in defence of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism is the hallmark of Marxism Leninism. The Communist Party of China had a proud record of upholding the banner of anti imperialism and fighting the Right revisionist trends in the World Communist movement.

Grave Departure

It is, however, regrettable that the Chinese Communist leadership had gravely departed from this policy, fundamentally revising the entire world political assessment universally accepted by the international Communist movement. Hence the CPI(M) had to sharply demarcate and oppose the line of the CPC which was advocating the so called "Three Worlds" theory, the theory of Soviet "social imperialism", and the theory of united action against the USSR in alliance with U S imperialism.

South East Asia in general, and the three countries of Indo China in particular, have, for long, been storm centre of the anti imperialist struggle. It was here that heroic and death defying battles were fought by the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, first against the French and later against the U S imperialists. The victory of the Vietnamese war of national liberation, defeating the most ferocious armies of U S imperialism, has culminated in the setting up free, democratic and Socialist States in all the three countries of the Indo China region. These victories have inspired the entire world anti imperialist forces, giving a firm rebuff to aggressive U S imperialism.

The Central Committee is glad that the Chinese and Vietnamese Governments have agreed to meet and commence their talks over the disputed issues. It hopes that the talks would result in ending all conflicts between the two Socialist States through peaceful negotiations.

However, the new political line of cooperation with the U.S. in opposition to the USSR, being pursued by the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, created a dangerous situation which, once again, offered opportunities to the imperialists to stage a come back in the Indo China region. This is evidence from the fact that both on the issue of the Kampuchea Vietnam conflict and the Chinese Vietnam conflict, the world imperialist powers lent their full support to the stand of the Chinese Government in the United Nations and its Security Council.

Unprincipled Opposition

Instead of carrying on a principled struggle against the adventurist line of the Chinese Communist leaders from an anti imperialist and Marxist stand point of view, a powerful section within the international Communist movement tends to deny the very character of the Socialist system in China, treating Socialist China on par with imperialism.

The C.C. of the CPI(M), while it is sharply critical and opposed to the Left adventurist policies of the CPC, cannot subscribe to the pernicious theories of either anti Sovietism or anti Chineseism.

The C.C. deplors and disapproves of all those forces in India who viciously attack Vajpayee's visit to China and the attempts of the Indian Government to normalise relations with China, utilising the feelings roused against the Chinese attack on Vietnam. They seek to turn the campaign of solidarity with the Vietnamese people into an anti China campaign and against the efforts to normalise Sino Indian State to State relations.

The C.C. takes due note of the fact that the Janata Government, while denouncing the Chinese aggressive action against Vietnam and demanding the unconditional withdrawal of the Chinese armies, dissociated itself with those who are hostile to all efforts to normalisation of relations between India and China. The C.C. hopes that the Indian Government will firmly adhere to the path of Indo Soviet good relations without relaxing its efforts to normalise Sino Indian relations.

Growing Collaboration

The C C notes with serious concern the growing trends of collaboration by the Indian big bourgeoisie with foreign monopolies and multinational corporations. Behind some Janata Ministers' glib talk of nationalisation of some big industrial concerns, what actually is taking place is the enormous strengthening of Indian Big Business and its deals and collaboration agreements with foreign monopolists at the expense of the common people and the nation as a whole.

The economic policies of the Janata Government, which are nothing but a continuation of the three decade old class policies of the bourgeois landlord State and Government in India, are leading the country deeper and deeper into the crisis. Policies in relation to land reforms, labour relations, taxation, prices, etc., are strengthening the monopolists and big landlords.

The Sixth Five Year Plan that has been formulated, the two budgets presented by former Finance Minister Patel and the latest budget presented by Charan Singh—all three are nothing but faithful continuation of the policies of the former Congress Government. The minor changes and marginal adjustments made in economic policies do not alter the main framework of building capitalism in alliance with landlordism and in collaboration with foreign monopoly capital.

Due to these collaborationist class policies of the Government, it is coming under great pressure from imperialist circles, specially that of the USA and their international agencies such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc.

False Claims

The claims made by the Finance Minister that his budget is "rural oriented" and that it benefits the peasant masses has, in the opinion of the C C, no basis in reality. The concessions which are announced in the name of giving relief to the rural masses, do not in fact benefit the overwhelming majority of the people living in the villages, but only help a narrow stratum of the top landed interests. The new heavy imposts of direct and indirect taxes in the new budget fleece the rural masses, lead to inflation, hike the prices of consumption articles and throw more and more people into the already huge number of those below the poverty line.

As a result of these anti-people policies and attacks on the living standards of the people, there is growing mass discontent, expressing in numerous strike actions of the working class, rural labourers, employees, teachers, doctors, students and different sections of the middle classes. The C C notes with satisfaction the growing urge for united action among these classes and sections who owe allegiance to different mass and class organisations. In fact, there had been many united actions, with commendable results.

Growing Struggles

The peasantry in general, and the rural poor in particular, are found in a ferment. For wages, for land, for house sites, for tenancy rights, for remunerative prices and against tax burdens, there have been hundreds of struggles in different States, forging united actions, breaking the barrier of party or political loyalties.

United actions on the trade union and kisan fields, together with united actions among other sections of the working people and the general democratic movement, are having their impact on all political parties, opening up increasing prospects for forging the unity of Left and democratic forces. Rifts and divisions within various political parties and between them are being increasingly influenced by the demands made by various sections of the fighting people. Questions of policy, therefore, are getting reflected in the internal conflicts of political parties, bringing together radical elements in all political parties in the country.

The Central Committee is seriously concerned to note that the growing mass discontent is sought to be canalised into communalism and casteism by different bourgeois parties and organisations to the great detriment of the democratic unity of our people.

Political Realignment

The C C noted that all the parties of the ruling classes—Congress(I), Congress, the Janata, its various constituents, etc—are increasingly feeling the need for political realignment. Most of them are, of course, thinking in terms of political alignments in terms of electoral and parliamentary manoeuvring. However, against the background of the ever deepening economic crisis and the ever growing mass struggles, every party has to address itself

to some sections of the fighting people, and this helps the process of militant struggles of the rural and urban masses. The CPI(M) which, because of its very ideological political position orientates itself to mass campaigns and mass struggles, has to take advantage of every such development to further strengthen and deepen the trend towards the unity of the working people in a struggle

Forge United Actions

The Central Committee calls upon all party units to intensify their activities in forging united actions on an ever increasing scale

The C C reviewed the stand adopted by the Party in pursuance of the Political Resolution of the Tenth Congress, particularly in relation to the Shah Commission's revelations of the crimes committed during the Emergency regime, the Chikmagalur by election which was transformed into a major political battle, the rifts that developed in the Janata Party and then in the Swaran Singh Congress, the efforts made by a section of the leaderships of both the Congress to unify the two parties, the gathering resistance to the attempt at the 'unity' of the two Congress, etc. It noted with satisfaction that the Party was able to politically intervene in the rapid political developments in the country, Possibilities are growing for uniting the Left and democratic forces belonging to all these political parties against authoritarianism and for the Left and democratic programme

The Jullundur Resolution had given first priority in the programme of the Left and democratic front to the struggle against authoritarianism, the basis on which a broad platform was outlined. Recent political developments have made some elements even in the Indira Congress realise the need for fighting against the growing danger of authoritarianism as represented by the Sanjay Gandhi caucus. Realisation is growing within the Janata Party, too, that the struggle against various reactionary and disruptive forces such as those symbolised by the RSS and its ideology. This is the basis on which new political alignments can take shape

Role of The CPI

The C C notes that all these developments were having their impact on the policies of the CPI, too, No more do they give the entire Janata Party their reactionary stamp as they used to do. They now admit that there are secular, democratic forces in the Janata

Party They are prepared to cooperate with the secular forces in the Janata and concentrate their fire on the RSS The C C also taken cognisance of the changed stand of the CPI in supporting the Special Courts Bill While this is a positive development they still underestimate the danger presented by the Indira Gandhi, with the result that they sometimes tend towards all in unity, i e , unity including the Indira Congress against the RSS This has to be corrected if genuine unity of Left and democratic forces has to be forged

Disruptive Role of Naxalites

The C C notes the disruptive role played by the Naxalites Though they fight against one another on several ideological, political and factional issues, they are all one in rejecting the line of uniting the people in struggle They direct their main fire against the CPI(M) and the mass organisation led by the Party They are, in several places, acting as the tools of the reactionary ruling classes in attacking and even murdering the leaders and militants of the CPI(M) They are all united also in doggedly defending the indefensible line of the Chinese leadership in attacking the Soviet Union and Vietnam as social imperialism and its stooge There cannot, therefore, be any political unity or united action which includes the Naxalities

The C C reviewed and noted with satisfaction the progress made by the two Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura Their services to the people stand in marked contrast to those of the earlier Congress Governments in these very States as well as of Janata Governments in other States It is, therefore, not surprising that reactionary forces led by the two Congresses and sections within the Janata should launch attacks on the two Left Front Governments The role played by such reactionary organisations as Anand Marg and the Naxalites also should be noted The C C appeals to all the progressive, democratic elements throughout the country, it appeals particularly to the Left and democratic parties, the fighting organisations of the working people, radical groups, individuals, to foil the foul game played by the reactionary elements The Left Front and their Governments in the two States are the source of inspiration for all those who strive to forge the unity of Left and democratic forces

On The Fast of Vinoba Bhave*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press on April 21, 1979, regarding the proposed fast by Vinoba Bhave on the question of banning cow slaughter

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) regrets the failure of efforts made by various parties, organisations and individuals to persuade Vinoba Bhave to give up his proposed fast to force the Governments of West Bengal and Kerala to ban cow slaughter

The demand if acceded to, would seriously encroach on the fundamental rights of every Indian citizen to follow his or her way of life including food habits. It is an attempt at coercing those who are used to beef eating to give up the type of food which they like. It would be depriving the poorer sections of the people of the only source of animal protein needed for their nourishment.

It should be recalled that in neither of the two States is indiscriminate slaughter permitted. Restrictions have been imposed on the slaughter of such animals whose protection is necessary for a healthy economy. The two Chief Ministers have committed themselves to see that the concerned laws are strictly enforced. That in the face of these facts, Vinobaji insists on complete ban on cow slaughter shows that he is trying to impose the food habits of the majority on the minority.

It is well known that not only the Muslim and Christian communities but several other sections of the people do not observe the taboo in relation to beef eating which is enforced on the majority of Hindus. Coercing them to observe this taboo will be nothing

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less than imposing the upper caste Hindu way of life and food habits on the entire Indian people. That is why Mahatma Gandhi and several others who were themselves opposed to cow slaughter never did support the imposition of a legal ban on it.

Vinobaji claims to be a true follower of Mahatma Gandhi, but forgets that the Mahatma fell a victim at the hands of Hindu fanatics, defending the rights of the minorities. It is tragic that he should now stake his life for a cause which would inflame communal passions and can lead to tragic consequences.

The P B desires to remind Vinobaji and all others who support him in this ill advised move that there are innumerable issues concerning the life of the people, such as growing unemployment, increasing poverty, unspeakable atrocities on Harijans and other weaker sections of society, communal riots, etc. It is to these people's problems that the attention of every true servant of the people should be directed.

The proposed fast will be a total diversion from these burning issues of the people and the need for concerted efforts to find solutions for these problems. It will provide a golden opportunity for those who want to divide the people, and set them into two hostile communal camps.

The P B rejects the claim that the proposed fast is in defence of the Constitution into which has been written the directive principles of State policy among which is the ban on cow slaughter. The fact is that among the directive principles of State policy are several other items concerning reduction of concentration of economic power, free and universal primary education and so on which have all remained on paper ever since the Constitution came into force. Furthermore, the fundamental rights of the people written into the Constitution are far more valuable for the people, every one of them has during the last 28 years been consistently violated.

Vinobaji did not find it necessary to take up these violations of fundamental rights nor the failure to implement the other directive principles of State policy. He did not raise his voice against these violations of fundamental rights which assumed the crudest form in the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution forced on the people under the notorious emergency regime. For him now to take the

ban on cow slaughter as the single directive principle of the Constitution and to create an explosive situation on that basis goes against the spirit of the democratic Constitution

The PB notes that the most vociferous in extending their support to the proposed fast by Vinoba Bhave are the Indira Congress and the RSS. Both of them are interested in keeping the communal tension alive and creating incidents all over the country. The PB hopes that all the secular democratic forces will draw appropriate lessons from this fact.

The PB hopes that even at this late hour those of Vinobaji's supporters who are not interested in using his fast to create an explosive situation will prevail on him to desist from the disastrous step on which he appears to be determined to embark tomorrow.

Trends Helping Emergence Of United Front Of All Anti-Authoritarian, Anti-Revivalist Forces*

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Welcomes The Trend

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on April 26, 1979

The communal holocaust in Jamshedpur once again underlines the danger which the RSS constitutes to secularism and democracy. Delegations sent by all political parties, including the ruling Janata Party, to make an on the spot study of the genesis and course of the Jamshedpur riot are unanimous that the tragic events that took place in the steel city were the result of deliberate planning and that the organisation that planned it was the RSS. As in other riots like Aligarh, the leading light among the organisers of the riot in Jamshedpur was a confirmed RSS leader who happens to be the local Janata MLA.

Reports of delegations making factual study of the Jamshedpur developments draw pointed attention to the omissions and commissions of the administrative machinery. While a section of the local officials were keen on rooting out the riots, others were working hand in glove with the organisers of the riots. The Bihar Military Police, by and large, acted in concert with the RSS in the killing, looting, house burning and other inhuman deeds all directed against the minority community.

The Janata Government for its part failed in its responsibility in that even those in the political leadership who are not under the RSS influence felt helpless in the conditions of the internal situation in their party.

The role of the Tata management in encouraging communal disruption should also be mentioned.

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The facts revealed concerning the Jamshedpur riots should therefore wake up every patriotic citizen of India to the urgent necessity of fighting Hindu revivalism and disruption symbolised in the RSS

It is deplorable that in this tragic situation when every patriotic Indian should concentrate on protecting the minorities, a respected national leader like Vinoba Bhave should raise the issue of banning cow slaughter which for over half a century has been one of the war cries of Hindu communalism His indefinite fast for enforcing the ban on cow slaughter will, rather than help easing communal tension, further accentuate it The PB therefore once again appeals to Vinobaji to abandon his fast immediately and use his popularity and energy to advance the cause of stopping riots, as Mahatma Gandhi did in his last days

The PB recalls that a delegation of MPs representing the parties and groups in both Houses of Parliament (except the leader of the Congress I (who, at the last moment, kept out) went to Paunar and requested Vinobaji to desist from the proposed fast So did the Chief Ministers of West Bengal and Kerala jointly request him to abandon the proposed fast, promising him that they would strictly enforce the existing laws against indiscriminate slaughter A large number of organisations and individuals who in principle support the ban on cow slaughter have also appealed to him not to create an explosive situation in the country by insisting on this particular measure at this critical time in the history of the country It is deplorable that Vinobaji has not found it possible to respond to any of these requests and appeals

The Congress headed by Indira Gandhi has by its actions shown that it is interested in nothing more than staking Vinoba Bhave's life for its own political ends Its leader in the Lok Sabha, C M Stephen, who had agreed to join the MPs' delegation going to Paunar in order to try to persuade him to give up the proposed fast, at the last stage, backed out Its President, Indira Gandhi, directed her party MPs to observe one day's fast in support of what was called a "religious cause" No other conclusion can be drawn from these facts than that Indira Gandhi and her party want

to use Vinobaji and his fast as political weapons directed against the Governments of West Bengal, Kerala and the Centre

The PB appreciates the anxiety expressed by the majority of the nation to find some solution for the problem, so that Vinoba Bhave's life can be saved. His life is indeed precious. But, like other secular democratic forces in the country, the CPI(M) cannot be a party to anything that will objectively be imposing the food habits and culture of the majority on the minority communities. The PB is sure that there will be a large number of people in all parties including the Janata and the two Congresses, who are as anxious as the CPI(M) that nothing should be done by way of imposing the majority's way of life on the minority.

The developments in connection with the several communal riots culminating in the Jamshedpur holocaust, and the issue of banning cow slaughter raised in Vinoba Bhave's indefinite fast, have helped in emphasising the need for the coming together of all those who are opposed to the authoritarianism symbolised in the Indira Congress on the one hand and Hindu communalism and revivalism championed by the RSS on the other. The PB hopes that the secular and democratic elements in the Janata Party will take a firm stand and join the secular democratic forces in other parties in forging such unity against authoritarianism and communal disruption.

The Janata Party came into existence in the course of the struggle against the forces of authoritarianism headed by Indira Gandhi. Experience of the two year old Janata Government has however shown that their party cannot discharge its duties in this respect unless it takes a clear and firm stand against the forces of Hindu revivalism and communal disruption. The RSS which refuses to dissolve itself and submit to the discipline of the Janata Party is, at the same time, using its position as a constituent of the ruling party to burrow into the administrative machinery and transform it into a vehicle of communal disruption. A large section of the Janata leadership and ranks have correctly demanded that this "dual role" of the RSS leaders should immediately be put an end to.

The PB appeals to all the secular democratic forces outside the Janata Party to note the significance of this trend inside the Janata Party. Those of them who denounce the Janata Party as an instrument in the hands of the RSS should take note of the differentiation that is taking place—with all the short comings of this phenomenon—between the ardent supporters of the RSS and the rest.

The PB welcomes the recent trends in the Swaran Singh Congress, in the CPI and even in the Indira Congress which will help the emergence of a united front of anti authoritarian and secular forces. The unconcealed opposition, within the Indira Congress, to the deliberate effort being made to help Sanjay Gandhi once again to become the extra constitutional power centre, the abandonment by the Swaran Singh Congress of its earlier efforts to “unite” with the Congress (I), the recognition by the CPI of the significance of the recent trends in the Janata Party—all these help engender the hope that the Left and democratic forces may increasingly come together and fight authoritarianism and communal disruption.

The PB appeals to the Swaran Singh Congress and the CPI to realise that their idea of creating a “third front”, directed simultaneously and equally against the Indira Congress and the Janata, has no relevance to the present conditions in which they themselves have to take note of the rumblings within the Indira Congress and within the Janata. Continuing prejudice against those who fight for secularism and for democracy will not help but hinder the growing unity of the Left and democratic forces.

CPI(M)'s Note Submitted to Delhi Meeting*

The following is the text of the note of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to the participants of the meeting convened by Madhu Limaye in New Delhi on May 17, 1979

Contrary to the earlier understanding, the present exchange of views has received press publicity. This in fact has deprived it of the character of an "informal exchange", as envisaged in Madhu Limaye's letter to invitees. We, therefore, consider it necessary to go on record, formally stating our views before the friends who are participating in this exchange.

1 We consider it as a welcome development that trade unions and other mass organisations are increasingly coming in united actions on specific issues and that differences on policy which exist between the various organisations are not allowed to stand in the way of such unity in action. While this is, by and large, confined at present to economic issues affecting the working class, peasantry, etc., the situation appears to be favourable for extending such unity to political issues as well. It should be the endeavour of all of us, as it will be the endeavour of our Party, to strengthen this process.

2 United actions that are developing should be seen against the background of a political situation which is getting increasingly favourable to the anti-authoritarian, secular, radical, democratic forces. The efforts being made by the leader of the authoritarian forces to capitalise on the growing mass discontent arising out of the anti-people policies of the Janata Government and to stage a comeback to power are meeting resistance from the

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, May 27, 1979.
Refer document under Appendix (XXII) of this Volume.

people as well as from her own party. Those in the Congress who were trying to come to an understanding with the Congress (I) have also received a severe blow to their efforts. As for the Janata Party, the internal conflicts among its leaders are increasingly assuming the character of conflicts over policies.

3 It would, however, be wrong to exaggerate the extent of these political developments and think that the situation has already become ripe for what is called either a third front or a united front of Left and democratic forces. For, sharp differences exist among the various forces which are fighting against authoritarianism, for secularism and for a radical and democratic turn in Government policies. Many of those who are participating in today's exchange of views are on opposite sides in several States. Our Party, for instance, heads the Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura, while some of those who are participating in this exchange are trying to form an anti CPI(M) front. In Kerala, on the other hand, we are in the opposition, while some of our friends here are partners in the Government. In Maharashtra, we are supporting the Pawar Government, while some of our friends are totally opposed to it. In Punjab, too, we support the Akali Janata Government, while some of our friends are opposed to it. At the Centre, too, our policy is not that of total opposition to the Janata Government, as the policy of several of our friends is. Ironing out these differences is by no means easy but requires the experience of united action wherever it is possible, combined with continuous exchanges on the issues on which there are differences.

4 We, for our part, would like to make it clear that the struggle against authoritarianism represented by the Congress(I) is not yet over. There is, therefore, no question of sharing the anti RSS platform with the Congress(I), as some of our friends appear to suggest. The RSS, however, is trying to utilise its hold on the administrative machinery to inculcate its anti secular ideology among the people and to strengthen—its aggressive activities against the minorities. This should be resisted. Resistance is in fact building up within the Janata Party itself. It should be our endeavour to strengthen this resistance without weakening the struggle against the authoritarianism represented by the Congress(I).

5 Considering all the above points, we feel that our efforts should be to strengthen the process of forging unity in action wherever it is possible and to continue the dialogue on the political issues on which there are differences. In building unity in action, however, it is necessary to guard against any tendency to use united actions as platforms where ideological or political differences are fought out. Participants of every such united action should endeavour to have constant consultations and come to agreements on the issues to be taken up and on the terms under which united actions are developed. This would mean that every participant in the united action will have to exercise restraint and confine itself to agreed points. If any of them chooses to air their respective views on the united platform, it will force others either to express their respective views (which will turn the united platform into a forum of mutual confrontation), or to keep quiet (which will mean that they acquiesce in the expression of a viewpoint with which they differ). We hope that every one of us will be careful in this respect, since the opportunities for united actions are widening and since the temptation on the part of participants to use the united platform for their own respective propaganda may be strong.

6 We propose that we should in this exchange of views try to find issues on which united actions can be developed without affecting the respective positions adopted by different parties on ideological and political questions.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statements*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statements to the Press in New Delhi on June 3 and 4, 1979. The statements are on India and the Non Aligned Bureau meeting, the anti sales tax agitation, the agitation of policemen and for reinvestigation into the L N Mishra murder case

The texts of the four statements are given below

I On India and the Non Aligned Bureau Meeting

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its concern at Prime Minister Morarji Desai's statements regarding Egypt and East Asia and on the question of admission of Pakistan to the non aligned movement. The Prime Minister's position is that no action against Egypt can be taken by the non aligned movement and that there is nothing that stands in the way of Pakistan's admission. These are two of the issues which will be discussed by the Non Aligned Bureau of Foreign Ministers in Colombo in the next few days.

It is common knowledge that US Imperialism, bypassing all resolutions of the United Nations and in total disregard of Arab and world opinion, struck a deal with Egypt's Sadat and manipulated a separate agreement between Egypt and Israel at the cost of the Arab cause and sacrificing the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to have their own State. Prime Minister Morarji Desai's statement ignores the US imperialist role in intensifying tension in West Asia and Sadat's betrayal of the

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, June 10, 1979

Arab world furthering the cause of U S imperialism and Israeli Zionism, in complete violation of the resolution of the Colombo Non Aligned Summit. The Prime Minister's present statements cannot be viewed except in the background of the earlier welcome he accorded to the Camp David talks between Israel and Egypt under U S imperialist auspices.

As for the question of Pakistan's admission, there is no need to remind the Prime Minister how the USA is arming the military dictatorship, how Pakistan is acquiring nuclear weapons capability which the U S imperialists are utilising to blackmail India to accept full scope safeguards, how even recently the U S Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Warren recalled the treaties binding the USA and Pakistan and the U S commitment to aid Pakistan against any "Soviet supported military action." Hence, although formally not part of a military bloc, Pakistan is entangled in a military alliance with U S imperialism. Moreover, the Martial Law regime is fiercely suppressing democracy inside the country. Pakistan's admission to the non aligned community in this background will be diluting the principles of the movement.

These vacillations of the Government of India cannot but lead the people to the conclusion that the anti imperialist traditions of the country and the principles of non alignment are being watered down.

The Polit Bureau demands of the Government of India that it take firm positions fully on the side of the Arab people and the Palestine Liberation Organisation and denounce the Sadat regime for acting as a tool of U S imperialism and betraying the Arab cause.

The Polit Bureau also considers that support to the admission of Pakistan will be giving a certificate to a country which is still entangled in military alliances and is suppressing democracy, and will not be in accordance with the principles of the non aligned movement.

II On Anti Sales Tax Agitation

The P B of the CPI(M) takes note of the traders' agitation originally launched in U P and now spreading to other States

against the sales tax. While the agitation has been sponsored by the big traders who, having contacts with the tax collecting machinery, are able to evade the taxes, they have been able to rally the mass of small traders in the agitation which has thus got wide popularity among the entire trading community.

Sales tax is an item of taxation whose incidence falls on the consumer, rather than the trader. The burden of this tax is ever growing because of the fiscal policies pursued by the former Congress and the present Janata Government. The section of the people really aggrieved by the sales tax, therefore, is the broad mass of the people, rather than the traders.

Among the traders themselves, it is the smaller traders who are at the mercy of the officials of the sales tax department who, in the name of checking tax evasion, are continuously harassing them. The bigger traders can escape the rigour of inspection, since they can afford to grease the palms of the officials concerned. The democratic movement, therefore, has sympathy for the small traders who have been dragged into the agitation.

The P B, however, completely dissociates itself from the central demand made on behalf of the entire trading community that the State sales tax should be replaced by Central excise. This would deprive the States of the only elastic source of revenue which has been put at their disposal. The proposal for replacing the State sales tax by Central excise would thus further strengthen the trend towards centralisation and would deal a still more heavy blow at the financial autonomy of the States. The P B hopes that the trading community in general, and the small traders in particular, will see the anti democratic character of this demand and dissociate themselves from any movement calculated to secure this demand.

The P B, however, hopes that the Central and State Governments would apply their minds to the problem of how the harassment by the sales tax officials of which the small traders in particular are being made victims, can be reduced and how the rate of sales tax can be adjusted to the paying capacity of the people at large.

III On Agitation of Policemen

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) conveys its sympathy to the policemen in different States who have been demanding better living and working conditions as well as human treatment at the hands of their superiors

Although thirty two years have passed since the British rulers left the country, the men of the police force have still to work under the same colonial feudal conditions under which they were made to serve the British Government. Being used as a weapon in the hands of the ruling class to suppress the common people fighting for their democratic rights, the men of the police force have an image as the enemies of the people. The barrier that is thus erected between them and the people during the British rule still continues.

All the attempts made by the former Congress regime in the direction of so called reform of the police machinery did not make any real change by removing the barrier between the police and the people or help the personnel of the police force to function with dignity and self respect. They, on the other hand, have been made subservient to the bosses of the ruling party to whom the officers and men of the police are subordinated. All this continues under the present Janata regime.

The P B notes that, beginning with Punjab, various State Governments, as well as Union Government, have been making announcements giving concessions with regard to emoluments and service conditions of policemen. These announcements, however, have not satisfied the men. What they demand is not just some financial concession, but a change in the entire approach of the administration to the police force. Not only there is no indication of any change in attitude but vindictive actions are being taken against those who came forward ventilating their grievances.

The P B demands that (a) all those policemen who have been arrested in connection with the recent agitation be released, (b) all orders of suspension issued against the agitating policemen be revoked, and (c) the right of police personnel to form their own democratic organisations be recognised.

The P B hopes that the Union Government and the State Chief Ministers who are meeting in Delhi will realise the heavy responsibility that devolves on them and adopt a proper approach to the police unrest, rather than allow things to go out of hand by issuing threats of "firm action" against those who are supposed to have violated "discipline"

IV On Reinvestigation into L. N. Mishra's Murder Case

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) joins all those who have demanded that the case of the murder of the late Union Minister L N Mishra be reopened and fresh investigation be conducted in the light of the facts revealed in the report by the eminent jurist V M Tarkunde

The Tarkunde report has brought out the staggering fact that, while the original investigation was leading the investigating authorities to certain persons close to the former Prime Minister as the brain behind the murder, the line of investigation was suddenly reversed on instructions from the Home Ministry. If this is true and there is reason to believe it to be true, this is another case which should be tried in the Special Courts which have now been set up to try Emergency excesses. This, in fact, is an unparalleled instance of the highest authority in the country using its powers to shield the guilty and to foist false cases against somebody else precisely in order to save the guilty.

It is not surprising that the spokesmen of the Congress(I) should be fretting and fuming at the demand that the Mishra murder case should be reinvestigated. The pressures exerted by such persons are a measure of the panic which has gripped those who are afraid of the truth that may come out of a reinvestigation.

The P B hopes that the Government will not be swayed by these pressures but will proceed with the fair investigation of the case in the light of the facts brought out in the Tarkunde report.

P.B. Protests Against Centre's Handling of CRP Agitation*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), in two statements on June 25, 1979, has strongly protested against the way the Central Government was handling the agitation of the police personnel directly under its control. The Polit Bureau statement issued after reports were received of the incidents in Bokaro and Delhi, said

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) strongly protests against the handling of the police forces directly under the Union Government which has led to confrontation between the army on the one hand and the CRP and Industrial Security Force on the other. The information available shows that such clashes have taken place in at least two places—Bokaro and Delhi, and have taken a toll of nearly twentyfive lives.

It is strange that a Government committed to the defence of democratic liberties is dealing with its own personnel in such a way. It is obvious that the problems can be settled if the Government wants to do it.

In a statement issued earlier in the day, the Polit Bureau says

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) is amazed that even after the countrywide agitation of the police personnel, the Union Government adopted an attitude of callousness towards the men of the CRP. The police agitation had enjoyed such wide support among the men as well as among the general public that the various State Governments and the Union Government itself had to announce concessions. The Union Government, however, did not learn the proper lessons and failed to so deal with the demands of the CRP personnel as to avert a strike in Orissa, Trivandrum and now in Delhi.

Like the personnel of the police force in various States, the CRP personnel too have raised simple and irresistible demands. Apart from the legitimate demand for increase in the pay scales, reduction in duty hours, weekly holiday, etc , they demand that the judicial powers with which the officers of the force are invested should be withdrawn, that the orderly system, announced on paper to have been scrapped but continues in practice, should immediately be stopped, that freedom of organisation should be granted, and that the recommendations of the National Police Commission should be implemented

The PB is shocked that instead of immediately conceding these demands and paving the way for the withdrawal of the CRP agitation, the Government is using the military to suppress the CRP strike. The PB demands that the Government should immediately end this policy, and deal with the personnel of the CRP in a fair and just manner

Combat Negative Aspects To Retain Initiative*

CPI(M) Polit Bureau's Call to Democratic Forces

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), met in New Delhi on June 30 and July 1 and 2, 1979 and issued the following statement to the Press on July 2, 1979

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) shares with the other democratic forces in the country the concern over certain developments which, if not checked, may once again raise the danger of authoritarianism and may break the unity and integrity of the democratic movement

The PB, however, notes that these negative aspects of the situation are to a large extent counteracted by certain positive developments which, if utilised by the democratic and secular forces, can counteract the negative consequences of the crisis that is rapidly overcoming the economy and polity of the country

Among these positive developments is the revolt of a section of the Congress(I) headed by Karnataka Chief Minister Devraj Urs and his colleagues. The PB welcomes the decision of Urs and his colleagues to hold a convention of anti authoritarian Congress men to be held in Bangalore on July 4, which has been responded to by a large number of Congress(I) and Congress leaders

These developments have dealt a heavy blow to the plans hatched by the caucusmen to canalise popular discontent arising out of the Janata policies in order to strengthen themselves and pave the way for coming back to power of the old and discredited caucus rule. Heavy blows have also been dealt on the efforts made by a section of the Congress leadership to build a bridge with the Congress(I) leading to a merger of the two Congress parties

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The PB also welcomes the moves made by sections within the Janata Party and between them and the anti authoritarian secular democratic forces outside the party The PB notes that two leaders of the former Socialist Party, Madhu Limaye and George Fernandes, have made a critique of the policies pursued by the Janata leadership and outlined the direction in which the realignment within the Janata and link up with like minded elements outside the party, have to be brought about

Taking place as these developments have been doing against the background of the consensus arrived at by the participants of the May 17 exchange of views they pave the way for the widest possible mobilisation of all the anti authoritarian and secular forces against the twin danger of authoritarianism and communalism

The need for such a wide mobilisation is being increasingly felt in view of the negative features of the situation that has arisen out of the 27 month long Janata regime The policies pursued by the Janata Government, like those of the earlier Congress Government, are leading to a rapid and unprecedented deepening of the economic and political crisis

The much trumpeted "price stability" claimed to be the greatest achievement of the Janata Government has been proved hollow The four months since the last budget was introduced in Parliament have witnessed a price increase approaching ten per cent though the claim made by the Government spokesman was that the budgetary impositions would have no impact on prices beyond one per cent Never since the 1973 74 days has the price increase been so steep in such a short time

Other sections of the people like the peasants, small industrialists, traders, etc , are also suffering from the results of a stagnant economy The agrarian sector is reeling under the blows of precipitous falls in the prices of several crops while the increase in the prices of certain other crops are not commensurate with the increased prices of manufactured products Small traders, small industrialists, etc , are also finding it difficult to keep their business running with a reasonable rate of profit Such is the lot of the overwhelming majority of the people

while a handful of big landlords, monopolists, black marketeers, smugglers, etc , are able to make enormous profits

The economic policy of the Janata Government, like the policy of the earlier Congress Government, is also helping the process of increasing collaboration between the Indian and foreign monopolists, making the key sectors of the economy a field of exploitation by the multinationals

Rapid Disillusionment

It is not surprising, under these circumstances, that the working people are getting rapidly disillusioned and adopt the path of struggle in defence of their living standards. The organised working class and the middle class employees are increasingly coming out in various forms of action including strikes. The railway workers are now preparing themselves for a countrywide strike for securing their legitimate demand for bonus which had been promised to them by the Janata leaders including several Ministers. A strike in the coal and steel industries was at the last moment averted only because the Government in the end was persuaded to concede the demands of the workers.

The growing strike movement is not confined to the organised working class and middle class employees. Sections like engineers, doctors, etc , have been forced to resort to various forms of direct action. That these need not be confined to the civilian employees of the Government has been shown by the unrest that is spreading all over the country among the personnel of the repressive organs of the Government. The agitation launched by the police personnel to begin with has spread to such para military forces as the CRP and the CISF. The use of the CRP and other para military forces against the police and the use of the army against the para military forces shows the extent to which a serious crisis is engulfing the administrative apparatus.

Never before since Independence was there such a widespread confrontation between the law and order personnel and the Government. The sufferings imposed by the crisis seem to have reached a breaking point. But the Government was blind to the entire situation. And when they woke up, they found nothing

better to deal with the situation than threats, firings and imprisonment. It was nothing but an act of gross breach of faith to invite CISF representatives for negotiations in Delhi and send them to jail.

Preventive Detention

The Government refuses to draw lessons from these developments. Instead of trying to find political solutions for the growing discontent among all sections of the people from the industrial workers to the personnel of the administrative apparatus, the leaders of the Government and the ruling party talk as if the problem is one of "curbing indiscipline." The June 25 Press Conference of the Prime Minister indicated the trend of Government thinking. On the one hand, he declared that there is no question of conceding the demand for bonus. On the other hand, he announced that his Government was thinking of introducing legislation providing for preventive detention. Both these declarations of the Prime Minister are contrary to the declared policies on the basis of which the Janata Government came to power. If the democratic forces through their united action are not able to force the Government to retrace its steps, the danger of authoritarianism raising its head again is real.

The PB strongly denounces the attack of some Janata Ministers on the working class and slander that they are profiteering at the expense of the nation. Figures supplied by the Planning Commission themselves show that the real wage of the working class has hardly risen. It is sheer hypocrisy on the part of the Janata Ministers to pose as champions of agricultural workers, while decrying the industrial workers. No previous regime witnessed daily slaughter of agricultural workers—euphemistically described as Harijans—as the Janata regime.

The PB warns the people that these false and intemperate attacks of Janata Ministers presage a widespread attack on the working class and its trade union rights. This is how the Emergency regime began. An attack on the working class is only a fore runner of the attack on the democratic rights and liberties of the people. The talk of Preventive Detention Act in this context

may turn out to be just the preliminary for progress towards a dictatorial regime

North Eastern Region

The anti democratic stand of the Janata Party is also revealed in the attitude towards the national minorities like the Nepalese in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, parts of U P, Bihar and Assam as well as in the State of Sikkim. The Prime Minister characterised the language spoken by substantial sections of the people in such widespread parts of the Indian Union the Nepalese language—as a "foreign language". The repressive methods adopted towards the Mizos, the completely negative attitude adopted towards the Nagas and other tribals in the North Eastern region, etc., lead to exacerbation of relations between ethnic groups whose integration requires the use of democratic methods.

The P B desires to point out that the Left Front Government of Tripura has been trying to deal with the sensitive question of the tribal non tribal conflict in that State in a democratic way. While the legitimate national demands of the tribals and the democratic rights of the weaker sections of society are sought to be conceded, the tribals as well as the non tribals are educated on the need for joint efforts to solve their common problems. That is why the Left Front Government of Tripura is under attack by the chauvinists which unfortunately has been supported by the local units of the Indira Congress, the Swaran Singh Congress, the Congress for Democracy and of the Janata. The P B is of the view that only if the Janata Government and leadership at the Centre adopt the same democratic policy, as that of the Left Front Government in Tripura, throughout India and curb the hostile attitude adopted by the local unit of the Janata Party can confidence be created in the tribal peoples of the North Eastern region.

The situation in this region is particularly serious in that imperialism is trying to utilise the national conflicts in this region, to disrupt the unity and integrity of India, exacerbate the relation between the various tribal peoples in the region and the rest of the Indian people.

Left Fronts' Proud Record

The PB recalls with pride that both in Tripura and in West Bengal, the Left Front Governments are pursuing democratic policies which endear them to the common people. The PB pays tribute to the people of West Bengal who have been bearing with fortitude the innumerable difficulties which they have had to go through during the two years of Left Front Government such as the calamitous three round flood of 1978, the continuing power crisis, etc., but stood behind the Left Front Government because they knew that the Government was doing its best to provide maximum relief to them. As opposed to this is the concerted attack on the Left Front Government organised by the discredited Congress parties and the Janata and wholeheartedly supported by the Ananda Marg, the RSS and other reactionary disruptive forces who are operating on a big scale. The Amra Bangalee movement launched under the auspices of the Ananda Marg and receiving encouragement and support from abroad has become very active in West Bengal as well as Tripura. Their declared objective is to rouse chauvinist passions among the Bengalees against non-Bengalee tribals and other communities in the entire region. Although ostensibly directed against the Left Front Governments of the two States, it is a danger to the peace, unity and integrity of the whole country. For, the activities of this organisation will transform the entire region into a cockpit of conflicts between the various tribal groups and among the tribals and non tribals.

The PB is surprised that parties which consider themselves "national", standing for the unity and integrity of India, are so blinded by their anti CPI(M) prejudice that they have no hesitation even to support the chauvinist Amra Bangalee movement whose leaders organised an open demonstration in Calcutta with human skulls and shouting the most provocative slogans.

Hold of Hindu Chauvinism

This, however, is not an isolated event. The open encouragement given to the RSS throughout the country because

of the participation of the former Jana Sangh leaders in the Government, the declaration made by several RSS leaders that they are fighting for the resuscitation of the ancient Hindu Empire which extended from Afghanistan to Indonesia, etc., are indicative of the hold of Hindu chauvinism on the administration and the leadership of the ruling party. Those in the Janata Party and its friends outside who had nursed the illusion that the participation of the Jana Sangh leaders in the country's administration would lead to a curbing of the activities of the RSS, are being disillusioned. They, on the other hand, find that the RSS sakhas and their ideological and organisational activities are alienating the minorities and other weaker sections of the society from the Janata Party. Hence the increasingly insistent demand that the dual membership of those Janata leaders who are also RSS functionaries should come to an end.

Other divisive and disruptive forces are also gathering strength and are being used by one or other group within the Janata Party and by the two Congresses, such as the caste conflicts which are getting more and more widespread. The divisions of the people into the "backward" and "forward" communities is endangering the unity of all the democratic movements—the working class and peasant movements in particular. Leaders of the ruling and opposition parties of the ruling classes are using this caste conflict in their mutual quarrels.

The series of communal riots that broke out in Aligarh, Jamshedpur, etc., pose a serious danger to which the PB hopes every secular democratic party, organisation and individual will wake themselves up. It is significant that the anti-Left Front forces in West Bengal having failed to make political capital out of such problems as power shortage in the State, the presence of Dandakaranya refugees in Marichhanpi, etc., in the end resorted to the game of whipping up communal passions in the Nadia district of West Bengal—a district which has always had the reputation of having been free from communal riots was thus brought into the maelstrom of riots, thanks to the hostility of the Congress (I), Congress and Janata Opposition.

Role of The CPI

It is known that the anti Left Front movements in both West Bengal and Tripura are spearheaded by reactionary parties and organisations to create destabilisation in both the States and in the entire region. Far from seeing this and putting their whole weight against the hostile activities of these reactionary forces, however, the CPI leaders are trying to provide some sort of defence of these anti Left Front Government activities. While outwardly trying to demarcate themselves from the reactionary forces, they have started launching their own independent campaign against the Left Front Governments. This campaign is reminiscent of the vicious attacks launched by them in collaboration with the Congress (I) against the two Governments of West Bengal and Kerala in 1967-69—the campaign that culminated in their "unity" with the Indra Congress in toppling the two Governments. Today, too, they are launching a similar hostile campaign against the two Governments of West Bengal and Tripura, while they are doing their utmost to preserve the anti CPI(M) unity and the Government formed on that basis in Kerala. The PB would appeal to the followers, members and leaders of the CPI to ponder over the question whether this squares with their declared objective of forging the unity of Left and democratic forces.

Welcome Developments

Despite this hostility shown by the CPI towards the two Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura, and despite several other negative features of the situation, the PB is happy to note that a broad consensus is emerging among all the secular democratic forces in the country. The Bangalore convention of anti authoritarian Congressmen, together with the views expressed by a large section within the Janata Party against the policies pursued by their leaders, and the initiative taken by the Socialist leaders, Madhu Limaye and George Fernandes, for a realignment of forces within the Janata and link up with outside forces of democracy and secularism—all these are developments which should be heartily welcomed. The PB appeals to all the democratic and secular forces to miss no opportunity to bring

together on a common platform all those who are interested in the struggle against authoritarianism and against the forces of communal and other disruption

The contemplated attack on the working class, the proposed Preventive Detention Act, the communal riots, the hunt of Harijans, the inflaming of passions through local and chauvinistic appeal, if not combated, will take the initiative out of the hands of the democratic forces and place the authoritarian forces in a favourable position. These weaknesses and measures are used just because the parties of status quo and reaction are disintegrating and fear that the initiative will inevitably pass on to the democratic, secular and Left forces

P.B. Statement on No-Confidence Motion*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on July 13, 1979

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) considers that with the large scale defections from the Janata Party and resignations of a number of Ministers, the Government of Shri Morarji Desai has lost its majority in the Lok Sabha

The crisis had been brewing inside the Janata Party for a long time. Behind it was the relentless drive of the Jana Sangh RSS combine to dominate the Central and State Governments. Having consolidated its position in a number of States, the combination toppled the Ministries in Haryana and Bihar to extend its control over them. It has also secured a firm hold over the organisation. The result has been a growing influence of Hindu chauvinist ideology and hold over the Janata Party and the Government. These are menacing developments which all secular and democratic parties have to take note of.

The attitude of the Janata Party and the Government towards communal riots and the atrocities against Harijans, their refusal to pinpoint the role of the RSS all bespeak of the growth of this reactionary ideology, and daily alienate the mass of Muslims and Harijans from the Janata Party. The Janata Party and Government more and more assumed the shape of a protecting agency for the RSS and Jana Sangh, losing its character of a combination to fight the forces of authoritarianism.

The Morarji Government in this context found no time to fulfil its electoral pledges. The democratic rights of the people were being

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attacked in the States and the Prime Minister recently announced his intention to introduce the Preventive Detention Act. The handling of the police agitation, the merciless massacre at Bokaro, the use of the army to suppress policemen fighting against the most brutalist conditions of life and the justification of all this by the Home Minister revealed that the Government had started on the dangerous path of using dictatorial methods.

The issue of Ordinances on the eve of the Parliament Session, one Ordinance repudiating the earlier promise to return the CDS money and another to crush the agitation of the RBI employees was an act of utter contempt for Parliament and a return to authoritarian methods.

So far as the workers and the people are concerned, the Government repudiates many a solemn promise including that of bonus to railway workers and others. This is nothing but a gross betrayal of the pledge to treat bonus as deferred wage. As if this was not enough, the Morarji Government, by its deficit budget, has set in motion the inflationary process sending prices to giddy heights.

The CPI(M) has been warning the Janata Party, its members and the Government against the consequences of these policies which brought grist to the mill of the authoritarian forces. But, with an overbearing attitude born out of their absolute majority, the Government ignored the advice and refused to honour their electoral pledges like bonus. During the course of his speech on the no confidence motion, Comrade Samar Mukherjee, leader of our Lok Sabha Group, pinpointed these failures but failed to draw any response. Official spokesmen justified Government policies without even caring to refer to the grievances of the people or the demands raised by our Party.

It is obvious that the Morarji Desai Government has no intention of improving its practice or its performance in relation to the electoral pledges. What it seeks is a vote of confidence on issues like refusal of bonus, proposal for Preventive Detention Act, suppression of policemen's strike and issuance of recent Ordinances. Our Party, defending the interests of the people, and fighting authoritarian trends cannot agree to express its confidence in these

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policies. The PB directs Party MPs to give expression to our disapproval of these policies by voting for the no confidence motion.

The CPI(M) warns that the Morarji Government has created favourable ground for authoritarian forces to thrust forward. It shall be the common endeavour of all progressive and Left elements to prevent these forces from seizing the initiative. It, however, cannot be done by turning a blind eye to the many failures of the present Government including its domination by chauvinistic elements. The CPI(M) feels that all secular forces in the Janata Party, remaining true to the electoral pledges to the people, have a big role to play in the fight against authoritarianism.

Fight Twin Danger Of Authoritarianism And Communalism*

CPI(M) Polit Bureau's Statement

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on July 24, 1979

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its deep sense of concern over the latest developments in connection with the formation of a new Ministry. The protracted struggle over leadership, the inexcusable delay in mobilising all the healthy forces for the formation of alternative Ministry, and the opportunism of a number of leaders who put selfish interests above principles and the cause of democracy, have enabled the Congress(I) to thrust forward and take a hand in shaping events. This was a danger against which the PB resolution of July 13 had specifically warned the people.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at its last meeting specifically directed the PB to help in the formation of a Ministry which was not dependent for its existence either on the support of the Congress(I) or on the support of the Jana Sangh RSS combination. It warned that no viable Government could be formed under the present circumstances unless it was determined to defend the masses and fight both the authoritarian forces of Indira Gandhi and the communal forces of the Jana Sangh RSS combine.

In pursuance of this decision of the Central Committee, the Polit Bureau has been directing its energies to help forward the process of formation of such a Government. Its representatives

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held several consultations with the representatives of other parties to evolve common action and use their combined voting power to move the events in the required direction. Its representatives held innumerable consultations with other democratic elements from the Janata(S) and other parties for the same purpose. It also called upon the major parties involved in the formation of an alternative Government to immediately announce their support to certain minimum demands like bonus to railway workers, guarantee against further enactment of the Preventive Detention Act, withdrawal of the two Ordinances promulgated on the eve of the Parliament Session, and release of all arrested policemen and end of all victimisation measures, along with effective price control and measures for remunerative price to the peasantry. On this basis the PB gave a clear indication of its support to the formation of a Ministry led by the Janata(S) in combination with the Congress(S). This combination supported by the Socialist group led by Madhu Limaye and CFD led by Bahuguna met the two conditions laid down by the C C, and merited support of the Left parties.

However, it seems that with the process of counting of heads in full swing, principles were being jettisoned for the sake of numbers and certain Janata(S) leaders made a bee line for Congress(I) support. The latter was already taking a truculent stand and demanding its pound of flesh. In any case it was relishing the role of Ministry maker and expressing its support to the Janata(S) and its leader Sri Charan Singh.

Today's Press reports clearly reveal that there have been prolonged consultations between the Congress(I) and Janata(S) leaders before the former announced its "unconditional" support for the formation of a Janata(S) led Ministry. This was confirmed by statements suggesting preference for Smt. Indira Gandhi over Sri Morarji. With these developments it is clear that the Janata(S) Government, if it is formed, will be heavily dependent on the Congress(I) for its survival and existence. The CPI(M) cannot be a party to support a Ministry which comes to depend upon the Congress(I) for its survival.

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The PB expresses its firm opposition to the formation of a Ministry dependent on the Jana Sangh RSS combination. The PB calls upon all Left and democratic and secular forces from all parties in Parliament to fight the twin danger of authoritarianism and communalism.

On The July Governmental Crisis*

CPI(M) Central Committee's Statement

The emergency meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) held in New Delhi on July 19 21, 1979, adopted the following statement on the present governmental crisis

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) endorses the July 13 statement of the Polit Bureau which called upon Party MPs to support the no confidence motion against the Morarji Desai Government. The resignation of the Morarji Government since then has shaken the complacency of the people and political parties and raised the question—what next?

Failed to Fulfil Hopes of People

It is significant to note that the Morarji Government resigned before the House of People could vote on the no confidence motion. The Government fell because the Janata Party disintegrated, its unity collapsed. The resignation of about a hundred members and more than ten Ministers brought about the collapse of a party which was returned to Parliament with a thumping majority only two and a half years ago. It is obvious that the party leadership failed to fulfil the hopes of the people, it set itself on a course opposed to the aspirations of the people and brought about disintegration of the organisation.

The Janata Party and its Government rose to power on the crest of the great popular upsurge against Indira Gandhi's authoritarian rule of the Emergency period.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, July 29, 1979

The people voted generously for a combination which they thought was an instrument to fight the authoritarian forces of Indira Gandhi—the reactionary economic and anti democratic policies pursued by her. The people in their good faith did not bother about the ideologies professed by the different constituents of the Janata Party, fondly hoping that anti authoritarian and democratic ideologies will dominate the thinking of the party.

Immediately after taking the reins of Government, the Janata Party did take steps to restore democracy, freedom of the Press and several other measures to restore the rights of the individual and strengthen the rights of the citizen. Its Constitution Amendment Bill, in spite of its several shortcomings, was also directed at doing away with the mischiefs introduced by the 42nd Amendment Act. After procrastinations and a lot of pressure it withdrew the hated MISA, that notorious symbol of the terror rule of Indira Gandhi. The Government also passed the Special Courts Bill to book those including Smt. Indira Gandhi who had committed crimes and illegal acts during the Emergency.

In the economic field also, it took a number of important steps, notably the abolition of the CDS, the restoration of bonus, though on an annual basis, reinstatement of railway employees, and in the initial stages, provided a more democratic outlook in dealing with the trade unions.

Initial Policies Replaced

But this phase of Janata Party policy did not last long. It was rapidly replaced by another one. The struggle against authoritarianism slackened. Repression in economic struggles became the order of the day. Some of the Janata State Governments started enacting MISA or Preventive Detention Acts. The Central Government also expressed its intention to reintroduce the P.D. Act. The crushing of the police, CRP, CISF agitation was done in a thoroughly dictatorial style reminiscent of the Emergency days, and its justification meant that the party leadership had abandoned the last claim to defend democracy. The issuance of two Ordinances on the eve of the Parliament session displayed a contempt for Parliament born out of absolute majority.

Retreat on Economic Front

It became clear that over the months the Janata Party Government relied more and more on dictatorial and authoritarian measures to bolster itself. The instrument forged by the people in the last elections to fight authoritarian practices had collapsed. Equally striking was the retreat on the economic front. To enforce its reactionary economic policies, the Government resorted to measures of suppression against the working class. Its Industrial Relations Bill was condemned by the entire trade union movement but Morarji would not yield. Resisting working class demands for improvement in living conditions, the Government has, by an Ordinance, withheld the repayment of instalments of Compulsory Deposits. The Government, further, contrary to its electoral promises, has refused the promised bonus to railwaymen and others. The peasant, the agricultural worker, the teacher and employee, all stand defrauded and cheated under the economic policies pursued by the Janata Government—policies which were a continuation of the Congress policies under Indra rule. Taxation and rising prices which took the necessities of life beyond the reach of the ordinary individual imposed oppressive burdens on the people.

These developments—arising out of the very class character of the Janata leadership—could not but affect it internally. The unity that was necessary to fight against authoritarianism began to disintegrate, the process of unification of the various disparate constituents stopped and was replaced by a struggle to dominate and control the Government on behalf of different constituents. Almost, from its inception, the party was plagued by bitter squabbles at the top with the administration and implementation of policies almost coming to a standstill.

RSS Jana Sangh Domination

The entire process of the last two and a half years as far as the developments inside the Janata Party is concerned is a process of the most well organised constituent, the Jana Sangh RSS combination, pushing itself to the forefront both in the organisation and the Government. It is a process of replacement

of the professed democratic and secular ideology of the party by the ideology of the RSS. In the inner party struggle for push and pull, Morarji began to rely on Jana Sangh RSS support to retain his leadership of the Government. He openly supported the toppling process in Haryana and Bihar and encouraged the bringing down of the Janata Ministries in the two States. In UP also, the same process was started but could not succeed. But the Jana Sangh MLAs were openly encouraged to vote against their own Government and no measure to discipline them was taken. Morarji was asked to decide on the question of dual membership, but for fear of offending his Jana Sangh RSS supporters he dared not decide and started the process of the party's disintegration.

The dominating influence of RSS ideology was seen in the leadership's stand on the Aligarh and Jamshedpur riots. The RSS leader in Aligarh was directly involved in the riots but the party leadership gave a clean bill to the organisation and suppressed a report made by a Janata leader which exposed the local leader. Also an RSS MLA was involved in the Jamshedpur riots but nothing could be done against him. The same callous attitude was revealed in relation to the atrocities on Harijans which went on increasing without the culprits being punished. These happenings led to the loss of confidence of the minorities in the Government.

Banner of Revolt Raised

This was not the Janata Party for which the people had voted in the fight against authoritarianism. It was, therefore, inevitable that criticism, dissent and defections should start inside the party. The democratic and progressive elements standing for secularism raised a banner of revolt—but they were either ignored or silenced. Sri Bahuguna, Sri Madhu Limaye and other Socialist secular minded members played an important role in rousing the conscience of the party. They also raised the question of fulfilling the electoral promises.

The anti RSS slogan was picked up by others in the party who were opposed to the organisational domination of the Jana Sangh RSS wing. A number of important top leaders of the party

opposed the growing domination by one constituent The Janata Party disintegrated before the eyes of the people—a tragic anti climax to the great popular victory of 1977

What remains now as the Janata Party is a Jana Sangh RSS dominated section It is regrettable that a number of Socialists and other progressive individuals are still remaining in the organisation, instead of joining the revolt against the Hindu chauvinist ideology of the RSS To think that by exchanging Jagjivan Ram for Morarji Desai they can either save the image of the party or form a Government is to believe in the impossible The Socialists and secular minded friends now in the Janata should see the writing on the wall and take part in a new realignment of political forces One can certainly understand their feelings of loyalty to their organisation for which they worked and suffered, but the clock of history cannot be set back

The Janata Party disintegrated because, in the first place, it was not faithful to the masses when they were passing through the most trying period for the Indian economy, because it failed to keep up the fight against the forces of authoritarianism, because it began to be growingly dominated by the reactionary Jana Sangh RSS ideology

CPI(M) Stand on New Government

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) warns all that no viable stable Government can be formed, whatever may be the initial majority behind it, unless it is determined to defend the masses and fight both the authoritarian forces of Indira Gandhi and the forces of communal reaction A Government dependent for its day to day existence on either will not last, will be rejected by the people, will lose its majority in Parliament The CPI(M) will not lend its support to such Governments The CPI(M) would, therefore, offer its cooperation to political parties which are trying to form a Government which is not dependent for its existence on either the Congress(I) or the Jana Sangh RSS combination The Central Committee at the same time warns that fight against authoritarianism and communalism to be successful must be combined with a vigorous defence of the interests of the

masses against the vested interests, and policies to grant them immediate relief and fulfil electoral promises. Long winded economic programmes have no meaning for the masses. If a new Government comes, it must boldly announce that it is repudiating the policies pursued by the previous Janata Government and as an earnest of its sincerity, announce immediately the following (1) bonus to railwaymen, (2) declaration that the new Government will never introduce the Preventive Detention Act, (3) end all victimisation measures against policemen, release all arrested policemen, and restore to them their jobs, (4) withdrawal of Ordinances, (5) immediate effective price control and remunerative prices to the peasantry.

National Government Idea Rejected

The CPI(M) thinks that otherwise an appeal to the people is absolutely necessary. The Central Committee rejects as reactionary the idea of a National Government which is nothing but an opportunist combination of parties which do not agree on anything. Such a Government will be an instrument of cheating the masses, a Government without responsibility to Parliament.

The Central Committee expresses its deep sense of abhorrence over the horsetrading going on between different political parties for positions and leadership. It earnestly hopes that this unsavoury phase will end and the suffering people are promised a Government which can do justice to them.

The Central Committee warns the people that the disintegration of the Janata Party, the fall of the Morarji Government and the present governmental crisis are the direct outcome of the ever deepening crisis of the economy and the entire social system. The growing economic breakdown witnessed in the malfunctioning of the railways, large number of closures, shortages of strategic materials, the rising inflation and mounting unemployment is finding expression in one mass outburst after another. The unprecedented all India strike of the police, CRP and CISF showed the crisis has started hitting at the vital spots of the State. Dictatorial tendencies try to get the upper hand in such a situation unless the democratic forces stand on

guard to frustrate their designs. Our Party, in its Jullundur Resolution, has stated that the danger of dictatorship is not over with the electoral defeat of Indira Gandhi. That warning has to be repeated again in the context of the present governmental crisis.

Appeal to Socialists

The Central Committee, therefore, stresses that in this critical situation facing us in Parliament as well as outside, the Left and democratic forces must quickly unite to shape political events. Their strength and consciousness are growing. The Left and democratic forces in the Janata have played a role in the fight for realignment of political forces. The united mass actions of the people, especially of the working class and the employees organised under the Left leadership, are galvanising new sections and creating a sound basis for Left and democratic unity. They must be continued with greater vigour. At the same time, it is more than ever necessary, especially in the critical balance of forces in Parliament, that the Left parties come together more often to exchange views and decide upon common action on issues on which they think alike. The Left forces in Parliament must learn to throw their combined weight against authoritarianism. The Central Committee once more appeals to the Socialist friends in the Janata Party to reconsider their stand and strengthen the Left forces in Parliament.

P.B. Welcomes Lok Sabha Dissolution, Fresh Elections*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on August 22, 1979

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the President's decision to order dissolution of the Sixth Lok Sabha and order fresh elections. This has been demanded by all the political parties in Parliament except the Janata

Our Party has been demanding fresh elections as the only way to prevent the floor crossing and horse trading which have been the method by which the RSS Jana Sangh combine tried to seize power at the Centre under the cover of a Government headed by Jagjivan Ram

The P B hopes that all the forces will come together in order to inflict an electoral defeat on the pro authoritarian and pro communal forces

Call for Fresh Appeal to Electorate

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on August 20, 1979

Our Party has taken a forthright stand against the formation of any Government which will be dependent either on the authoritarian forces led by the Congress(I) or on the communal forces led by the RSS. We tried to disentangle the Charan Singh

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, August 26 1979

Government from the Congress(I) and succeeded in the sense that Charan Singh refused to be blackmailed by the Congress(I) The attempt to form another Janata Government under the present circumstances will mean lots of horse trading to bring the RSS again to power We are, therefore, of the view that the present situation can be met only by a fresh appeal to the electorate

The P B has noted the Radio broadcast giving the view of one of the Party M Ps , Jyotirmoy Bosu, asking that the RSS dominated Janata should be helped to form a new Government It wants to make it clear that this has nothing to do with the Party's policy nor that Jyotirmoy Bosu is a spokesman of the Party

CPI(M) Central Committee Statement Of August 16, 1979*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which met in New Delhi on August 15 16, 1979 issued the following statement

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) takes into consideration the unstable parliamentary situation with the hectic attempts of the Janata to return to power and of the Congress(I) to influence the Charan Singh Ministry. The C C had earlier expressed itself against the formation of a new Government with the help of the Congress(I). Finding that the Janata(S) Congress combination included the Congress(I) among its supporters, the C C refused to extend its support for the formation of its Ministry.

At the same time, the C C understood that the Janata(S) which heads the new alliance was born out of a struggle against the forces of communalism inside the Janata Party.

The C C finds that the authoritarian forces of the Congress(I) have mounted pressure on the Charan Singh Ministry to accept some of its conditions. But the counteracting forces in the new combination have been resisting and a compromise on the question of Special Courts has been prevented.

In this delicate situation, the C C is of the opinion that all democratic forces should make every effort to help the Ministry to disentangle itself from dependence on the Congress(I) and enable it to struggle both against authoritarianism and communalism.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi August 26 1979

In order to prevent the Jana Sangh dominated Janata Party from coming back and Congress(I) exploiting the situation, the CPI(M), while being in the Opposition, is prepared to support the Charan Ministry in the coming vote of confidence though it has not yet freed itself from the support of the Congress(I) and is yet to give specific assurances to the masses. The CPI(M) will decide its attitude to the Government from issue to issue on the basis of its policies in relation to the masses and towards the struggle against authoritarianism and communalism.

Governmental Crisis in Assam: CPI(M) Stand*

The Assam State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), in its meeting in Gauhati on September 2, 1979 adopted the following resolution

The Assam State Committee of the CPI(M), having considered the present governmental crisis in the States, notes with concern that the Janata Government of Assam, which had the support of the CPI(M) from the beginning, has come to its present pass, and following defection of twenty three of its legislators, has forfeited its right to remain in office

In the opinion of the State Committee, the Janata Government's exercise in laying the blame on the dissidents will serve no purpose. The internecine feuds and consequent defections are a consequence of the anti people policies and practices of the Government. It had more than one year to implement its election pledges, and thereby strengthen the democratic and secular forces. But it did nothing in the way of serving the people who had put them in office. It cannot blame anyone other than itself for its present unenviable position.

The State Committee of the CPI(M), only four weeks ago, had urged the Janata Party and its Government to take urgent measures to go to the aid of the long suffering masses. The Party proposed an immediate programme to curb the price rise to stop the sharp rise in the cost of living, stop eviction of peasants from the land, ending of police repression on the struggles of workers, employees, teachers and other hard hit sections and safeguard the civil rights of the minorities, the Party also called for the unity of all secular and democratic forces against all forms of authoritarianism and

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, September 9, 1979

communalism. Such a programme, the Party held, would have engendered a proper climate and created the basis for a stable Government capable of serving the people.

The CPI(M) notes with deep regret that the Janata Government failed to rise to the occasion and lost valuable weeks in the futile task of head counting.

Meanwhile, sharp rise in prices further eroded the slender earnings of the working people and the middle classes, and a spate of evictions threatened the lives of thousands of peasants. The offer of relief announced today to a section of Government employees, though welcome, does not touch the fringe of the problems facing the people.

At the same time, anti-democratic forces have intensified their divisive activities all along the line. Incidents of violence against the weaker sections are growing. Certain statements of the leader of the Government concerning the rights of the minorities reveal utter disregard for lawful procedures as well as for the realities existing in Assam. These rights are daily being trampled upon by the police and the bureaucracy. Above all, communal and chauvinistic forces are freely inciting strife, in order to divide the people and thwart democratic advance.

In face of these facts, the Janata Government neither agrees to sever its relations with the RSS communal forces nor exert its political influence to combat these inimical forces. The Government's attitude, in fact, has emboldened these elements—the RSS, during the last one year, has grown into a force in Assam under the flag of the Janata Party.

The State Janata Party, in its latest resolution, has raised the issue of foreign nationals. The CPI(M) has, time and again, stated that foreign nationals have no right to remain in the State, that they should be expelled through lawful procedures. In this respect, or in respect of any other matter, the Party has always stoutly defended the genuine interests of the Assamese people and the State, defending at the same time the democratic rights of the religious and national minorities. The Janata Party has now come out with the assurance that during the process of expulsion of

foreign nationals, the rights of no Indian citizen would be trampled upon. This commitment, belated as it is, remains only on paper with practice being otherwise.

The State Committee of the CPI(M), considering the entire situation in the context of the current crisis, has come to the conclusion that the Janata Government has lost the confidence of the Assembly.

In this situation, the CPI(M) considers that supporting the present Government any longer would not serve any useful purpose. Rather, in view of all that has taken place, any continued support by the Party to this Government would compromise its position among the people and would in no way help develop the unity of all democratic and secular forces.

The CPI(M), however, would like to state that political parties like the Congress(S) and Janata dissidents which are today opposing the Janata Government, have neither put forth their programme nor earned the confidence of the people with their past performance that they would be able to form a viable Government and meet the urgent demands of the people.

The CPI(M) would exert all its strength, limited as it is, to help bring into existence a Government consisting of all the Left, democratic and secular forces existing in different parties, including the democratic sections inside the Janata Party. It hopes that the democratic sections in the governmental party would respond to this appeal.

The CPI(M) appeals to the democratic, secular and Left forces to unite and see that such an alternative force that steers clear of the Indira Congress and the Jana Sangh RSS communalists, emerges with a positive programme to meet the sore needs of the long suffering people and give them relief.

Defeat Authoritarian Congress(I), RSS-Dominated Janata*

CPI(M) Central Committee Communique

Having reviewed the recent political developments in the country, the Central Committee of the CPI(M), at its meeting held in New Delhi from September 7 to 9, 1979 came to the conclusion that the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and the appeal to the people are the direct outcome of the ever deepening crisis of the economy and the entire social system. Parties and groups defending the interests of the bourgeois landlord ruling classes are trying to cover up this reality, blaming one another for the situation that has of late been developing at the Centre

The authoritarian leader of the Congress(I) and her colleagues would have the people believe that the governmental crisis which led to the dissolution of the Lok Sabha is the inevitable consequence of their party having been thrown out of power. Resorting to demagogy, they denounce the two and a half year long Janata rule for heaping increasing misery on the people and raise the slogan, "bring Indira back, save the country "

Balance Sheet of Indira Regime

In doing this, they deliberately cover up the fact that the thirty year long Congress rule, particularly the last 11 years of that rule when Indira Gandhi herself presided over the Government, witnessed the spectacle of a handful of monopolists and landlords prospering at the expense of the overwhelming majority of the working people. This period also saw increasing penetration of foreign monopoly capital into the Indian economy facilitated by the policies pursued by the Government.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, September 16, 1979

The Indira Gandhi regime was notorious also for its brutal attacks on the democratic rights of the people culminating in the imposition of the Emergency. That regime sought to subvert the Constitution depriving it of all democratic content. The attacks on democracy were utilised by the then Prime Minister, her family members and other hangers on to loot the public exchequer and amass huge fortunes, as has been proved in the Shah, the Gupta and other Commission reports.

The people who went through this terrible experience and therefore threw that regime out, are now asked to believe that a "stable" and "prosperous" India can be built if only the leader of that regime is once again brought to power.

Janata Government's Policies

The leaders of the Janata Party claim that the governmental crisis which led to the dissolution of the Sixth Lok Sabha, was artificially created by a few selfish leaders of the united Janata Party who "defected" and helped the Opposition to topple the Janata Government. They, too, resort to the demagogic propaganda of their own variety, such as that they were consistent and stout opponents of the perpetrators of the Emergency misdeeds.

The fact however is that on the eve of their being thrown out of power, they were planning to bring the hated Preventive Detention Act back. These and other measures of suppression of civil liberties and democratic rights of the people were intended to smother the growing discontent of the people due to the class policies pursued by the Janata Government which were generally along the same lines as those of the previous Congress regime.

The two years and more of the Janata Government saw fresh burdens being heaped on the people by way of heavier burdens of taxation, rise in the cost of living of the common people arising out of the inflationary budgetary policies of the Government. Not only did the popular discontent gather strength among all sections of the working people but it spread to the ranks of the police, the CRP, the CISF, etc., whose personnel were denied their legitimate demands and whose agitations were brutally

suppressed Two Ordinances were issued on the eve of the July session of Parliament—one directed against the struggle of the Reserve Bank employees and the other denying payment of amounts due under the CDS These and other measures adopted by the Janata Government showed that, that Government was following in the footsteps of the former authoritarian Congress regime

The Janata leaders would have the people believe that they are so solicitous towards the Harijans that they have elected the topmost leader of that community for the highest administrative post in the country and denounce all their opponents for their alleged opposition to a Harijan Prime Minister It would, however, be noted that the very Janata leaders who now make a pretence of championing the cause of Jagjivan Ram as future Prime Minister rejected his claim when they had the opportunity to do so in March 1977 Furthermore, the very President of the Janata Party who is now campaigning for Jagjivan Ram had staked his claim for the leadership of the Janata Parliamentary Party after Morarji Desai's resignation by announcing his candidature which was withdrawn only under the advice of Jaya Prakash Narayan

Covering Up Reality

The leaders of the two major parties of the bourgeois landlord classes are thus, in their respective ways, trying to cover up the fact that 32 years of Independence—30 years under the Congress and two under the Janata—have meant growing unemployment, falling emoluments for the working people, increasing taxes on the poor and middle strata of society, increasing prices of consumption goods, falling prices of agricultural and other products put into the market by the poor and middle producers, etc , on the one hand, and increasing profits and other incomes of the capitalists and landlords

The leaders of the two major parties of the bourgeois landlord classes try to cover up this reality with the slogan of "building a Socialist society", originally adopted by the Congress and subsequently taken over by the Janata leaders They are using this

attractive slogan to cover up the reality that under their rule the rich were getting richer and the poor were being impoverished

The steady erosion in the popularity of the Congress as the ruling party, leading to its partial electoral defeats of 1957 and 1967 and which culminated in the 1977 rout shows that the class policies pursued by the Congress were inimical to the interests of the working people. The leaders of the Janata Party, however, did not learn any lesson from this. They, on the other hand, adopted the same policies as their predecessors. They did not heed the warnings uttered by the CPI(M)

RSS Domination

Another factor which led to the fall of the Janata Government was that the ruling party and the Government were increasingly coming under the influence of the RSS. Basing itself on the pernicious ideology of Hindu Rashtra, the RSS came out as the opponent of religious minorities. It also opposed greater powers for the States, calling for greater centralisation of power. The concept of the Hindu Rashtra also meant the preservation of *Varnashramadharma* which thus set the RSS in opposition to all that is modern, secular and democratic. The RSS came out also as the champion of free trade, thus pitting itself against the policies of controlling the profiteers and blackmarketeers. Its stand on the language question was a denial of the legitimate right of all linguistic groups for complete equality.

Having got into the positions of power in the Central and several State Governments, the RSS tried to extend its influence over the administrative, educational and cultural bodies. The increasing grip that they secured over the administration was used by the bosses of the RSS to organise riots in various places. This naturally raised apprehensions not only among the minorities and other weaker sections of society but also the secular democratic elements in all communities. A conflict between the RSS and its supporters on the one hand and the secular democratic forces within the Janata on the other was the natural consequence of this development which led to the split of the Janata Party.

The CPI(M) for its part had full sympathy with all those in the Janata who raised the banner of revolt against the RSS. The Political Resolution adopted by the Party at its Tenth Congress had stated "The Left and democratic forces advocate a consistently secular outlook and are opposed to any deviation from it on the part of the Government. They specially fight the Hindu chauvinist and obscurantist communal ideology of the RSS which is today in a position to influence the Janata Government."

Three Combinations

Basing itself as the Central Committee did on the above mentioned assessment made at the Tenth Congress, it adopted a positive attitude to the forces which fought the RSS. Jana Sangh combine inside the Janata. Taking note of the developments inside the Janata Party, the Central Committee joined the other secular forces in the country in exposing the role played by the RSS in the Aligarh, Jamshedpur and other communal riots. It was, however, heartened by the fact that criticism, dissent and defections had started inside the Janata Party. The leaders of the party, however, either ignored or remained silent at the gathering revolt. It was this that led to the disintegration of the Janata Party.

The revolt of the secular democratic elements inside the Janata Party and certain parallel developments within the Congress including the revolt of Devraj Urs and other elements inside the Congress(I) itself have created a new situation in which there are three instead of two major parties or combinations of parties, which are contending for power and seeking the support of the electorate in the forthcoming election to the Seventh Lok Sabha.

On the one hand is the Congress(I) whose leaders do not conceal their determination to bring the Emergency regime back, claiming that only a strong Government can bring about stability to the country which had been brought into chaos and instability by the Janata rule.

On the other is the Janata Party which, though still containing such secular democratic forces as the former Socialists, the

Congress(O), the Young Turks and the CFD headed by Jagjivan Ram, is under the iron grip of the RSS Jana Sangh combine

Opposed to both is the combination of the anti authoritarian elements from the former Congress Party, the anti communal elements from the former Janata Party who are today known as the Janata(S) and other radical and secular elements

In the present parliamentary elections, the Left and democratic forces are not powerful enough to present an alternative of their own So the people have to make a choice between the three formations

Choose Janata(S) Led Formation

The C C of the CPI(M) has no hesitation to choose, appeal to the people to choose, the formation headed by the Janata(S) and the Congress which has taken an anti authoritarian and anti communal stand It is happy to note that several other Left and democratic parties are adopting the same position and putting their weight in favour of this formation with a view to defeating the other two

The C C is conscious of the class limitations of this political formation Many of those who are in its leadership were part and parcel of either the former authoritarian Congress regime or of the subsequent Janata regime Their record as the executors of the Congress and Janata policies should make every Left minded individual, group, organisation and party wary of the policies that are likely to be pursued by this political formation when it is voted into power

The C C of the CPI(M), however, takes note of two facts concerning these leaders (1) They are today ranged against the two evil forces of authoritarianism represented by the Congress(I) and communalism represented by the RSS Jana Sangh combine (2) In this struggle, against authoritarianism and communalism, these leaders find the Left parties as well as fighting organisations of the working people the allies that they can depend upon

It would, therefore, be in the interests of the Left movement, the organised movements of the working people, to help this

political formation win in the electoral contest and form a Government Such an outcome of the election will be a heavy blow struck simultaneously against authoritarianism and communalism

However, considering the above mentioned class limitations of the Janata(S) and the Congress(S), the C C considers it necessary for itself as well as for the fighting organisations of the working people, to maintain their political independence, adopt a critical attitude to the policies and measures that might be adopted by this political formation once it comes to power The possibility of this formation coming into power does, in fact, make it all the more necessary for the forces of the Left who base themselves on the organised movements of the working people to strengthen their unity

Strengthen Left Unity

The CPI(M) would in the election campaign do its utmost to strengthen the unity of the Left, popularise the programme of the Left and democratic front which alone can take the country out of the ever deepening crisis into which the class policies of the Congress and the Janata rulers have landed it

The C C of the CPI(M) is conscious of the innumerable problems that will come up in the process of uniting the forces of the Left and building bridges between the Left and other anti authoritarian and secular forces It should be the endeavour of all of them to see that these problems are amicably resolved

The Central Committee notes the declaration made by the CPI leadership that they would have no truck with the Congress(I) This is welcome and if acted upon, would help the process of uniting the Left forces

Practices of CPI

Many of their practices, however, are in violation of this declaration Its Kerala unit, for instance, is at the present moment in alliance with the Congress(I) in the panchayat and municipal elections in Kerala Its Assam unit has joined hands with the Congress(I) in knocking together an alliance which has just been

permitted to form a Government Nor has anything been done in West Bengal and Kerala to repair the damage done to the cause of Left unity nearly ten years ago, when the CPI along with some other anti CPI(M) forces disrupted the then existing Left unity and toppled the Left led Governments of the two States While some all India leaders of that party had expressed themselves in favour of abandoning the anti CPI(M) Government in Kerala in the interests of reforging the Left unity all over the country, their State unit is putting up stout resistance which their all India leadership is yet unable to overcome

It is to be hoped that the very force of circumstances will oblige then in Kerala to have simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislature, paving the way for resorting the unity that was broken in 1969 In West Bengal, too, it is to be hoped, that, the party would adopt an attitude of co operation, and not hostility to the Left Front Government

The Central Committee appeals to the CPI as well as all other Left and democratic forces to take note of the two dangers facing the entire country On the one hand is the Congress(I) which is trying to win over to its side all those who can be of service in fighting all that is democratic and radical On the other is the RSS Jana Sangh combine which is trying to use its grip over the Janata Party to push forward its obscurantist and disruptive policies Any strengthening of either of these two forces will spell the doom of the democratic, radical and secular movement in the country

It is heartening that democratic, radical and secular forces are asserting themselves in all parties and organisations as well as among the non party public The people at large are looking up to the Left and democratic forces, to all anti authoritarian and secular forces, to come together and put up a joint struggle against the two evil forces The Central Committee, therefore appeals to the organised forces of the Left to come together and prevent the advance of authoritarianism represented by the Congress(I) and communalism represented by the RSS

The C C is aware that among the leaders and ranks of the Janata Party are secular forces such as the former Socialists, the

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former Congress(O), the former Young Turks and the CFD headed by Jagjivan Ram. Inside the Congress(I), too, there are forces which cannot for long tolerate the authoritarian forces headed by the notorious caucus. It would be the endeavour of the CPI(M) to win them over to the anti authoritarian and secular camp so that Indira Gandhi and her caucus and the RSS Jana Sangh combine can be completely isolated even inside the two respective political parties, through which they are today operating.

Having thus worked out the Party's general approach to the elections, the C C directed the State Committees to enter into negotiations with the concerned parties in the respective States with a view to (a) defeating the Congress(I) and Janata, (b) get increased representation to the forces of the Left in Parliament, (c) strengthen the CPI(M) by securing greater representation to it

An Indira Canard*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has denied the allegation made by the Congress(I) President Indira Gandhi that the CPI(M) had demanded the dismissal of the Tamil Nadu Government of Karunanidhi in 1976. In fact, the Party had been jointly campaigning with the DMK against the Emergency regime and denounced the dismissal of the Government as soon as it was announced. In fact, immediately after the Karunanidhi Government was dismissed, on the same day warrants of arrests were issued, under President's rule, against many leaders and activists of the CPI(M) in Tamil Nadu and some of them were arrested and detained.

Defeat Indira-Sanjay Caucus That Perpetrated Maruti Fraud*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on September 17, 1979

The generally known facts concerning the Maruti Limited have now been substantiated by the Gupta Commission that went in detail into the doings of that firm. The revelations made by the Commission show that the former Prime Minister, her family members and friends had no scruples in using the official machinery at the Central and State levels to enrich themselves.

The PB of the CPI(M) hopes that this would open the eyes of those who still nurse the illusion that the return to power of the overthrown caucus would lead to "political stability", "protection of the weaker sections", etc. What will in fact be sought to be "stabilised" is the unscrupulous use of the official machinery in the selfish interests of the family and friends of those who are in power.

While the Commission had submitted its report to the Morarji Government several weeks before its resignation, that Government failed in its duty of making its contents known to the people. The PB approves the Charan Singh Government's action in not only publishing the report but also initiating follow up action calculated to proceed against those who have been indicted in the report. The PB hopes that no exception will be made in the case of anyone whatever the position occupied by him in the present Government. The PB is particularly concerned at the

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statements made by the Railway Minister, T A Pai, who has justified his role in connection with the Maruti Limited

If the Congress(I) leaders have any sense of decency left in them, they should boldly face the forthcoming proceedings against their own leaders and others indicted by the Commission, rather than resorting to pettifogging arguments concerning the procedural details of the manner in which the report came to be published

The publication of the Gupta Commission Report and the howl raised by the Congress(I) leaders throw revealing light on the motivations behind the original decision of the Congress(I) to give "unconditional support" to, and the subsequent withdrawal of support from the Charan Singh Government. It was the hope of making the Government refrain from proceeding against their leaders indicted in the Shah, Gupta and other Commissions' reports that the original offer of unconditional support was given. However, when it was found that these hopes would not be realised and that the Charan Singh Government would allow the law to take its own course, the support was withdrawn. This sharply underlines the fact that all their demagogic pronouncements notwithstanding, the one and only political aim of the Congress(I) is to save its leaders from the clutches of the law.

This makes it all the more necessary that all the anti-authoritarian secular forces should join together and defeat the Congress(I) and the RSS dominated Janata in the forthcoming mid term elections to the Lok Sabha. The Central Committee of the CPI(M) has already pledged itself to the struggle against authoritarianism represented by the Congress(I) and communalism represented by the RSS and the support of the Janata (S) Congress combine in the election. The PB hopes that all those who have been shocked by the facts revealed by the Gupta Commission would rally behind the anti-authoritarian and secular formation that is emerging.

On Withdrawal of Cases Against Bansī Lal*

Statement Dated September 25, 1979, Issued by The
Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the Haryana Chief Minister's decision to withdraw some of the criminal cases against Mr Bansī Lal and his son. These cases were launched in pursuance of the findings of a Commission of Enquiry which was appointed to go into the excesses in Haryana under the Emergency rule. The role of Bansī Lal was thoroughly exposed by the enquiry.

Even before the enquiry was initiated, the details that were known of the heinous crimes committed had created such wrath and revulsion among the people that the author of the Emergency regime herself had to expel Mr Bansī Lal from her party. The Janata Party had repeatedly assured the people that it would punish all those guilty of crimes during the Emergency.

Now Mr Bhajan Lal, Janata Chief Minister of Haryana, has arbitrarily withdrawn the cases against Mr Bansī Lal and his son without perhaps consulting his Cabinet colleagues. This is nothing but unscrupulous misuse of the Chief Minister's powers to get Congress (I) votes in the Assembly during the current session without which his Ministry would fall.

Once again the people are seeing the opportunist alliance of the Janata Party and the Congress (I). What is the value of the repeated statements of Janata leaders like Sri Jagjivan Ram and Sri Chandra Shekhar that there is no such alliance?

Indira Gandhi in recent days is set on the path of rehabilitating Mr Bansī Lal in her party, and the Janata Chief Minister of Haryana is giving her assistance. But the people of the State, and the rest of

the country, will not forget the indignities and cruelties heaped on the people under Bansı Lal's leadership the stripping of a middle aged sister and brother in police lock up and forcing them to lie together, the destruction of property including a centuries old land mark so that his family members can get land cheap to build a hotel, the uprooting of thousands of peasants with paltry compensation to enable Sanjay Gandhi to perpetrate the Maruti fraud, and so on

The CPI(M) calls on the people, especially of Haryana, to remember all this on the day of polling and decisively reject the authoritarian forces of Indira Congress, and the Janata Party which is rescuing the perpetrator of Emergency crimes from just punishment

Homage To Jaya Prakash Narayan*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement in New Delhi on October 8, 1979

Jaya Prakash Narayan, a great freedom fighter, patriot, democrat and Socialist, has died. The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) expresses its deep sorrow and grief at his demise, at this critical juncture in our national political life.

In all his life he was never enamoured of office, and served the nation in different capacities and in different spheres of life. His book "Why Socialism?" is one of the most popular books written in the mid thirties propagating the ideas of Socialism, and it was instrumental in attracting many a youth towards the progressive, radical and Socialist school of thought in the country.

Jaya Prakash's role in organising the fight against the authoritarian and dictatorial regime of Indira Gandhi, and in defence of democratic rights and liberties of the people will always remain fresh in the minds of the people. It is he more than anyone else that was instrumental in unleashing the mighty protest against the one party dictatorship of Indira Gandhi, for which he had to spend several months in jail. Indira Gandhi will never be able to wash the guilt of this heinous crime.

It is a tragedy that he had to live to see the disruption and disintegration of the Janata Party, the party which was forged under his inspiration to defend democracy and liquidate the dangers of authoritarianism. And yet, the gains of his memorable struggle against the Congress dictatorship under Indira Gandhi's

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leadership cannot be wiped away. The multi pronged attack on the Congress (I) and its authoritarian platform that is now on, is a standing testimony to the fruits of his struggle in defence of democracy.

The Polit Bureau pays its respectful homage to the departed leader, and sends its heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family members.

Recent Political Developments*

Review Made By The Polit Bureau Of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) met in New Delhi on October 1 and 2, 1979 and reviewed recent political developments

It expressed its concern over the rapid rise in the price level which had made the living conditions of the people still more difficult. The price level of agricultural products, too, is causing increasing misery to the working peasantry. A handful of hoarders and other anti-social manipulators of the market are gaining at the expense of both the consumers and the producers. The PB, therefore, is of the view that action against economic offenders should be vigorously pursued.

Pernicious Weapon

This, however, should not involve the use of the pernicious weapon of detention without trial, as is proposed by the Union Government. The PB would suggest that, besides plugging the loopholes in the laws of procedure, in dealing with economic offenders, Special Courts may be set up to bring them to book. The PB disapproves the use of Preventive Detention Act which, although at present intended to be used against economic offenders, is capable of being misused, as our experience of post freedom India has shown.

The PB noted with satisfaction that progress has been made in forging the unity of anti-authoritarian and secular forces and to consolidate the forces of the Left as the most consistent among the anti-authoritarian and secular forces. It is, however, regrettable that the process is slow and suffers from various limitations.

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The PB noted the efforts being made by the monopoly Press to build the Congress (I) as the only viable alternative to the former Janata and the present Coalition Government at the Centre. The President of the Congress (I) and her colleagues are making full use of the Press build up to sway the masses towards them and project an image for themselves as the would be ruling party. Opportunist elements from all parties are flocking to the Congress (I) with the hope that that will help them to brighten their electoral prospects.

The PB, however, is of the view that these trends can be reversed if only the Left, democratic and secular forces unite themselves and provide a genuine alternative both to the Congress (I) and to the RSS dominated Janata Party. The PB hopes that everybody concerned will take necessary steps to remove the obstacles and quickly forge such unity as will ensure the defeat of the Congress (I) and the RSS dominated Janata.

The PB regrets that, even after the revelations regarding the intensions of the RSS, the Socialists and other secular forces who are still within the Janata are not severing their relations with the RSS to join the anti authoritarian and secular forces. The PB repeats its earlier appeal to these friends to help the cause of uniting all the anti authoritarian and secular forces.

Situation in States

The developments in Tamil Nadu have created a situation which is difficult for all anti authoritarian and secular forces. The DMK has gone into a full electoral alliance with the Congress (I) giving the latter the dominant position in the alliance. The AIADMK for its part has created problems for the anti authoritarian and secular forces by its understanding with the Janata Party. The PB resolved to get in touch with the other Left parties as well as with the Lok Dal and the Congress and discuss the problem that has thus arisen in the State.

The PB noted that the situation in Maharashtra continues to be confused. The failure of Sharad Pawar to break with the Jana

Sangh constituent of the Janata hampers the cementing of the unity of anti authoritarian and secular forces. The PB notes the efforts being made by the parties concerned, the Left parties above all, to solve the problems that have arisen in the State.

The PB noted that in Kerala a break through has been made with the acceptance by the ruling coalition of the principle of simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislature in order to pave the way for unity of all anti authoritarian and secular forces. This, however, has not led to any positive results, since the ruling coalition insists on pushing through the present Legislature the anti peasant "Kerala Land Reform (Amendment) Bill, 1979". This Bill will deprive tens of thousands of landless labourers and poor peasants, including a large number from those belonging to the minority communities, of the surplus land to which they are entitled, on the other hand, landlords belonging to all communities are enabled to escape the provisions of the existing land laws concerning the fixing of ceiling on land. The Bill, therefore, goes against all the principles and policies which a combination of Left and democratic forces should pursue. The PB hopes that the leaders of the ruling coalition will facilitate the forging of the unity of anti authoritarian and secular forces by dropping this Bill.

The PB noted with regret that the anti authoritarian forces in Punjab have been weakened by the threatened split of the Akali Party. The Congress (I) would undoubtedly derive benefit from the split unless unity is immediately restored. The PB expressed the hope that efforts in this direction succeed.

The PB noted the statement made by the former Chief Minister of Assam Golap Borbora, on September 8, 1979, dissociating himself and his Government from the RSS-Jana Sangh combine. This should provide the basis on which other anti authoritarian and secular forces can unite themselves. The PB hopes that in order to facilitate this, the CPI and other Left forces would break their relations with the Indira Congress.

The PB takes account of the differences in the situation as it exists in various States. It is under the circumstances unrealistic to

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have a set pattern for all States in building the unity of anti authoritarian and secular forces. This, however, should not blind anybody to the fact that the need is to concentrate our energies to ensure the defeat of the authoritarian and communal forces. It hopes that everybody will take this as the main guideline and on its basis work out appropriate ways of uniting the anti authoritarian and secular forces.

P. B. Denounces Military Dictatorship of Pakistan*

Extends Solidarity, Support To The People

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the military dictatorship of Pakistan for putting the country back under complete Martial Law, in total violation of the solemn promises made by General Zia ul Haq for restoration of civilian rule

The cancellation of the promised elections, the illegalisation of all political parties, the institution of Press censorship, all mean that the people of Pakistan are now completely enslaved to the military usurpers of political power

The proclamation of Martial Law and cancellation of the November poll make it clear that Zia has lost all hopes of doctoring the election and rigging it in his favour. The people's protest against the murder of Bhutto has not died down. The political parties with all the restrictions imposed on them have become a rallying point for protest against Zia's rule. The courageous fight carried on by Bhutto's wife and daughter, by his party, continues to rouse and activate more and more people. Zia could no longer play with the election game.

The CPI(M) expresses its deep sympathy and solidarity with the fighting people of Pakistan. It is confident that a broad anti dictatorship front will soon emerge in Pakistan embracing all sections and parties intent on restoring democracy and people's rule.

The dictator is afraid of the people's verdict. Denied of the opportunity to deliver it through the ballot box, the masses of Pakistan will decide it through a successful united struggle.

On Bahuguna's Exit From Central Government*

Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press on October 22, 1979

The resignation of Sri Bahuguna from the Central Government on the instance of Sri Charan Singh revealed deep fissures in the alliance behind the Caretaker Government. Signs were not lacking of the developing conflict, but few expected that it would come so soon with a preemptory call for resignation from the Prime Minister. This development no doubt ill serves the electoral struggle against the forces of authoritarianism and communalism. Far more shocking is the Press statement issued by Sri Bahuguna. The former Finance Minister narrates a series of important instances affecting internal and foreign policy issues on which he differed from the Prime Minister. On these issues Sri Bahuguna seems to have taken a correct position.

But how does all this lead to total absence of reference to Indira Gandhi's authoritarianism in the statement of Sri Bahuguna? How does Charan Singh's stand on Kampuchea lessen the danger of Indira's authoritarian dictatorship to our country? Sri Bahuguna in his statement seems to deride the very concept of joint opposition to the forces of reaction. The essence of the electoral and democratic fight today is the fight against authoritarianism and communalism, and Bahuguna's Press statement makes it appear that the CFD leader is preparing for some kind of peace with Indira and turn a complete somersault. It seems

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On Bahuguna's Exit From Central Government 489

Sri Bahuguna has still to study India's electoral programme before deciding his electoral line towards her

Neither the irrational demand for compulsory merger with the Lok Dal nor the conflict of opinions on several issues should be allowed to over ride the needs of the anti authoritarian struggle. The PB of the CPI(M) is confident that the rank and file of the CFD will ensure that their organisation remains a part of the anti authoritarian and anti communal forces in the electoral struggle and does not play a role disruptive of democratic unity

Defeat Manoeuvres of Authoritarian and Communal Forces*

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press on October 28, 1979

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M), meeting on October 26 and 27, 1979, in Calcutta expressed its shock at the dastardly murder of Comrade Ramanand Singh, a member of the Secretariat of the Bihar State Committee of the Party, Secretary of the State Kisan Sabha and member of the Central Kisan Council. It paid its tribute to his memory.

Ever since Comrade Ramanand Singh joined the Communist Party 28 years ago, he worked tirelessly for developing the Left and democratic movement in general and the Kisan movement in particular. His loss will be acutely felt at a time when all the democratic, secular and radical forces are making their best efforts to forge unity for fighting authoritarianism and communalism in Bihar. The PB conveyed its sincere condolences to the members of his family.

Crisis of System

The PB discussed developments in the country since its last meeting. The barbarous firing in Faridabad, killing ten workers, by the police of the Janata Government of Haryana, the gruesome riots in Ahmedabad, the reactionary agitation in Assam against "foreigners" and the police strike in Tamil Nadu constitute an integral part of the electoral situation. These reveal that the elections are taking place in the midst of a crisis of the

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socio economic system and the electoral battle cannot be divorced from the struggles of the masses

The PB warns that reactionary forces will employ diversionary tactics as the election battle draws nearer

The PB noted with satisfaction that efforts to further consolidate the radical and secular forces has made some progress This is particularly evident in the coming closer of the CPI(M), the constituent parties of the Left Front in West Bengal, the CPI, the PWP in Maharashtra and other forces allied to the CPI(M) in Kerala and other States—a development which has made an impact on all the democratic and secular forces throughout the country

The resignation of the Kerala Ministry headed by the CPI leader Vasudevan Nair and the coming together of the two Communist Parties and the RSP along with other democratic forces is a development of positive import not only for Kerala but for the whole country

However, it is unfortunate that the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee headed by A K Antony who had previously resigned the Chief Ministership on the question of the stand taken by the Congress in relation to Indira Gandhi and the Chikmagalur by election, instead of co operating with the Left forces to strengthen the fight against authoritarianism, has joined hands with the Congress(I) and Janata Parties to instal the minority Koya Ministry This course, if not reversed immediately, will land the Congress Party in collaborating with the Congress(I) to fight the Left and democratic forces in Kerala This will strengthen the authoritarian forces of the Congress(I), which the Congress Party is pledged to fight throughout the country

The PB. appeals to all those interested in fighting for democracy and secularism to frustrate the efforts at all Communal forces and vested interests which are afraid of the Left and democratic forces.

Government Pronouncements

The PB notes that certain policy pronouncements and practices of the Lok Dal Congress Government are also

alienating the working people. Special mention should be made of the revival of the Preventive Detention Act, the refusal to concede the demands of the railway and other employees for bonus, the total incapacity to arrest the rising prices of the essential commodities, the threatened attack on the right of the working class and employees to go on strike, the attitude to the public sector, etc —all these are creating serious impediments in the way of rallying the people in the fight against authoritarianism and communalism.

The fight against authoritarianism and communalism cannot be divorced from giving immediate relief to the suffering people. The P.B. calls upon the Government, instead of longwinded statements as to who is responsible for inflation, to immediately arrange for distribution of essential commodities through the public distribution system at fair prices and give substantial relief to the people affected by drought.

Instead of taking such measures, reliance is placed upon hotch potch electoral understandings which create impediments in forging the unity of the Left and democratic forces.

Further, the leaders of the Lok Dal Congress combine are indulging in mutual disputes endangering the unity and cohesion of their alliance. The situation that led to the resignation of Sri H. N. Bahuguna and the exit of the CFD from the alliance is a setback to the Caretaker Government.

The P.B. is shocked that, in his Press statements, Sri Bahuguna makes no reference to the fight against the authoritarian forces. He seems to derive the very concept of joint opposition to the forces of authoritarianism which only helps Indira Gandhi.

The P.B. appeals to the CFD to ensure that it remains the part of the anti authoritarian and anti communal forces to which it was committed, and does not play a role disruptive of democratic unity.

Janata Party

While the RSS Jana Sangh dominated Janata Party has been put on the defensive by the anger of the people against the

communal chauvinism of the RSS, it is trying to strengthen itself by secret understanding with the Indira Congress. This is most glaringly seen in the illegal withdrawal of the criminal cases against Bansi Lal by the Janata State Government, who indulged in monstrous crimes against the people.

In its Election Manifesto, the CPI(M) warned the people that "the menace of the Congress(I), that repository of dictatorial ambitions, continues to be the main authoritarian danger and had to be fought." It further warned that "the Congress(I), representing the main danger of authoritarianism and terror, of subversion of the Constitution, must be defeated at all costs."

Congress(I) Attempt

In the present situation of confusion and uncertainty, Indira Gandhi is attempting to seize the initiative in the electoral battle. She is exploiting the misdeeds of the Janata Government for electoral advantage. She is using the existing economic situation and the failure of the Caretaker Government to tackle it, to push forward her claims for power. Now she is offering stability and stable Government to the people, while in her eleven years regime she could not provide any stability to the people's standards of living and actually imposed the Emergency to suppress the rising tide of mass struggles.

However, her main weapon is to divert the forces opposed to her, divide the anti authoritarian vote and enter into opportunist alliances with other bourgeois leaders.

This is most glaringly seen in the alliance she has entered into with the DMK whose Government she dismissed on charges of corruption and against whose leaders she instituted a commission of enquiry.

The extent of her unscrupulousness is seen in the fact that the Congress(I) is collaborating with the RSS leaders, and is supporting the extreme Assamese chauvinists who demand that all names of "Foreigners" should be struck off the electoral rolls. "Foreigners" include Bengalees and other non Assamese Hindus and Muslims who have settled in Assam for generations. She has rehabilitated Bansi Lal and praises her son Sanjay Gandhi which

announces the return of the power of the caucus in the organisation

It must be noted that the big bourgeoisie and their Press ever ready to utilise Indira Gandhi's services, have been giving her a big boost

Unity of the Left

The PB has noted with satisfaction that the unity of the Left has become stronger and is more firmly rooted among the people in West Bengal and Tripura

In this complicated situation, the unity of the Left and democratic forces will play a decisive role in overcoming all difficulties and removing all obstacles in the struggle to give a crushing defeat in the electoral battle against the forces of authoritarianism and communalism. United and effective intervention of the Left and democratic forces will also encourage the ranks of the Lok Dal and the Congress Party in overcoming all fissures in their alliance

The unity of the Left and democratic forces will play a key role not only in the electoral battle, but will also be of great importance in shaping the future of the country along the path of progress and prosperity and in defending democracy and secularism in the post election period

The PB appeals to the electorate to see through the manoeuvres and machinations of the forces of authoritarianism and communalism and give these forces a resounding defeat and enable the forces of democracy and secularism emerge victorious in the coming elections

On Attempt to Intimidate The Chief Justice*

**Statement Issued by The Polit Bureau of
CPI(M) on November 14, 1979**

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) denounces the attempt at intimidating the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. While drawing public attention to the attempt, the Chief Justice himself named a lawyer who is known to be a close associate of the Congress(I).

This incident completely exposes the caucus around the former Prime Minister and currently President of the Congress(I) who would stoop to anything to frighten the judiciary and the executive arm of the Government in order to force them to submit to the caucus. This should be a reminder of what the caucus had done during the Emergency and a warning of what will happen if and when the leaders of the Congress(I) are able to seize control of the State machinery.

The P B calls upon the Party units throughout the country, all anti authoritarian elements, to further cement the unity of the anti authoritarian and secular forces which is the real answer to the threatening pose adopted by the caucus.

P.B. Statement on Assam Situation*

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) expresses great concern at the dangerous situation that has developed in Assam. Firings have taken place in several places and town after town is under curfew.

Passions are being whipped up among the Assamese people against the so called "foreign nationals". The total injustice of the main demand of the agitators can be seen in the fact that tens of thousands whose names are in the electoral rolls and have exercised their franchise in two general elections are sought to be arbitrarily removed from the rolls on the alleged ground that they are "foreigners". The Election Commission and the local electoral authorities took the correct stand that whatever names are to be removed should be done through the established electoral rules. It is against the obviously correct decision that passions are being whipped up and incidents created.

It is regrettable that the State Government which is duty bound to protect the rights of the people of the State, regardless of whether they are Assamese or non Assamese, has adopted an attitude which amounts to helping the chauvinists. Anti democratic and disruptive forces including the Congress(I), the RSS, the Anand Marg, etc, are also helping this process since it facilitates their nefarious game of disrupting the unity of democratic forces.

The P B appeals to all the democratic forces in Assam and outside to join together in defeating the disruptive game of the chauvinists, preserving peace and facilitate the conduct of free and fair poll in Assam in which the rights of all voters are safeguarded.

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Statement of P B issued on November 14 1979

P.B. Statement on Congress(I), Janata Manifestoes*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on December 2, 1979

The two former ruling parties, the Janata and the Congress(I), have come out with their respective election manifestoes

As is usual with all political parties of bourgeois landlords ruling classes, they make liberal promises to the people, particularly to the weaker sections of the society, including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, minorities, women as well as industrial and agricultural labourers, artisans, farmers, etc

Neither of them, however, makes the promise that, if they are voted to power, they would break with the policies which they pursued when they were in power—the Congress for thirty years and the Janata for two and a half—and which so isolated them from the people that they were thrown out of power

The Congress(I)'s call is significant. What they want is nothing other than "proceeding with our unfinished revolution"—a "revolution" which could not be finished because the people threw them out in the historical election of March 1977

Its manifesto does not bother to examine why, if all the claims made by them are true, the people threw them out in the election. They have not a word of regret regarding the sufferings of tens of thousands who were subjected to unspeakable torture and humiliation, hundreds being actually murdered, during the notorious Emergency regime. On the other hand, they call the

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Enquiry Commissions, which went into several charges of corruption and abuse of power of which they were accused, an act of "unabated persecution of Congressmen"

The much abused Commissions of Enquiry gave the former Prime Minister and her colleagues of the Congress(I) full opportunity to rebut the charges levelled against them and vindicate themselves. This they did not do obviously because they were aware of the fool proof nature of the evidence against them. The Commissions, however, found them guilty of many of the charges and recommended expeditious action. Saving themselves from the consequences of the prosecutions that are awaiting them is what they call "finishing the unfinished revolution"

While the President of the Congress(I) has, in several of her pronouncements, made casual references to the 'mistakes' committed during her regime and, for courtesy's sake "apologized" to the people for the same, the Polit Bureau calls attention to the fact that in the manifesto of the party, however there is not a word of remorse for the torture, humiliation, loss of property and other sufferings of tens of thousands. Detention without trial, Press censorship, unmitigated police terror—none of these is regretted. The notorious perpetrators and organisers of these crimes—the Sanjay Gandhis, the Bansi Lals and so on—are, on the other hand, back in positions of power in the Congress(I). It is against this background that their call for "proceeding with the unfinished revolution" has to be seen.

The Congress(I) calls for stability which, they claim, can be provided only by their party. They denounce the Janata Party for the "hotch potch". They also talk of the rapid disintegration of this hotch potch. It is, however, known that, in spite of the clear majorities obtained in successive elections, the Congress could not maintain the stability of its own Government. It was to avert the catastrophe that was overtaking it due to this growing instability that the Internal Emergency was declared. During the pendency of that Emergency, too, Chief Ministers were made and unmade at the sweet will and pleasure of the powers that be in the Congress(I). The Polit Bureau warns that restoration of power to this party, as is demanded in its manifesto, would mean the repetition of this sort of stability.

The Janata Party, too talks of stability which, according to them, can be provided only if they are voted to power again. They hark back to 1977 when the people of India elected them to power, "entrusting them with the task of restoring democracy and freedom" They, however, do not bother to examine why, within less than two and a half years, the whole edifice of the Janata Government and the Janata Party organisation crumbled.

The Janata leadership blames the collapse of their Government on what they call "unscrupulous elements" who, "guided by personal and factional ambitions", brought the Janata Government down. They admit that no less than thirty per cent of their elected MPs belong to this category of "unscrupulous elements". Any political party which is serious about itself would have considered this a serious development, turned the torch of self criticism into themselves and made amends for what happened. However, like the Congress(I) leaders, the Janata leaders are so power hungry that they want the people to forget the past once again to vote them to power.

The Polit Bureau notes that while both the Congress(I) and the Janata leaders are appealing to the electorate to vote them back to power, neither of them is confident of the outcome of the election. That is why both are indulging in unscrupulous manipulations. The very people who fulminate against defection are either getting others to defect to their own side or themselves defecting to some other party. At least in one instance, that of their collaboration in bringing into existence the Mohammed Koya Government in Kerala, the Congress(I) and the Janata jointly organised defections from wherever they could get somebody to defect.

It is no more a secret that intense manoeuvrings were resorted to by the Congress(I) leaders to get the leader of the Janata Party, Sri Jagjivan Ram, to defect to their side. The latter, in his turn, was not unwilling, provided the terms were acceptable to him. Although the Congress(I) effort in this direction has failed for the moment, this single incident will show the falsity of the claims made by the Congress(I) as well as the Janata Party—the Congress(I) claim that theirs is the only party and Mrs Gandhi

is the only leader who can save India, and the Janata claim that defection is the biggest single crime against which everybody has to fight

The two parties, each of which is fighting for power, would not shun any method if only it helps in attaining its objective. While ostensibly fighting against each other, they may also come together if that becomes necessary in their own selfish interests, as was seen in Haryana, in Bihar and now in Kerala. The interests of democracy and protecting the mass of the working people, therefore, demand that these two parties are deprived of the opportunity to come back to power.

The CPI(M), along with other Left and democratic forces, wants to tell the people that stability, democracy, secularism, defence of the interests of the weaker sections, etc., requires the defeat of the Congress(I) and the Janata. The Polit Bureau reiterates that this requires that while the Left and democratic parties, groups, and individuals get increased representation in the Seventh Lok Sabha, such parties as the Lok Dal, the Congress, the AIADMK, the Akalis, etc.—parties which, though suffering from serious class limitations, are committed to defeat the Congress(I) and the Janata—are enabled to get sufficient number of seats to form the Government after the elections.

On Centre-State Relations

Memorandum Submitted by The Left Front Government of West Bengal

The West Bengal Cabinet, at its meeting on December 1, 1977 adopted a memorandum, making a strong case for modifications in the Constitution to give it a truly federal character and create conditions for the survival of a multi party system

Stressing the need for a national debate on Centre State relations, the memorandum said, "The issue of Centre State relations, has assumed a new significance in the changed political context. Different parties are in office in different States and at the Centre. This is a welcome departure from the one party authoritarian rule of the Congress "

The West Bengal Cabinet felt the Centre should retain authority in national matters such as defence, foreign affairs, foreign trade, currency and communications, economic co ordination and inter State projects

Chief Minister Jyoti Basu sent copies of the memorandum to Central Ministers, Chief Ministers, Members of Parliament and various other organisations, urging a national debate on the issue of Centre State relations

In his letter, accompanying the memorandum, Jyoti Basu said, "I hope you will agree with us that the unity of our country has been subjected to considerable strain during the last few years. This, in our view, has been caused mostly by an overbearing and, if I may add, oppressive preoccupation on the part of those who were in authority at the Centre to concentrate all powers and responsibilities in their hands. The consequence was a deviation from democratic norms, aggravation of tension and distrust, and

denial of the rights of various economic and social and cultural groups. The excessive outlay on defence, the police and the Intelligence network was another negative, but inevitable, feature of this development. Since the autonomy of the States was deliberately sought to be suppressed, economic growth was stultified, for it was palpably impossible to conduct efficiently the affairs of the economy simply through fiat issued from New Delhi "

The Chief Minister added, "We would like our draft merely to form the basis of a wide ranging discussion at different levels such as between the Centre and the States, among the States, among members of Parliament and State Legislatures and among academic and scientific circles as well as mass organisations "

The following is the text of the memorandum

The question of Centre State relations is crucial to the preservation of the unity and integrity of India within the framework of its linguistic, cultural and other diversities. The several linguistic and cultural groups that inhabit the country were united before Independence in their common aspiration for freedom from colonial bondage. They are today united in their common aspiration to build a prosperous life for themselves as well as to develop fully national resources free from imperialist interference and according to their respective socio economic, linguistic and cultural needs. The struggle for realising these common aspirations makes it incumbent on the Governments at the Centre and in the States, the political parties and the people at large to recognise the need for unity in diversity.

Inroads Into State's Powers

The Constitution that emerged after Independence, though described as federal, was essentially unitary in character. It clothed the Centre with more powers at the expense of the autonomy of the States. That is why the "Concurrent" List has as many as 47 items. Since the adoption of the Constitution, the tendency had been to make greater inroads into the powers of States. This was facilitated by the fact that the same political party was in power at the Centre and in all the States, except for short durations and that, too, in only a few States

During the last two decades, while the demand has been growing for greater powers to the States so as to make States' autonomy real and effective, there have been persistent efforts to erode even the limited powers of the States and reduce the democratic functioning of the Governments there. The right of the people to manage their affairs even within the limited sphere allotted in the States List of the Constitution has been sought to be reduced to a farce. For this purpose all manners of pressures had been used, sometimes formally through the power of the Centre, sometimes indirectly by denying finances and other resources, etc. to non-Congress Governments and by applying pressure on the Chief Ministers of the Congress Party through the organisation and leadership. During the last ten years, the Centre's tentacles have further spread to the States even in the sphere of law and order, which is formally a State subject, through the creation of the Central Reserve Police, the Border Security Force, the Industrial Security Force, etc. By the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution, Education which was a State subject, was transferred to the Concurrent List. The process has now reached a stage when it threatens to reduce the States to the status of subordinate departments of the Centre under the aegis of the Central Home Ministry. The Emergency immensely accelerated the process; the actions taken in those twenty months sought to make it clear beyond doubt that the State Ministries and Legislatures faced the perpetual threat of being removed by hook or by crook, if they did not toe the line of the Centre.

In Today's Context

The issue of Centre-States relations has assumed a new significance in the changed political context. Different parties are in office in different States and at the Centre. This is a welcome departure from the one-party authoritarian rule of the Congress. It is a part of the democratic aspirations of the people that federal principles should be correctly understood and applied so that this multi-party democratic pattern may survive.

In a country like India, with such diversities in race, religion, language and culture, national integration can be achieved only

through conscious voluntary efforts. Devolution of powers may help ward off fissiparous tendencies instead of encouraging them. A strong and unified India can only be one in which the democratic aspirations and the distinctiveness of the people of the different States are respected and not treated with disdain. We are definitely for strong States, but on no account do we want a weak Centre. The concept of strong States is not necessarily in contradiction to that of a strong Centre, once their respective spheres of authority are clearly marked out. The Preamble to the Constitution should be amended to include the word 'federal' in the description of the Republic of India. Consequential changes should also be made replacing the word 'Union' by the expression 'Federation' in all places.

To protect States' autonomy, an amendment to Article 248 should be made to the effect that the Legislature of a State should have exclusive power to make any law with respect to any matter not enumerated in the Union or Concurrent List, as against the present provision which reserves this right to Parliament. In other words, the residual powers of the Federation should lie with the units and not with the Centre.

The States have to act in such a way while exercising their full rights in their own sphere that they do not transgress the spheres allotted to the Central Government; the latter, too, on its part should not interfere in the sphere of the States, both Legislative and Executive.

Article 249 giving power to Parliament to legislate on a subject in the State List under the plea of national interest should be deleted.

While enlarging the scope of the States' sphere, we must also try to preserve and strengthen the Union authority by subjects that could be carried out by the Union authority and not by any single State, such as Defence, Foreign Affairs including Foreign Trade, Currency and Communications and Economic Coordination. The role of the Centre should be one of coordination. In areas such as planning, fixing of prices, wages etc., the Centre may not only coordinate but also issue general directions.

In the matter of planning and economic coordination, however, the Centre will have to conform to the general guidelines laid down

by the National Development Council, in which the States will have representation along with the Centre. At the moment, neither the Council nor the Planning Commission is specifically referred to in the Constitution. This lacuna may be closed by introducing a separate Article, which should also state clearly that the composition of the Planning Commission will be determined by the National Development Council. Loans and grants for developmental purposes are now the prerogative of the Planning Commission. It is thus important that the States have some say in the manner of operation of the Commission. But nothing beyond foreign relations, defence, communications, currency and related matters should be the exclusive domain of the Centre. The latter should help the States develop in their own way, with more powers and resources at their command.

Industrial and power or irrigations schemes which concern more than one State have to be kept in the Union List so that there can be a common policy and final decision in regard to these multi-State projects will be enumerated by the Union Government, while the execution and implementation should be done through the State Governments.

In matters concerning industrial licensing, etc., major modification in the allocation of powers between the Centre and the States are called for. The Lists in the Seventh Schedule should be reformulated so that States may be given exclusive powers in respect of certain categories of industries.

The right of the Central Reserve Police or other police forces the Union Government may raise to operate in the States is to be withdrawn. The subject of law and order and the police should be fully in the State sphere, and the Centre should not interfere with its own specially created forces.

The Article regarding the Finance Commission and the distribution of revenues should be amended to provide for 75 per cent of the total revenues raised by the Centre from all sources for allocation to different States by the Finance Commission. This is necessary to end the mendicant status of the States.

In what proportion and on what principles this 75 per cent of the total realisation shall be divided between the States shall be decided by the Finance Commission.

It should not be the job of the Finance Commission to decide on the proportion of revenues to be distributed between the Centre and the States. Its task should be only to fix the proportion each State should get from the total financial realisation by the Centre, 75 per cent of which is to be allotted to the States. Article 280 clause (3), sub clause (a) should be amended so as to make it clear that it is the duty of the Commission to make recommendations to the President as to the allocation between the States of their respective shares of the proceeds and omit from this sub clause the words, "the distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of the taxes which are to be or may be divided between the Union and the States"

The States must also be accorded more powers for imposing taxes on their own and to determine the limits of public borrowing in their respective cases. The right of the Union Government to tax property and income of the States in certain cases as provided in Article 280, clauses 2 and 3 should be removed. Further, the right of the Union Ministry to put restrictions on trade and commerce and intervene within a State as provided in Article 307 should be deleted. To achieve these objectives, the Seventh Schedule enumerating Union, State and Concurrent Lists should be suitably amended.

Articles 356 and 357 which enable the President to dissolve a State Government or its Assembly or both should be deleted. In the case of a Constitutional breakdown in a State, provision must be made for the democratic step of holding election and installing a new Government as in the case of the Centre. Similarly Article 360, which empowers the President to interfere in a State administration on the ground of a threat to financial instability or credit of India should be deleted.

Articles 200 and 201 which empower the Governor to reserve Bills passed by the Assembly for President's assent should be done away with. The State Legislatures must be made supreme in the State sphere and no interference by the Centre in this sphere should be allowed on any ground.

In order to enforce the principle of equality of the federating units and to protect from further erosion States' autonomy, it is

suggested that elections to the Rajya Sabha also should be directly by the people at the same time as Lok Sabha elections. All States must have equal representation in the Rajya Sabha except those with a population of less than three million. Both Houses must have equal powers.

All India services like the IAS, the IPS, etc., whose officers are posted to the States but remain under the supervision and disciplinary control of the Central Government, must be abolished. There should be only Union Services and State Services and recruitment to them should be made respectively by the Union Government and the State Government concerned. Personnel of the Union Services should be under the disciplinary control of the Union Government and those of the State Services under the disciplinary control of the respective State Governments. The Central Government should have no jurisdiction over the personnel of the State Services.

Article 368 should be so amended as to ensure that no amendment of the Constitution is possible without the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present and voting in each House of Parliament.

Article 3 of the Constitution which gives powers to Parliament to change the area of a State unilaterally should be suitably amended so as to ensure that the name and area of a State cannot be changed by Parliament without specific consent for that by the State Legislature concerned. In the case of a conflict between two or more States in respect of territory, steps would be taken to settle the conflict in accordance with the provisions already made in the Constitution for settlement of other conflicts, (e.g., use of water resources for the same river flowing through a number of States) between the States.

Languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule should be allowed in the work of the Governments at the Centre and in the States at all levels. Any citizen of India will have the right to use his mother tongue in his dealings with any branch of the Government up to the highest stage. English should continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union along with Hindi as long as the people of the non-Hindi regions so desire. It may be necessary to further

amend the Eighth Schedule to include certain other languages such as Nepali

The special status of Kashmir within the Indian Union, as laid down in Article 370 of the Constitution, should be retained. The way this Article had been worked by the Congress Government at the Centre had raised grave doubts and suspicion among the people of the State. These must be removed now, particularly in view of the fact that the leaders of the State Government have underlined the Instrument of Accession to India.

A Great Victory

Editorial of "People's Democracy", January 8, 1978

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) hails the victory of the people of Tripura who have inflicted a crushing defeat on the forces of authoritarianism represented by the Congress and the forces of disruption inside the Janata Party in the State

The Polit Bureau warmly greets the people of Tripura for giving such a massive victory for our Party and the Left and democratic forces allied with it

This victory is a vindication of our Party's line of building popular unity against the forces of Congress reaction of our Party's unceasing efforts to isolate and defeat the forces of authoritarianism

In Tripura, the attack on parliamentary democracy began much before the Internal Emergency was formally clamped on the country. For the survival of the Congress Ministry, Legislators belonging to our Party were detained under the MISA when there was a threat of the Government's budget being voted out. During the Emergency, the people of Tripura were victims of all its rigours.

All this could not daunt the people, they stood steadfastly by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and struggled for the restoration of democracy.

In the interests of the defence of the people, the CPI(M) had joined two Coalitions in Tripura—first with the CFD group of the Janata Party and next with the Janata Party. The State leaders of the Janata Party, specially those in the Government, after solemnly agreeing to a 14 point programme, stood in the way of its implementation, even of those vital items for the restoration of democracy, release of political prisoners, withdrawal of

victimisation measures etc. Unfortunately, the central leadership of the Janata Party also did not intervene to correct this situation and the State leaders continued their disruptionist activities. As in West Bengal, in Tripura, too, the people have rejected those who stand in the way of building popular unity against the forces of authoritarianism.

They have also rejected the Right Communist collaborators of the Congress who supported the Emergency and helped the forces of dictatorship.

The massive victory of the people of Tripura rallied behind the United Left and Democratic forces headed by our Party constitutes a vital link in the country's fight for democracy, its expansion and the economic amelioration of the masses.

Our Party has always held that only the Left and Democratic forces can offer a real alternative in today's situation and the present victory in Tripura following the one in West Bengal immensely strengthens these forces throughout the country. It will help our Party to pursue with even more vigour its efforts to forge the unity of Left and Democratic forces which alone can secure abiding advance for the people.

The Polit Bureau is confident that with the fullest support of the people, our Party and the Left Front in Tripura will conscientiously shoulder their new responsibilities and move expeditiously to restore the democratic rights of the people and take steps to give whatever relief is possible to the long suffering people of the State.

End Ordinance Rule

Editorial of "People's Democracy", January 15, 1978

Since the lifting of the Emergency and the defeat of the authoritarian forces, the workers and employees have been asserting their democratic right to fight for better living conditions

None can deny that the inflation and rise in prices and the Emergency measures to freeze wages and the CDS—all combined to rob the workers and employees of their dues and enforce a lower living standard on them. Thousands among them were living below the poverty line and their misery was multiplied by the combined evils of the Emergency period

The end of Emergency and the installation of the Janata Government at the Centre and in several States saw no changes in the conditions of the people. The new Bonus Ordinance itself while it sanctioned bonus to sections of workers and employees, at the same time, denied it to others—State and Central Government employees, railway, post and telegraph and defence workers, banking and other employees. There was no effort either to sympathetically understand the plight of these sections, much less any honest effort to meet their demands

On the contrary all the infamous practices of the Emergency and pre Emergency period are being resurrected and the forces which brought about the rout of the Congress in the elections are shown the door by the new Governments

In Maharashtra nearly a million State Government employees and those of the local bodies are on strike for more than three weeks. This magnificent action embraces from the Secretariat

clerk to the sweeper and scavenger in the local bodies. Rarely has the country witnessed such unity and solidarity among State employees and such determination and loyalty for the common cause.

What is the response of the Congress Ministry of Maharashtra to this democratic action, this determination to defend the interests of the downtrodden sections?

The Chief Minister refused to negotiate with the strikers. He demanded unconditional surrender. The Janata Prime Minister also talked the same rude language peremptorily asking the employees to withdraw the strike. He stated that he would not entertain any memorandum of the employees unless they withdrew the strike.

Strengthened by this support the Maharashtra Chief Minister decided on tough measures against the strikers. On December 31, the Maharashtra Governor promulgated an Ordinance under which refusal to work in certain services such as milk supply, printing presses, conservancy, water supply, etc., has been declared illegal.

Since then round up of strikers in essential services has started and scores are being arrested. The Ministry is openly intimidating the strikers and attempting to break it with repression as during the Indira regime.

It must be noted that the Maharashtra Ministry does not owe allegiance to Indira Gandhi, but to the Chavan and Brahmananda Reddy group. It seems Indira or no Indira, the Congress tradition of crushing the struggles of the workers and employees must continue.

This Ordinance mentality, besides, exposes the Congress claim to defend the weaker sections, and especially the Harijans as a fraud. Among the strikers nearly 85 per cent are below or only a little above the poverty line. And they include thousands of conservancy workers, sweepers and other Harijans for whom the Congress professes profuse love. And the Congress Chief Minister plans to starve them into submission and send them to jail to break the strike.

But the resort to Ordinance is not the monopoly of the Congress only. Some of the newly elected Janata State Governments are utilising this tradition of the Indira Congress to suppress the State Government employees and other sections on strike.

The Bihar Ministry of Sri Karpoori Thakur refused negotiations and decided to starve its employees and workers of local bodies into submission. Its callous attitude prolonged the strikes for several weeks imposing agony and misery on the employees.

On January 7, it decided to ban Government servants from participating in strikes or joining demonstrations, processions, gheraos, dharnas or fasts to press their demands. Even the right to protest peacefully is now being denied to the employees.

This attack on the employees' democratic rights is to be enforced through the operation of Rule Eight of the Government Servants Conduct rules, which was introduced during the Emergency.

The Government has further decided not to withdraw any case instituted during an agitation.

Penalisation and banning of strikes were introduced on a wide scale during the Emergency, and the Bihar Ministry is now continuing the tradition.

Not to be outdone, the U P Janata Ministry has come out with a disgraceful and notorious Ordinance threatening to dismiss eighty thousand secondary teachers from their jobs. It provides for the termination of services of teachers who do not resume work by a specified date. It covers employees of private managements also.

Thousands of teachers, in the meantime, have been arrested and put in jail. There have been reports of lathi charge and ill treatment in jails. The Emergency scenario is being re-enacted in U P in its details.

None can suggest that the teachers form a part of the affluent section and enjoy a privileged position in Indian society. But the Janata Ministry of U P is adopting the same attitude towards them that the Congress did. Those who brought the party to power are now treated as opponents and repressed.

The Ordinance fever has seized the Central Government also. It was recently reported in the press that the Central Government proposed to promulgate an Ordinance to declare banking an "essential service", to ban strikes and agitations by the banking employees. This is of course a reaction to the mighty united protest of the bank employees against the denial of their just demands. To include banking under essential services will be total misuse of power in the tradition of Indira Gandhi.

It was thought that the promulgation of the Mini MISA Ordinance by the Madhya Pradesh Government was a solitary lapse, which was not likely to be repeated. It is now clear that rule by Ordinances attacking people's rights, especially striking workers and employees, is not to be an exception.

The pro capitalist pro landlord sections in the Janata Party are leading the organisation to oppose the masses, and liquidate the broad democratic support behind it. All this brings grist to the mill of the authoritarian forces who are lying in wait to capitalise on such reactionary policies.

The Janata Ministries must learn from the experience and practice of the West Bengal Left Front Government. It has firmly defended the interests of the masses and employees and refused to use repression against their struggles.

Freedom of mass actions, freedom of the trade union movement, liberty to conduct their agitations must be ensured to the masses and the employees and no Ministry should be allowed to transgress these rights. All Left and democratic forces, the entire trade union movement must unitedly protest against these policies and throw their full weight in support of the demands of the striking employees and workers. To protect these mass actions against repression is a vital part of the fight against authoritarianism.

The Janata Party Government at the Centre is committed to repeal the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act and is making a number of proposals to undo the mischief of the Act and expand democratic rights. At the same time, its Ministries attack the existing rights and grant protection to the vested interests. It will not be long before the masses begin to distrust the democratic

professions and promises of the party. The entire responsibility for undermining the solid front against the forces of dictatorship will lie on the shoulders of the Janata Party.

The democratic and radical elements in the party must raise their protest in time and fight this trend which favours the vested interests and attacks the masses. It is the same outlook that prefers private enterprise to public sector, rolling plan, reliance on big traders and makes a present of crores of rupees to private capital in the budget, that is responsible for this attack on the people. This trend has to be fought both inside the party and the Government so that electoral promises are kept and the fight against the forces of authoritarianism is not disrupted.

Autonomy And Unity

The move made by the Left Front Government of West Bengal for a national debate on the issue of greater powers and financial resources for the States has provoked Prime Minister Morarji Desai to make a categorical declaration that such a move will endanger the unity of the country. He has gone further and said that the Constitution is a well drafted document and does not require any amendment by way of revising the allocation of power and financial resources as between the Centre and the States.

Experience in all countries, including our own experience extending over a quarter of a century, has shown that, far from cementing national unity, centralisation of power would actually endanger it. What is required for real unity is involvement of the entire people in the process of decision making and of implementation of policies democratically worked out. Centralisation, worked out in country after country, and attempted in our own country by the Congress Government, would prevent such a wide involvement of the people in the democratic process and thus prevent the forging of that real national unity and intergration which alone will strengthen the nation.

Take the case of the Indian Union, Pakistan and Bangladesh into which undivided India has come to be divided.

One of these, i.e. Pakistan, has had its political administrative power so centralised that actual military rule was clamped on its people for some time. Did that maintain and strengthen the unity

of Pakistan? On the other hand, did it not raise such widespread national resistance among the people of Bangladesh that the worst military terror could not prevent the formation of a separate Bangladesh?

Even after the formation of the separate Bangladesh State, has Pakistan been able to maintain its unity? On the other hand, is it not even now facing the problem of the Baluchis, the Pakhtoons, the Sindhis and the Punjabis? Has not that problem led to such an acute political crisis in that country that after a temporary escape from military rule, it has once again relapsed into it?

Though not to the same extent and in the same manner as Pakistan, the Indian Union, too, is facing the problem of adjustment between the different linguistic cultural groups or nationalities

As the Fifth All India Conference of Social Sciences held in Calcutta from January 20 to 23 has pointed out, the unity of India is inseparable from the multinational character of the country. Every linguistic cultural group in the country has, in fact, developed into a nationality.

The recognition of the reality of different nationalities living in India, however, does not detract from the unity of India. India has a common heritage handed down over the centuries—a heritage which was further reinforced by the common struggle waged by all the different linguistic cultural groups or nationalities against the British rulers. It is this common heritage lasting over several centuries, together with the bond of fraternity forged in the common anti imperialist struggle, that makes for the unity of India.

But this should not blind any realistic politician, or students of Indian politics, to the reality that, as part of this common heritage and as a result of the common struggle for freedom and democracy, the various linguistic cultural groups have emerged as distinct nationalities with their own distinct languages and literature, arts and culture, in short the common national psychological make up. It was this that made the freedom movement write into its basic programme the formation of linguistic States.

This programme was, by and large, implemented with the States reorganisation of 1956, followed by the subsequent formation of the States of Maharashtra and Punjab. While a few problems of nationalities still remain unresolved even after the formation of linguistic States, and although the linguistically reorganised States do have several mutual problems to be sorted out, the fact remains that the attainment of independence, the break up of the Princely States and the rational reorganisation of States broadly on the linguistic principle, have led to the recognition of the multi national character of the country.

In this whole process of the formation of the linguistic States or what amounts to the recognition of the multi national character of India, none of the linguistic cultural groups—except the Kazhagams in Tamil Nadu and that, too for a time—voiced the demand for separation or secession. Even in Tamil Nadu, subsequent political developments have at least weakened the demand for separation. It is therefore contrary to the truth to say that the formation of linguistic States has led to the movement for separation or secession.

We are not unaware of the fact that Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Mizoram, etc., do not come under this category. But then each of them has its own separate complex problems. The emergence of separatist trends in these border States should not blind anybody to the reality that in all the other States including Tamil Nadu, the demand for autonomy has nothing to do with the demand for separation.

What they all have in mind, as has once again been emphasised by the Memorandum prepared by the Left Front Government of West Bengal and by the documents of the All India Conference of Social Sciences, is that, while vital activities of the State like defence, foreign affairs, etc., (which will be of crucial importance in maintaining the unity of India) should remain with the Centre, the rest of the governmental activities (which are of living importance for the people in their day to day life) should be left with the States. Such a radical reallocation of Ministries and departments as between the Centre and the States would necessarily require a corresponding reallocation of financial resources.

The question can legitimately be asked whether such a drastic reallocation of powers and financial resources would not create a situation in which there is no uniformity in educational standards, measures of labour and agrarian reform, etc., furthermore, would such a state of affairs be conducive to the planned development of the country which is important for all the nationalities living in India

The answer is that autonomy for the States does not preclude coordination of the activities of the State Governments on a voluntary basis. As a matter of fact, there exist today mechanisms like the National Development Council, the Central Board of Education, etc., through which the activities of the State Governments are coordinated, with the active participation of the Union Government. Greater powers for the States as demanded now does not mean that these coordinating bodies will be wound up. They, on the other hand, will be continued on more rational lines.

The West Bengal Memorandum, for instance, proposes the reorganisation of the National Development Council which will enable the States to play a more active role in the formulation of the national plan. The reorganisation would, of course, mean the reduction of the statutory powers exercised by the Union Ministries and the Planning Commission but would strengthen the process of all India planning in which the States will be more directly involved.

Similar proposals for reorganisation of existing coordinating bodies, or the formation of new coordinating bodies, can be considered and adopted. What is important is that these coordinating bodies should function on the basis of democratic discussion among the representatives of all the States and of the Centre rather than the Centre's decision being forced upon the States as is the practice now.

Indian unity in the present Indian context, i.e., the context of the various distinct nationalities with their distinct languages and culture having had their own (linguistic) States, every nationality organised in its own linguistic State requires cooperation of every other nationality. The joint efforts of all the nationalities alone

will enable the Indian people to undertake the tasks of nation building and bring our country at par with all modern countries with such a rapid development of its resources with equitable distribution of the fruits of development

It is regrettable that the Prime Minister has closed the door for a national debate on the issue. The very logic of the situation, however, has opened the debate, thanks to the initiative taken by the Left Front Government of West Bengal

Centre-State Relations: Historical Background and Present-Day Realities*

Speech of P. Ramamurti delivered in the Rajya Sabha on February 23, 1978

Comrade P Ramamurti, participating in the debate in the Rajya Sabha on the President's Address on February 23, 1978 devoted his speech exclusively to the question of Centre State relations Earlier he protested vehemently against the arrests of Iranian and Palestinian students in New Delhi

Comrade Ramamurti said

The Prime Minister does not want to have a national debate on Centre State relations But whether the Prime Minister wants it or not, a national debate is on And I am glad to say that even the President of this country has joined that national debate In the last interview that he gave to *Link* of January 25 he stated his own experience as a Chief Minister, how even for every small thing he had to come here and discuss with an official, a Deputy Secretary, in order to get that thing done If this has been the experience of the President of India twenty years ago one can imagine what the position today is

I do not want to go into the details of the working of the various State Governments and the Central Government

I would like to take the Constitution and point out that as far as this Constitution is concerned, it is not a question of working it in a flexible manner The Constitutional safeguards have got to be built in, in order to see that the States function within their sphere without any let or hindrance by the Central Government

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Rajya Sabha is the Upper House of Indian Parliament

Replica of 1935 Act

I would like to point out that as far as our Constitution is concerned, section by section or article by article, it is the replica of the Government of India Act, 1935. And that was an Act which the national movement rejected *in toto*.

In 1935, for example, in the then Central Legislative Council, the Congress Party, together with the Muslim League, jointly passed a resolution which stated among other things

"As for the scheme of Provincial autonomy, this House is of the opinion that it is most unsatisfactory and disappointing inasmuch as it includes various objectionable features, particularly, the establishment of second chambers, extraordinary and special powers of the Governors which render the real control of the Executive and Legislature ineffective "

With reference to the Government of India Act of 1935, I can quote chapter and verse from the speeches of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Acharya Kripalani and Maulana Azad who, after that, in successive sessions of the Congress spoke on this subject. I was then part of the Congress and I was also fighting against the imposition of the Government of India Act of 1935.

And the main ground on which we rejected the scheme of Provincial autonomy of that 1935 Act was that the Provincial autonomy that was supposed to have been enshrined therein was farcical for the simple reason that whereas the responsibilities of the provinces were very great and all the nation building work and activities were under the charge of the Provincial Governments, the Provincial Governments did not have the financial resources to discharge the responsibilities and what is more, the power of the Viceroy to interfere in the power of the so called federal structure which was at that time contemplated was such that the so called Provincial autonomy was rendered meaningless and it was an absolute farce. This was the very ground on which we rejected the Government of India Act of 1935.

Position Today

And today, what is the position in the present Constitution of India? I would like to point out that after the Motilal Nehru Committee was appointed in the year 1927 by the Congress Party

to frame a Constitution for India, of which the late Sri Jawaharlal Nehru was the General Secretary, it had recommended a Constitution for India which recognised that the linguistic groups of this country were distinct groups, I won't use the word 'nationality' because it jars on the ears of somebody

Solemn Pledge

But the national movement itself had recognised the linguistic groups as distinct groups and it had stated that in free India, Provinces created by the British Government must be broken into linguistic Provinces and it had recommended a Constitution with the widest autonomy for these Provinces

I would also like to point out that the August 8, 1942, Resolution, the "Quit India" Resolution as it came to be known, which was passed at the stroke of midnight, when I was present as a member of the All India Congress Committee, in its operative part, authorised Mahatma Gandhi to start a movement. It demanded that the Government of Britain appoint a Provisional Government in India, consisting of all political groups in order to carry on the war effort. In that resolution, the AICC said that the Provisional Government will among other things "evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a Constitution for the Government of India". Mark these words, this is the most important point

"The Constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units and with residuary powers vesting with the units"

This solemn undertaking was given by the Congress in 1942, on August 8, on the eve of starting what was called the 'Quit India Movement'. Now here is a Constitution which goes completely against the solemn undertaking and which gives it a complete go by. All residuary powers are vested with the Central Government as per the last item in the First List of the Seventh Schedule. And still if we say that the undertaking given solemnly to the people by the national movement in the struggle against imperialism must be honoured by free India, we are called anti nationals, that we are for separation

If we are for separation, I must point out, then all those people who participated in that AICC meeting in passing this resolution almost unanimously, including Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad who presided over that session, all these people were separatists. It is because they knew that in a country with this multi-lingual character, with distinct multi-lingual groups, unless a federal structure is evolved with the widest autonomy for the federating States, the unity of this country cannot be maintained, that solemn undertaking was given.

We Fought Separatists

The unity of this country was forged during the struggle against imperialism, against a common enemy. India was never a politically united country throughout its history and for the first time political unity was evolved in this country in the struggle against British imperialism. And if that structure, if that unity, has got to be cemented, it is not going to be done by any number of National Integration Committees, but it can only be cemented on the basis of the struggle of the common people, the downtrodden people, the working class, the peasantry and other exploited people against exploitation. Therefore, our Party is interested much more than anybody else in fighting against divisive forces. In this connection I may point out that when the DMK in Madras was fighting for a separate Dravida Nadu, it was our Party that carried on a vigorous struggle against that ideology. Even Mr C. Subramaniam who was then the Leader of the House, had to quote from my writings to counter it. Therefore, we yield to none in maintaining, preserving and cementing the unity of this country. All that I say is that in order to cement that unity, the federating States must have enough powers to carry on their responsibilities which they are charged with.

Powers of States

Now, I want to point out that the 1935 Constitution in its Seventh Schedule—unfortunately, it so happens that the same Seventh Schedule also is the Seventh Schedule here—defines the powers

of various States and the Centre as also what is called the Concurrent List. The 1935 Government of India Act also contains the same lists—the Central List, the State List and the Concurrent List. And if you take the subjects, you will find the same thing. You would not find anything different. The only thing is that the Concurrent List contains 36 items in the Government of India Act, 1935. The present Constitution has increased the number of items from 36 to 47. Beyond that there is absolutely no difference whatsoever. What are the provisions? You will kindly bear with me, this is a very important subject on which I am speaking. What were the responsibilities of the States?

Public order, prisons, local Government, public health, relief to the disabled and unemployed, communications, that is, roads, bridges, roadways, inland waterways, agriculture in all its aspects, development of agriculture in all its aspects, water supply, including irrigation canals, drainage, land reforms, fisheries, money lending, agricultural indebtedness, industries, theatres, dramatic performances—everything. The present Constitution has also listed the same items in the State List of the Seventh Schedule.

There are the vital functions which the State has got to fulfil. What are the resources in order to do that? The resources are the same as have been defined in the 1935 Government of India Act.

Sources of Finance

These are land revenue, agricultural income tax, estate duty on agricultural land, excise duties on all alcoholic liquors—with prohibition that source will also go—sales tax and professional tax. These are the only resources which the State has got. Actually, land revenue and sales tax are the only two items and the States are charged with the responsibility of doing welfare activities for the people in respect of all their vital needs.

It is precisely for this reason that the Congress Party as well as the national movement rejected the 1935 Act. They rejected it because it wanted to divert the attention of the people from the struggle against the British Government to the Ministries that may have been formed under the 1935 Act. That was why there was a furious debate whether to accept office in the Provinces or not.

I must say that the same provisions in the present Constitution is meant to divert the attention of the people from the struggle against the exploitation of the all powerful Centre dominated by Big Business to the State Ministries, who cannot perform any of these functions. The same policy of divide and rule has been adopted by this Constitution. That is the gravamen of my charge.

Political Pressures

Apart from these resources, the other source of income for the States is the divisible pool of the income tax collected by the Centre. The whole of the income tax that is raised by the Government of India can be divided among the States on the basis of the formula recommended by the Finance Commission. Beyond that, there are some grants in aid. For the grants in aid, the States have got to take the begging bowl to the Central Government and it depends on the sweet will and pleasure of the Central Government. All sorts of political pressures can operate.

I know that in 1970 when Smt. Indira Gandhi was in need of the help of the DMK for the elections in 1971, she visited Madras, and immediately sanctioned 20 crores of rupees for drought relief. It is political pressure. Therefore, the States have got to depend upon the sweet will and pleasure of the Central Government. Political pressure and political considerations operate on the Central Government and nobody can say that the Central Government will be free from these pressure groups. Therefore, the States have got to come with begging bowls.

Dependence on Centre

Even with regard to income tax the 1935 Act says that corporation tax will not form part of income tax. The present Constitution also says that corporation tax is not income tax. Then there is also another proviso. In order to circumvent this provision, the 1935 Act says that if the Government of India imposes a surcharge on the income tax—it is increased income tax but they call it surcharge—then that surcharge will not form part of the divisible pool. The same thing is repeated in the Constitution. Therefore, I want to point out that as far as the financial resources are concerned, they have got to depend upon the sweet will and pleasure of the Central Government.

Expanding sources of revenue, such as customs duty, i.e., export and import duties, and excise duties are the preserve of the Central Government. In 1950 excise duties amounted to only Rs. 67 crores, today it is Rs. 1900 crores. Customs revenue has also increased.

Again under one Article, the States are empowered to raise loans against their revenues. But sub-clause 3 of the same Article says that if any part of the loan of the State from the Centre remains unpaid, such loans can be raised only with the permission of the President. Is not the first provision a farce? Which is the State that is not indebted to the Centre? Which State can be free from loans from the Centre with such meagre resources? Unless this financial lacuna, this financial imbalance, is removed, how can the States fulfil those functions? This is one aspect of the question that I want to point out.

Encroachment on Powers

Another thing that I want to point out is this. What is the position even with regard to the functions which are within the competence of the State Government as per the State List? The position is that the Governor—under Article 200 and Article 201—can reserve any Bill passed by the State Legislature even with regard to those subjects which are listed as State subjects for the assent of the President of India, that is the Government of India. What has happened in practice for the last so many years?

Every land reform measure is entirely the exclusive preserve of the State according to List II. But then what happens? Every proposed land reform Bill before it is placed before the Assembly has got to be sent to the Central Government and its approval got with regard to those provisions. And who are the people to decide? Even the Chief Minister of a State cannot discuss with the Prime Minister because the Prime Minister is busy and all these people have no time, they go to a Deputy Secretary who in the ultimate analysis has got to decide and he puts up a note.

Therefore, even with regard to those subjects on which the State is entirely competent according to the Constitution to enact laws, even with regard to those subjects, it is always sent to the Central Government. Either before the enactment you have got to get the

permission of the Central Government, otherwise after the enactment, the Governor always sends it to the Central Government for its assent. The crux of the matter is that this issue is now a question of democracy versus bureaucracy. Therefore, where is State autonomy?

Centre's Axe

Under these provisions, if the Central Government happens to be of a different character and the State Government happens to be more progressive than the Central Government and it passes a legislation with regard to land reforms which the Central Government does not like, which the party in power at the Centre does not like, then in that case down comes the axe saying, "We are not giving you the assent unless you change this and unless you change that." Today the position exists not only with regard to land reforms, but with regard to almost all Bills of the State Government. The States have been reduced to a position of municipalities.

What Rajaji Said in 1952

In 1952, when Mr. Rajagopalachari was the Chief Minister. I was the leader of the Opposition in the Madras Assembly—when so many demands were made on him by the members of his own party, he said, "*What is the use of your making all these demands? After all, what is a State under the Constitution? It is a glorified municipality*" This is what he said in the Assembly. And I said

"Well Mr. Rajagopalachari, you have now agreed to my position. We have been saying that the State is a glorified municipality. But then why not you join me and our Party in fighting the Central Government for a revision of the Constitution?"

Mr. Rajagopalachari, in his reply stated,

"Mr. Ramamurti wants me to fight the Centre. Why should I fight the Centre? After all, they are my friends. When I can get the things changed by gentle persuasion, why should I enter into a fight?"

Glorified Panchayats

This is what Mr Rajagopalachari said. It is there in the records of the Madras Assembly proceedings. After all his persuasion what has happened is that the powers of the Centre have been more and more increased, amendment after amendment has been made to the Constitution as it emerged in 1951, and more and more powers have been taken by the Centre so much so today the States have been reduced to—I do not know what to call it and I cannot call it now a glorified municipality, at that time he called it so—and I would call it a glorified panchayat. The States today have been reduced to the position of glorified panchayats.

Situation is Different

And today if voices are raised that there must be a national debate on this question, the States cannot be reduced to the position of a glorified panchayat, what is wrong about it? It was all right at that time when one party ruled the Centre and in all the States, it was all a family affair and a circular from the Central Government was honoured by all those people. Those days are gone now. It is not going to be possible now. Mr Sanjiva Reddy has said, the President of India has said, that today different parties have come to power in different States. They have got their policies.

We have got our policies. In West Bengal, for example, we are committed to carrying out certain policies. I may say that four months back, the West Bengal Legislature passed a resolution defining the qualifications for resumption of land for self cultivation. It defined what is meant by self cultivation. It said that it can only be resumed if the land lord actually contributes personal, physical labour by himself or by members of his family and if he resides in the village for a certain number of days. This only means self cultivation. It is still awaiting the assent of the President, i.e., the Government of India. I know the Janata Party may not like that. And because the Central Government does not want that, we are not able to meet the commitment that we have made to the people of West Bengal even though this is a subject which falls completely within the competence of the State Legislature.

So, how can things go on like this. If things go on like this, then naturally people in different States will begin to say well, to hell with this. The divisive forces will begin to rear their head again. It is because we are extremely anxious to see that such divisive forces do not raise their heads again, that we are anxious to see that this question is debated and properly debated and is settled once and for all.

Just one more point. The other day I saw a newspaper report. I do not know if it is correct. Mr. Morarji, our Prime Minister, is reported to have said it and it has appeared only in the Hindustan Standard. I have not seen it in any other paper. I do not know if it is true. It says "The CPI(M) had done certain things in West Bengal that it should not have, Mr. Morarji Desai said in an exclusive interview while boarding the special Air Force Plane Rajhansa. He, however, refused to elaborate."

This can be contradicted. I will be happy if this statement is contradicted. I want to tell you that I did not expect that a person of the standing of our Prime Minister would make such a statement.

If you have got any specific charges against the West Bengal Government, bring it out openly, say it openly. Tell the Chief Minister of West Bengal that it is here that you have gone wrong. He might not have done something which is according to your policy. We are not running the West Bengal Government to carry out the policy of the Janata Government. We are not elected by the Janata Party. As a matter of fact, the Janata Party was rejected by the people of West Bengal and we were elected there on the basis of the promises that we have made and so long as we are able to carry out the promises that we have made and within the competence of the State Legislature, the Central Government has no business whatsoever to interfere with that.

If that Government transgresses the provisions of the Constitution, then there is the Supreme Court to decide that such and such a law is beyond the competence of the State Government and therefore the Supreme Court can strike it down. But what business has the Central Government got to interfere so long as we stick to this thing. We are saying that this is not conducive to the improvement of Centre State relations.

If Comrade Jyoti Basu has done something, have a discussion with him, point out to him that you have done this wrong. You first get yourself convinced about it. You might get some police reports. Are we to depend on police reports? Are the police to decide the conduct of elected representatives? Therefore this is not the way in which this question can be decided.

Therefore, I say that this whole problem, has now attained tremendous importance. I want to tell you that even the other Chief Ministers, those people who have been Chief Ministers, know where exactly the shoe pinches. Today, for example, Sri Sanjiva Reddy has come out with the position. And I know, as a matter of fact, Mr. Babubhai Patel, who happens to be a Chief Minister belonging to the Janata Party itself, has agreed to attend a conference to be held in Chandigarh because he also feels aggrieved.

I know you might impose party discipline and prevent him from attending it but nonetheless this feeling is growing in this country and every Chief Minister of this country is feeling this state of helplessness when he has got to take the begging bowl. Is this position to continue?

If you want to cement the unity that has been achieved during the struggle for independence against British imperialism, now a new common bond must be evolved and a new common bond can only be evolved on the basis of the States' feeling that they are equal partners in developing the country and that they are not just subordinates or servants of the Central Government, and for that proper provisions must be made in this Constitution. Therefore, to say that a national debate cannot take place is burking the question.

Whether Mr. Morarji Desai wants it or not, whether the Janata Party wants it or not, there will be a national debate on this question. Nobody can stop the people of this country speaking on this issue and I know that the truth will prevail because we are interested in the unity of this country. It is the exploiting forces that want to divide the working class. They help the Shiv Sena and this thing and that thing, which often times receive the support of the ruling party in various places.

Therefore, in the interests of unity for which we have fought, I appeal to the Government of India to give up this thinking and have an open mind. Let not the Prime Minister say that he will talk with Mr Jyoti Basu. What is the use of talking to Mr Jyoti Basu when it is a question concerning the entire people of this country? Therefore, there must be a national debate on this question of Constitution and we must see how far it has worked successfully during the last thirty years. This is a question that has got to be seriously debated on a nationwide basis, with full freedom to all the State Ministers who should not be fettered by mandates from their parties.

Just one last point I want to mention that we who ask for this are carrying on the heritage of the national movement. We want the national movement's promises to the people to be fulfilled, and those who today refuse to do that, are going against the heritage of the national movement, betraying that heritage.

Orissa State Party Conference of CPI(M)*

The Orissa State Conference of the CPI(M) which was held from February 14 to 16 in the Berhampur town of Ganjam district concluded with big processions and a mass rally of nearly ten thousand people which was addressed by Comrades Promode Dasgupta, Sivaji Patnaik and Banamali Das. This mobilisation in a district where the Party is weak and the Right C P controls the traditional bases of the united Party has surprised many and demonstrated the growing strength of the CPI(M).

The conference was inaugurated by Comrade Promode Dasgupta, member of the Polit Bureau of the Party, after flag hoisting and homage to departed leaders and martyrs. Comrade Dasgupta in his speech explained at length the deep crisis of the bourgeois landlord system which was manifested through the declaration of the Emergency, collapse of almost every norm of bourgeois society, the sharpest ever conflict between the bourgeois landlord parties and further division and disintegration of the Congress. In this connection it is to be noted, he said, that both Indira Gandhi and the Opposition bourgeois parties under JP's leadership did not hesitate to solve the crisis violating the constitutional and parliamentary norms by which they had been swearing.

The CPI(M) in its Ninth Congress in 1972 had warned about the danger to parliamentary democracy and called for a united mobilisation to resist the drive to one party dictatorship and had advanced the slogan of Left and democratic unity. But the sharp contradiction between the bourgeois landlord parties was not properly emphasised, thereby giving scope for an understanding

that countrywide danger to parliamentary democracy would arise only when bourgeois rule was challenged by the party of the working class

However, if the crisis that has enveloped the bourgeois landlord system is to be overcome the policies adopted by the Congress and Janata Government will have to be changed. Hence arises the necessity to develop and unite the Left forces in the country while carrying on the effort to build up a common platform against the forces of authoritarianism, he said. In the changed situation, the scope for such an onward march is more than ever before, provided proper initiative and organisation are there.

Comrade Sivaji Patnaik, Secretary of the State Committee, placed the report of the Party during the last six years. In introducing the report he said, the Party in the State has developed as a party which organises mass movements on the question of food, prices, land, employment, wages, social and educational reforms and for democratic rights. Because of these movements and the changed situation that has arisen after the March elections and installation of Left Front Governments in West Bengal and Tripura, the prestige and influence of the Party have gone up and people in growing numbers are looking to it for solving their problems.

He said, the Janata Government in Orissa is denying the workers and employees their dues in the name of better deal for the peasants and rural areas, while on the other hand, it has ranged itself against land reforms and refused to do anything when the agricultural labourers and poor peasants were starving in the lean months of 1977. Workers, employees, students and youth are increasingly getting dissatisfied with the Janata Government. Factional quarrels have developed inside the Janata Party in a big way. In such a period the Party has to give a definite direction to the entire situation. For this the Party has to develop itself at a faster pace.

Although the membership of the Party has gone up by 50 per cent after 1972 and this year it will be doubled definitely, and the circulation of the Party's weekly has increased two and a half

times, and areas of trade union, kisan and student work have expanded, a wide gap remains between the organised strength of the Party and its influence, leave apart the expectations of the people. In the coming days, leadership will have to be built at every level of the Party so that it can give shape to the expectations of the people.

The report has stressed the need to enhance the independent mobilising capacity of the Party and to adopt a proper approach and take timely initiative in order to bring about a wide mobilisation of broad forces against authoritarianism and to develop and unite the Left and democratic forces in the State.

The report was adopted with minor changes after thirtysix out of the 105 delegates from nine districts took part in the discussion on it. The need to expand the Party and to strengthen it in all spheres was stressed by the participants.

Resolutions on democratic rights, Centre State relations, land reforms, unemployment and problems faced by the workers were adopted by the conference. In another resolution, tasks have been charted out to strengthen and expand the mass organisations, increase the circulation of Party journals, to increase the collection of Party fund and to educate and train Party members and new entrants to the Party.

The conference elected a 15 member State Committee and six delegates to the Party Congress. The State Committee has re-elected Comrade Sivaji Patnaik as its Secretary and formed a Secretariat with Comrades Banamali Das, Ajeya Raut, Janardan Pati and Sivaji Patnaik.

Jullundur and Bhatinda

Editorial of "People's Democracy", April 16, 1978

The Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) was held from April 2 to 8, 1978. It reviewed the development of the six years that have elapsed since the Ninth Congress and the policies pursued by the Party, in order to implement its political tactical line of building the unity of Left and democratic forces in the struggle against authoritarianism which in its incipient form had appeared even before the Ninth Congress. On the basis of such a review, it worked out the political tactical line for the coming years.

This coincided with the Eleventh Congress of the Right CP held at Bhatinda. The last Congress of that party was held three years ago, i.e., just before the imposition of the Emergency on the country. The Congress had to review the role played by the Party on the eve of and during the Emergency. It came to the conclusion that some serious mistakes were committed. On the basis of the review of the past, it worked out the tactical line for the immediate future.

The two Congresses were looked up to with eagerness not only by the members and followers of the two parties but the entire democratic movement in the country. Hopes were expressed by people from all walks of life that ways and means would be found to overcome the division that has been persisting in the Left and democratic movement in general and within the Communist movement in particular. Never since the 1964 split of the Communist Party was the urge for unity so universal as on the eve of and during the week when the holding of the two Party Congresses coincided.

This would not be surprising if seen against the background of the failure of the two major political parties in the country—the Congress and the Janata—to provide a viable economic and political programme on the basis of which the most burning problems facing the country could be resolved

The Congress had shown through its thirty years' rule that, far from solving the living problems of the nation, it could only accentuate them. Having given repeated shocks to the leaders of the ruling party in successive elections but permitting it to be at the helm of affairs again, the electorate found that it is futile to give the Congress another chance to rule the country. For the first time in the history of free India, therefore, that party had to go into the opposition. This, however, was not the end but was followed by the internal convulsions within the party leading in the end to its total split.

The Janata which replaced the Congress as the ruling party at the Centre has, in the last one year of its rule, shown that it is no better than the Congress except in one respect: it restored the civil liberties and democratic rights of the people which the Congress had completely suppressed. Even in this respect, however, the Janata showed, during the last few months, that it cannot be completely depended upon but requires enormous pressure from inside and outside its ranks to honour its commitments to the people.

The people naturally began to search for ways and means of ending the impasse created by the collapse of the Congress rule with no possibility of some other party taking its place. A third alternative consisting of all the Left and democratic forces in the country came to be looked upon as the only way to resolve the crisis facing the country because of the two major political parties.

This happens to be the core of the conclusion arrived at by the Right C P and the CPI(M) to indicate the direction in which the country has to go forward. Both use the term "unity of Left and democratic forces" to indicate the path of advance. The impression is thus created that the two parties are coming closer and that only some petty differences prevent them from acting

jointly in defence of the interests of the common people and ultimately to end the chapter of division among the Left and democratic forces. Reality, however, is different although using the same term, the two parties are having different ideas of what the term actually means.

The CPI(M) looks upon the unity of Left and democratic forces which is to be forged as the logical continuation of (a) the great class battles symbolised by the most historic of them, the all India railway strike of 1974, and (b) the united struggle of all the anti authoritarian forces which culminated to the ouster of the Congress from central power in March 1977. It looks upon the Congress party headed by the former Prime Minister as a by no means down and out political force but as a political force still capable of once again challenging the democratic forces and bringing about authoritarian rule in the country. It will, in its opinion, be suicidal for the anti authoritarian forces to be complacent and think that authoritarianism has once and for all been defeated and that democracy is safe.

The Right C P, on the other hand, does not hide its unhappiness that the Janata Party has taken the place of the Congress as the ruling party at the Centre. The coming to power of that party is, according to the Right C P, a retreat of the country from the "progressive" policies pursued by the previous Congress Government. The unity or united action proposed by that party therefore is *unity against the Janata*.

It may be noted in this connection that a passage in the self critical review finally adopted by the Bhatinda Congress unanimously holds that on the eve of the imposition of the Emergency, there was a threat to the nation from the Right reactionary forces. Even those participants in the Bhatinda Congress who adopted a position to the extreme Left of the National Council leadership agreed that the danger of an immediate take over by the Rightist forces was real. Their only criticism was—and this was accepted by the Congress—that this threat should have been met by political means, rather than the administrative measures adopted by the former Prime Minister.

It was logical to draw from this assessment of the past to the present assessment that the assumption of power by the

Janata Party at the Centre was a Rightist take over. It is, therefore, not surprising that they should look upon the unity of Left and democratic forces as a weapon of political struggle against the Janata Party and its Government.

The CPI(M) has repeatedly made it clear that it is basically opposed to the socio-economic policies of the Janata Government which are calculated to serve the interests of the bourgeois landlord ruling classes. It would, therefore, be prepared to forge unity in action with any political party or organisation which is opposed to these class policies.

At the same time, the Party holds that the struggle against authoritarianism and for restoration of democracy (in which it joined hands with the Janata Party and other Right Opposition parties) was an essential element in the process of uniting the working people for democracy. So long as the Janata Party and its Government continue to carry forward the struggle for completing the process of restoring democracy, the Left and democratic forces have, therefore, to continue their friendship and cooperation with the Janata Party and Government.

The gulf that separates the Right CP and the CPI(M) concepts of Left and democratic unity is thus wide. There is, therefore, no question of immediate political unity between the two parties. The process of self-criticism through which the Right CP has of late been going and which completed a stage at Bhatinda however, makes unity in action—both at the level of mass organisations as well as at Party level—far more practicable than ever before.

It is to be hoped that the central trade unions led by the two parties—the CITU and the AITUC—as well as the organisations of peasants, agricultural labourers, students, youth, women, etc., will increasingly come together and unite with other organisations led by other parties to develop joint struggles.

So is it to be hoped that the two parties themselves act together, along with other Left and democratic forces including those within the Janata and Congress parties, on such political issues as the defence of civil liberties wherever and by whomsoever they are attacked, resistance to the increasing penetration of imperialism in our economic, political and cultural life, etc.

There is, however, one necessary precondition for all such forms of unity in action they should not have the Janata Party and Government as the target of attack as the Right C P leaders are likely to make them

Along with developing various forms of unity in action, of course, the CPI(M) would carry on without let up the principled ideological political criticism of the policies of collaboration which the Right C P has been pursuing for years—policies which landed them in the end to that open support to authoritarianism which has now been admitted to have been a mistake

The Party will point out to the leaders and ranks of the Right C P that the mistakes admitted by them now are not accidental but arise out of the departure from the class approach to political problems obligatory for all Marxist Leninists It may be noted that some of the critics from the Left within the Right C P itself have pointed out that in arriving at the political tactical line of "Congress Communist unity", their leaders made an incorrect assessment of the class character of the Congress leadership, and overestimated the danger of Right reaction

We, therefore, hope that the self criticism made at Bhatinda would enable the leaders and ranks of the Right C P to carry the process forward and come back to the mainstream of class politics

Let us make it clear that the CPI(M) for its part would welcome criticism of its policies from anybody including the Right C P The history of India's Communist movement before and after the 1964 split shows that there is need for criticism and self criticism of the policies pursued by all sections within the movement It is idle to dream of reforging the unity of the Indian Communist movement without such a process of criticism and correction

The Minority Commission

Editorial of "People's Democracy", June 18, 1978

Within months of its appointment, the Minorities Commission appointed by the Union Government with Mino Masani as Chairman ceased to function, the Chairman himself resigned. Another member, Professor John, openly expressed his disagreement with the Government though not endorsing Masani's views on everything.

The main complaint on the basis of which Masani tendered his resignation appears to be that the Government did not accord the Commission the status which it should have if it is to discharge its responsibilities. One instance cited was that the Aligarh Muslim University Amending Bill was prepared by the Central Cabinet without taking the Commission into confidence and seeking its advice.

It was suggested that to avoid the repetition of any such actions on the part of the Government, the Commission should be given a statutory position with its powers and functions strictly defined and with the proviso that the Executive should not interfere with the working of the Commission.

It is not clear whether Professor John agrees with these views and recommendations of Masani. It is, however, obvious that he, too, has certain reservations on the manner in which the Government has been dealing with the Commission.

In the absence of information regarding the views of Professor John, or the stand taken by the Government on the issues raised by Masani, it is not possible for us to comment on them. Nor is it necessary for the present because the issues raised by the appointment and the failure of the Commission are not confined

to those raised and the recommendations made by Masani. The question in fact is the attitude adopted by the Janata Party and its Government to the problem of minorities.

Looked at from a purely formal point of view, all non Hindus are religious minorities in India. The Minorities Commission has to deal with the difficulties faced by all the minorities without any distinction. It was therefore quite logical for the Government to have appointed the Commission with a Parsi as Chairman and a Christian and a Muslim each as members.

The question of minorities in India, however, cannot be looked at from such a purely formal point of view. The problem has a past which gives a distinct character to the issue under discussion. It will, therefore, be totally unrealistic for anybody to divorce the problem from the past.

The Hindu Muslim riots which preceded, coincided with and followed the partition of India, give the problem of religious minorities in India its concrete character. While in the pre Independence decades and during the days of partition all over undivided India, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs had all played their respective roles in attacking one another and in organising riots, the riots that broke out during the last thirty years within the borders of the Indian Union have mostly been anti Muslim riots. There have been organisations and groups of Hindu fanaticism which incited and organised these riots. These organisations and groups have also given a theoretical ideological basis for the anti Muslim riots and other forms of attack on the Muslims. Slogans like "Hindu Rashtra" and "nationalising Muslims" were raised and have gripped the minds of large numbers of young Hindus. It was a group of young Hindu fanatics who adopted this theoretical ideological outlook that assassinated Mahatma Gandhi within less than half a year of Indian Independence and partition.

This cannot be dismissed as just an unfortunate past. It in fact is part of the present. For, the most organised section of Hindu chauvinists—the RSS—is as active today as it ever has been. Its leaders have rejected the demand made by the leaders of the Janata Party that the RSS should be wound up and made part of

the youth organisation working under the political guidance of the Janata Party. They have also rejected the advice given by such national leaders as Jaya Prakash Narayan that, as an indication of a change of their outlook, the RSS leaders should admit non Hindus into its fold. The ideology of Hindu Rashtra is still very much in the thinking and activities of the RSS leaders.

It is well known that the Jana Sangh, the strongest and most influential constituent of the Janata Party, is indirectly guided by the RSS. There have been loud complaints not only from the Muslims but from such Janata leaders and ranks as are committed to secularism that the RSS leaders are taking advantage of the predominant position occupied by the Jana Sangh in the Government to extend their grip over the administration of the country. The offensive launched on certain history books which did not toe the anti Muslim line, culminating in the Government's withdrawal of one of the books is a painful episode of the recent past. The ostentatiously organised parades of armed RSS volunteers in various parts of the country remind all secular minded people of what had happened in the past, they also raise the apprehension that similar things may recur in the future too.

While this is a matter of grave concern for all secular minded people inside and outside the Janata Party, it is a matter of particular concern for the Muslims who have suffered immensely from the riots that were organised by the Hindu fanatics, particularly the RSS. It was therefore necessary to assure the Muslim community, along with other religious minorities and all secular minded people, that the Government in which the Jana Sangh is an integral part, means business in putting an end to communal riots.

If this was the purpose for which the Minorities Commission was appointed, it would have been better for the Government to consult the leaders of the minority community in general and the Muslims in particular with regard to the powers, the functions, the procedure of working and personnel of the Commission. Having consulted them, the Government could take its own decisions but in such a way as to assure the Muslims that their

special problems and apprehensions, as distinct from the general problems and apprehensions of the non Hindu communities are being taken into consideration in the appointment and functioning of the Commission

While not conceding in principle that the Chairman of the Commission should always be a Muslim (as demanded by some Muslim leaders), it would have been prudent on the part of the Government to have appointed a Muslim Chairman at least in the first Commission. Failure to do that created the first misunderstanding between the Government and the Muslim leaders. This was further aggravated by the manner in which the Commission functioned and the Government dealt with it.

The responsibility for the sad state of affairs in the Commission and its virtual dissolution should therefore be laid squarely on the shoulders of the Government itself.

Now that the first Commission with Masani as Chairman has for all practical purposes been wound up, it is to be hoped that the Government will have a fresh look at the problem as a whole and have a new Commission appointed and functioning along the lines which will satisfy all the religious minorities and secular minded people in general and Muslims in particular.

Realignment

Editorial of "People's Democracy", July 2, 1978

Whether the talks now going on among the leaders of the Janata Party and the move for mediation by Jaya Prakash Narayan, will lead to a patch up in that party's leadership, or whether it will end in a break between two sections will be known only after a few days

But, whatever the nature and conditions of the "solution" arrived at, either through mutual contacts among the leaders or as a result of the mediation efforts, the Janata can never be the same again. All that happened before and during the crisis cannot be wiped out of the memory of either the leaders and active members of the party or of the people at large. If at all a patch up "solution" is found, the conflicts of personalities and groups will still continue in one or another form.

The question is whether these conflicts remain at the level of individuals and group loyalties, thus partaking of the character of faction fights within a political party, or whether they will also reflect clashes of policies and ideologies.

It is, for instance, well known that behind the conflict between Charan Singh and Morarji Desai (which on the face of it appears to be a conflict of personalities) are issues on which certain policies clash.

Charan Singh's dogged defence of the rural vested interests, though couched in Gandhian "back to the village" language, cannot be to the liking of those politicians within the Janata and outside, who have been brought up in the traditions of trying to industrialise India.

The landlord domination of the rural areas, which Charan Singh essentially represents and which logically leads to the persecution of Harijans and other oppressed sections of rural society also goes against the grain of those Janata politicians who still cherish the ideals of serving the *daridranarayan*, uplifting Harijans, etc

This is not to suggest that the lines of battle on policies are clearly drawn. On the other hand, the two groups that are now getting formed in the Janata leadership are fighting on issues which appear to have only very remote, if any, relation with policy matters.

Questions of internal discipline within the Janata Party and other organisational issues are covering up differences on questions of people's life like prices, employment, taxation, dependence on foreign monopolies etc. Such questions of democracy as protection of Harijans, Adivasis and other backward sections of society, the rights of religious minorities and prevention of attacks on them by the chauvinists in the majority community, serious problems arising out of the mistaken policy adopted by some sections within the Janata leadership on the question of language, etc., have also been clouded by the conflicts of individuals and groups within the Janata Party.

The radical and secular forces within the Janata Party, too, have unfortunately been unable to focus the attention of their leaders and of the people to these issues of policy.

The Left and democratic forces in the country will therefore watch with keen interest how the crisis which has gripped the Janata Party will end either temporarily or more permanently. Whatever the outcome of the current attempts at patching up the differences and maintaining the apparent "unity" of the party, the problem is bound to come up again.

The Left and democratic forces outside the Janata Party will therefore expect their colleagues inside it to bring these issues of policy to the forefront. Only then can they play a useful role in the further development of the Left and democratic movement in the country.

There is, for instance, wide talk of a "realignment" of forces within the Janata and between some of them inside the Janata and

some others outside. The most widely talked of suggestion for such a realignment is what is called "the coming together of all the former Congressmen"

This would mean that those in the Janata who were at one time in the Congress(O), the CFD, the Chandra Sekhar group (and possibly the Socialists too) should join their forces along with the two Congresses (or at least with the Swaran Singh Congress) and fight the combined forces of the BLD and Jana Sangh. There are some people who go to the extent of suggesting that such a force being secular, radical and Socialist in its political complexion, it can secure the support of the Communists and Socialists outside and thus be the genuinely Left and democratic force which can take the country forward.

The very mention of the forces which are supposed to join together in fighting the obscurantist and communal forces is enough to expose the hallowness of the idea behind this proposal. For, this realignment means nothing less than the revival of the Congress before its pre 1969 split. The Communists and Socialists in the country are supposed to give loyal support to it.

This means that all the political battles that were fought inside the Congress on the one hand and between the Congress and the Left forces in the country at least from 1967 onwards were fought in vain. The differentiation that has taken place in Indian politics during a relatively long period extending over a decade is sought to be totally ignored.

This is obviously an unrealistic proposal. We are today in a situation in which even the Janata Party cannot be taken back to the state in which it was at the time of its formation. As for taking the Congress back to its position in the latter half of the 60s, the less said the better.

Those who think and talk of realignment of political forces should realise the two major changes that have taken place since March 1977.

First, the Congress has been thrown out of the position in which it was for thirty years—the single ruling party controlling the Centre and (for most of the time) all the States of India.

Secondly, the Janata Party which expected and was expected by a large section of people in the country to take the place of the Congress as the single ruling party in the country has proved its inability to do so

The unduly long domination of a single party in the whole country and the two party system in which two bourgeois parties are supposed alternately to become the ruling party and go into the Opposition have both been proved impractical in the conditions of our country

It is against this background that one has to talk of realignment of political forces—not just inside the Janata Party but in the whole country. What are contemptuously called "regional parties" have not only sprouted into existence but proved their capacity successfully to challenge both the Congress and the Janata

Among these regional parties are some who are, in class terms, representatives of the same bourgeois landlord classes as represented by the Congress and the Janata, as for example the DMK and AIADMK in Tamil Nadu, National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir, and the Maharashtra Gomantak Party in Goa

There are others like the Left Fronts of West Bengal and Tripura which, in class terms, represent the rural and urban poor and middle classes

The very success of the Left Fronts in West Bengal and Tripura together with the strong position in which the Left Front in Kerala finds itself today, would show that, if any realignment is to take place, it is to be based essentially on policies, and not on individuals or groups

It is well known that there are large sections within the Janata as well as in all other bourgeois political parties (including the so called regional parties), who are at one with the political forces that formed the Left Fronts in West Bengal and Kerala. That they can act together at least on some specific issues of the everyday life of the working people has been shown by the unity of action forged among the trade union organisations

This unity which is growing from strength to strength at last succeeded in putting pressure on the Janata Government to make

certain concessions on the issues that they had raised in relation to the public sector industries. The possibilities for carrying this forward, not only among the trade union organisations but among all the organisations of the rural and urban poor and middle classes, are immense. It is to be hoped that the radical forces in all political parties, including the Janata, would adopt attitudes which will facilitate the further strengthening of this unity of action by the working people.

This however would make it necessary for them all to exchange views, and strive to arrive at agreements, on issues of socio-economic and other policies. As a matter of fact, there is a large area of agreement among the secular and radical forces in all parties, and among democrats belonging to no political party, on several of these issues. The point is for them all to free themselves from their individual and group loyalties and to chalk out a common programme of political action— action intended to reverse the policies of the Government towards the Left.

While there is agreement among them on several socio-economic policies, there is one field of political action in which agreement is yet to be arrived at. That is the question of how to prevent in future an attack on democracy as was launched in 1975, how to guarantee the full protection of civil liberties and democratic rights.

Here again, there appears to be no difference that the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution should be repealed, and that the constitutional provisions enabling the Government to declare internal Emergency should be annulled, etc. But there are serious differences on how to deal with those who clamped the Emergency in 1975 and perpetrated what are called "Emergency atrocities".

There are some who would like the trial and punishment to proceed in the normal process of the existing law in ordinary courts. This means that, while the minions who carried out orders would be tried and punished, the arch criminal who launched the most vicious imaginable assault on democracy will go unpunished.

There are others who insist that only if the person or persons responsible for this assault in 1975 are punished shall the people have the guarantee that this will never be repeated again.

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It is unfortunate that those in the Janata Party, who were expected to take these issues of policy and direct their internal struggle towards these issues, have been unable to do so. The result is that the crisis and its outcome are being judged on what will happen to this or that individual holding this or that position of authority in the party and in the Government.

The Battle in The Janata Party*

E.M.S. Namboodiripad

What has, of late, happened to the Janata Party cannot be dismissed as a purely internal affair of that Party, as Congress Parliamentary Party leader Chavan did on hearing about the resignations of Charan Singh and Raj Narain. Every citizen of India is, on the other hand, interested in it.

The statements made by Charan Singh after he tendered his resignation on the same day together with the confabulations that have been going on among the leaders of the former BLD which culminated in their decision to organise a massive protest rally on July 17 clearly indicate that the resignations and their aftermath are the beginning of a bitter battle between the two sections of the Janata Party.

Relevant in this context will be the assessment made in the Political Resolution adopted by the Tenth Congress of the CPI(M) held in Jullundur on the political nature and problems of the party.

"The ruling Janata Party" the resolution said, "has still to develop a cohesive ideology and organisation. The ideological and organisational skirmishes in the party, open play of former loyalties and the conflicting traditions and heritage of its constituents—all speak of divided counsels."

Connecting these specific features of the Janata Party to the state of affairs in the present day Indian bourgeois society as a whole, the resolution went on: "The tales of corruption, jobbery, murder, nepotism, unscrupulous use of State power for personal benefit, rapes and sexual offences in the highest quarters show the collapse of almost every norm that holds the bourgeois parties and

society together. The flood of scandals and the domination over the nation by a caucus of adventurers and individuals mark the invasion of the crisis in all spheres of life. No bourgeois party can be immune to it and the Janata Party is no exception. The wranglings in election, the manipulation for places in the Ministry, the struggle for tickets and the open appeal to former loyalties—all are the first symptoms of the disease."

The Janata Party, however, was different from the other bourgeois parties, particularly the Congress, in one respect.

As opposed to the factions within the Congress which were resorting to every trick and device to get a better share of power than the rival factions, the constituents of the Janata Party were bound by the common suffering under the authoritarian regime of the Congress led by Indira Gandhi and therefore had a common commitment to a programme of restoring democracy. Furthermore, the experience of the former "Grand Alliance" with its openly Rightist programme and the fiasco in which it ended, had made the constituents of the Janata adopt several socio-economic demands which, if strictly implemented after the formation of the Janata Party, could well have rallied large sections of the people around the new ruling party and the Government.

A far-sighted and sober collective leadership could have built a cohesively functioning party on the basis of such a common programme which did indeed stand them in good stead in gathering votes in the historic Lok Sabha election which threw the leaders of the former authoritarian regime out of power.

The essential pre-requisite for transforming the federation of several constituent groups that formed the Janata into a cohesive party, however, was lacking. The Janata Party—both at the Centre as well as in the States after elections took place in June for the State Legislatures—failed to live up to the pledges that they had made to the people during the elections.

Although they began well in taking steps in the direction of dismantling the authoritarian regime, they dragged their feet on such vital questions as the repeal of the MISA, annulment of the

42nd amendment to the Constitution, removing the Constitutional provision which enables the President (which means the Council of Ministers) to declare an internal Emergency. On every one of these vital questions, the Janata leaders' pledge to the people still remains unimplemented. This went so far as to permit some Janata led State Governments to have mini MISAs to crush popular struggles in their respective States. The Centre itself proposed to incorporate all the main provisions of the hated MISA in the regular law of the land—an attempt which, thanks to a vigilant public opinion (including opinion within the Janata Party itself), was finally foiled.

On socio economic questions ranging from labour and taxation policies to the policy of wooing multinationals, the expectations of the people roused by the commitments made by the leaders were, and are increasingly being, dashed. Even the most ardent supporter of the Janata Party today would admit that, barring some issues of defence of democracy on which there are still differences between the Congress and the Janata, the policies of the two parties have come to be scarcely distinguishable.

The one aspect of Government policy which has proved to be disappointing to everybody who wishes well of the Janata Party is the manner in which the trial and punishment of the perpetrators of the crimes committed during the Emergency were dealt with by the Janata Government. Instead of concentrating attention on the major crime of misusing Governmental power to subvert the Constitution for proceeding against the former Prime Minister and her cronies, they began picking up the so called "fool proof" cases of petty crimes.

Not only was precious time lost in the process but the very clumsy manner in which the former Prime Minister was arrested but had to be released within 24 hours provided her with enough ammunition to fight back. Even after the revelations made before the Shah Commission and the findings contained in the Commission's interim reports, the Government is unable to act on the revelations and findings.

All these are the collective failures of the Janata Party and Government. None of the senior Ministers can evade their own

responsibility for this failure. Surprisingly, however, they have now started accusing one another.

Charan Singh claims that he has always been for a firm stand against Mrs. Gandhi, but was prevented from taking such firm action by his Cabinet colleagues. The report given by the other side is that, as the Home Minister, it was his responsibility to make specific proposals for such firm action as is now suggested by him, no such proposal, it is pointed out, emanated either from the Home Ministry or the Home Minister personally.

The debate will probably go on for several weeks, since this is a major point of the critical statement made by Charan Singh which provoked Morarji Desai to ask for his (Charan's) resignation.

We, however, know very well that Charan Singh was responsible for the manner in which she was arrested in October last. The charge on which she was to be proceeded against was not the major political crime of misusing authority to try to subvert the Constitution, but two cases of departure from rules and regulations—and that, too, on the alleged "facts" of devious nature.

The fourteen months of Charan Singh's stewardship of the Home Ministry will go down in the history of Indian polity as one in which a bureaucratic machinery which is thoroughly inefficient if not worse, was presided over by a Minister who has no political vision and is not in touch with the radical democratic public opinion. It will be the height of irresponsibility on the part of Charan Singh to claim that his hands were tied by his Cabinet colleagues. Tied he undoubtedly was but by his own narrow minded and unimaginative political outlook, rather than by an obstructive Cabinet and Prime Minister.

Relevant in this context will be to note what happened to one of the closest followers of Mrs. Gandhi, former Chief Minister Vengal Rao of Andhra Pradesh.

Facts had been unearthed by a large number of political workers and jurists including the distinguished former High Court Judge V. M. Tarkunde, showing that the Vengal Rao regime was responsible for the most heinous crime of shooting scores of young men and women on the alleged ground of their being

"Naxalites" and having engaged themselves in "armed encounters" The demand for a thorough probe into the wanton killings had come from all sections of public opinion

But instead of the Central Government itself appointing a commission of enquiry as was done in several other cases the Union Home Ministry permitted the Vengal Rao Government itself to appoint a commission headed by Justice Bhargava The bureaucracy in Andhra Pradesh, with the full support of the Union Home Ministry, tried to put all manner of obstacles before the Bhargava Commission and those who did their utmost to cooperate with the commission and unearth facts concerning the so called "encounters"

It goes to the credit of a team of jurists and public workers who worked against heavy odds and used the forum of the Bhargava Commission to expose the falsehoods spread by the bureaucracy and bring the truth out When the plans of the bureaucracy began to go away, the successor of the Vengal Rao Government, the present Chenna Reddy Government ordered that all public hearings of the Bhargava Commission be put an end to the hearings being in camera The appeal made to the Union Government against this decision of the State Government was rejected The result is that the Commission stands wound up

To complete the picture, let us add, Prime Minister Morarji Desai and his supporters cannot claim that they as the collective leadership of a Government acted in the spirit of the pledges made to the people regarding firm action against the perpetrators of Emergency crimes The approach of the Prime Minister from the very beginning was that the Emergency crimes would be dealt with as ordinary crimes to be tried under the ordinary law The extraordinary nature of the crime, and, therefore, the necessity for taking such measures as involve some changes in the law were never accepted by them The utmost that they can claim, therefore, is that they are not worse in this respect than Charan Singh who is accusing them of "softness" towards Mrs Gandhi

It is obvious that "firmness" or "softness" towards the former Prime Minister will be only one of the issues which will be fought out between the wings of the Janata Party, which, if one may go by

reports available at present, will formally split in less than a fortnight Charan Singh and his supporters threaten to expose many misdeeds and corruption of which their rivals are accused One can well imagine that the other side will make charges against the leaders of the Charan Singh group The battle between the two factions of the Janata Party (which will form themselves into regular parties) will thus lead to a fierce battle with no holds barred

The battle, however, will not remain confined to allegations and counter allegations on what are called misdeeds, corruption, etc Questions of policy and ideology are also bound to be raised, they have, in fact, been raised in a way

For instance, Charan Singh from the beginning of his career as Home Minister has tried to create for himself the image of a theoretician and policy maker His note to the Janata leadership within a few months after the formation of the party, the book that he wrote on economic policy, and a number of his speeches and daily statements tried to project him as the spokesman and leader of the rural interests, against the urban, of the Kisans against the industrialist, of the rural poor against the city based monopolists and so on It is his claim that he is the one person who is sincerely trying to carry forward the Gandhian tradition while his colleagues led by the Prime Minister and the party President are the champions of modern capitalism

The protest rally to be held in New Delhi on the opening day of the Parliament session will, apart from denouncing the Prime Minister and other leaders of the Janata High Command, raise all these issues So will the national campaign tour which he and leaders of his party will undertake after Charan Singh and Raj Narain as resigning Ministers have their say in the Janata Parliamentary Party and in Parliament

When the internal conflicts of the Janata came into the open as they have done now and lead to the formation of a separate party led by Charan Singh, it will have a programme and policy on the basis of which to fight the party headed by the Prime Minister and his supporters The number of bourgeois parties in the field of electoral and other political struggles will grow No more will it be

a question of Congress versus Janata, but the two Congresses and the two Janata Parties. The relations among these parties, i.e., whether one or more of these four parties will cooperate with other political parties and among themselves, will be an important question affecting the fate of every electoral or other political battle in the immediate future.

The danger lies in the distinct possibility that this complicated situation will be taken full advantage of by the authoritarian forces led by Mrs. Gandhi. She has already taken advantage of the differences among the Janata leaders as well as the mass discontent arising out of the failure of the Janata Government to act in the spirit of its electoral pledges. That is how she succeeded to a certain extent in retrieving some of the grounds lost by her in the Lok Sabha elections and subsequently.

Now that the Janata Party itself stands divided and the two wings of the once united party will fight each other, as fiercely as, if not more than, with the Congress, she and her party will be in a much better position. It is this that should cause concern to all those who cooperated with all the constituents of the Janata in the struggle against authoritarianism and who desire that the battle should be carried forward.

It is here that significance of the two slogans raised by the CPI(M)—the slogan of uniting all the Left and democratic forces for a shift to the Left and a much broader platform of restoring democracy and still further extending it—lies.

Only the firm unity of all the Left and democratic forces can rally the masses of the working people for radicalism, secularism and justice. Similarly the unity of all—Left as well as non Left democratic force—is an essential pre-requisite if the forces of authoritarianism are to be resisted and their plans of staging a come back are to be foiled.

The Left and democratic forces should see that the Charan Singh programme of the so-called "defence of the rural interest against the Urban" is objectively a programme of the rural gentry. They, therefore, cannot afford to sail with the current of the Charan Singh led "Kisan" movement. They should, in fact, undertake a concrete study and exposure of the class implications.

of the so called Gandhian approach of Charan Singh. They should, however, realise that the Charan Singh programme appeals not only to the rural gentry but to sections of the rural poor and middle classes. For the path of capitalist development heaps misery on the rural toilers who can be easily made to believe that they are exploited by the "City folk". Bourgeois leaders of the Charan Singh variety can effectively use this in their own class interests.

Only by independently mobilising, organising and leading the struggles of the rural poor and middle classes through their own class and mass organisations—can the Left and democratic forces keep the rural poor and middle classes away from the influence exerted by the Charan Singh Raj Narain party and their rivals in the Janata Party.

The Left and democratic forces may, in this respect, and should try to secure support and cooperation from the radical and secular forces inside the Janata Party itself.

On Centre-State Relations*

M. Basavapunnaiiah

A memorandum, dealing with Centre State relations, was adopted by the Left Front Government of West Bengal on December 1, 1977, and submitted to the Central Government. The Government of West Bengal also requested the Centre to initiate a nationwide discussion on the subject before a final decision is taken on the subject. But Prime Minister Morarji Desai had outright rejected the proposal as he was averse even to a democratic discussion on the issue.

However, the debate on the said memorandum could not be stopped. Since the topic is real, topical and living, Chief Ministers of States, members of Parliament, editors and prominent columnists of daily newspapers and magazines and academicians have been freely discussing the subject of Centre State relations. Thus a nationwide debate is on despite the fact that such a proposal was turned down by the Central Government.

The West Bengal Government's memorandum proposed a series of amendments to the present Indian Constitution. It recommended amending of certain clauses of some Articles, pleaded for total deletion of certain other Articles, such as 200, 201, 249, 356 and 357 and specifically demanded the retention of Article 370. It briefly explained its case, and requested the Central Government to so amend the Constitution as to make States' autonomy real, not to increasingly erode the federal character of the Constitution and make it unitary, and thus to strengthen Centre State relations on a new and more enduring basis.

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The memorandum of the West Bengal Government stated "A strong and unified India can only be one in which the democratic aspirations and distinctiveness of the people of different States are respected and not treated with disdain. We are definitely for strong States, but on no account do we want a weak Centre."

It added "While enlarging the scope of the States' sphere, we must also try to preserve and strengthen the Union authority by subjects that could be carried out only by the Union authority and not by any single State, such as defence, foreign affairs including foreign trade, currency and communications and economic co ordination etc. In areas such as planning, fixing of prices, wages, etc., the Centre may not only coordinate but also issue general direction."

Ajit Roy, Editor of the monthly, '*The Marxist Review*' from Calcutta, has made a furious attack on the West Bengal memorandum in an article titled "West Bengal Government's proposals X Rayed", in a supplement to his magazine. He writes that this memorandum dealing with Centre State relations "demands a close scrutiny in terms of fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism as well as the immediate implications of these proposals for the interests of the Indian working class and its ongoing struggles for Democracy and Socialism."

It is to be noted here that another writer, Dr A R Desai, too, has written a long article on the subject in a journal called *Proletarian Politics*, the organ of the Communist League Indian section of the Fourth International dated January-February-March, 1978. He approvingly mentions how "Dr M N V Nar and Comrade Ajit Roy questioned the validity of raising this at this juncture and how they felt the propaganda of the CPI(M) on the issue was diversionary and opportunistic waylaying the entire Marxist movement, etc."

Not stopping at that, Dr Desai has hurled many more abusive attacks on the CPI(M), its West Bengal memorandum and the Indian Communists and their way of thinking and acting over the past decades. He comes to the cynical conclusion that the said memorandum of the West Bengal Government is a "product of the desperate desire on the part of the CPI(M) to cling to

the Ministry in West Bengal in pursuance of its peaceful parliamentary and reformist path for achieving the People's Democratic Revolution ”

The common point of both these critics of the West Bengal memorandum is that it is a deviation from the Marxist Leninist point of view, that it is diverting the working class movement into disruptive channels and that it undermines the struggle for Democracy and Socialism. As for Dr. Desai's innuendoes and abuses we need not go into them.

Ajit Roy writes, “In the absence of any oppressing nation which enjoy a preponderant position vis a vis the other nationalities of India, there is no need for demanding the right of full fledged self determination which in the last analysis means the right to secede ”

We do not understand as to why Ajit Roy is dilating on the topic of self determination of nations and secession in the context of the West Bengal memorandum and why he is recommending to his readers for reference his treatise on the subject written in August 1975.

It appears that Ajit Roy is under the misapprehension that either the CPI(M) or the memorandum of the West Bengal Left Front Government is applying the principle of “Self determination of nations including the right of secession” to the present Indian situation. We draw his attention to a Note on the National Question which was accepted by the Ninth Congress of the CPI(M) in June July 1972. It was published in a booklet along with the Political Report and an amendment to the Party Programme. It was an open document, sold in our bookstalls in 1972. We cite below for the benefit of our critics as well as our readers the pertinent points from that note.

“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

“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 such 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.

“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 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 imperialists or the oppression of different Indian nationalities at the hands of one or other oppressor nation of India.”

These passages make it abundantly clear that the CPI(M) is far from committing the sin of mechanically applying the Marxist principle of national self determination and secession to the prevailing national question in India. Ajit Roy's criticism on the score suggestively imputes to the CPI(M) and to the West Bengal memorandum that they are advocating the right of national self determination in India, to the point of secession. It is neither fair nor correct to do so.

Ajit Roy has levelled another criticism on the West Bengal memorandum that it is un-Marxian to advocate a federal set up in India, that "fundamentally speaking, Marxism is generally opposed to decentralised and/or federative State structure under the bourgeois rule" and that Marx, Engels and Lenin were the avowed opponents of the federal system and staunch advocates of the unitary system of Government. In support of his contention he quotes at length the passages from Marx Engels correspondence where the two founders were exchanging opinions regarding the State set up of Germany in the year 1850, and the merits and demerits of Bismark's unification of Germany by force, in 1866.

To put it mildly the arguments and the passages cited from Marx and Engels by Ajit Roy are highly misleading and the attempt to copy them to the present Indian national question smacks of crude dilettantism. The specific instance of opposition to "federalism" by Marx and Engels deals with the issue of unification of the German nation in a single State. They were not discussing how different nationalities, as in the present case of the Indian Union, should arrange their State structure.

Describing the extremely complicated conditions of Germany during the 1850s, Engels made the following observations which are highly instructive.

"The federal system of tenure was prevalent almost every where. The Lords of the Land had even retained the jurisdiction over their tenants. Deprived of their political privileges, of the right to control the princes, they had preserved almost all their medieval supremacy over the peasantry of their demesnes as well as their exemption from taxes. Feudalism was more flourishing in some localities than in others, but nowhere except on the left bank of the Rhine was it entirely destroyed."

“Thus with growing wealth and extending trade, the bourgeoisie soon arrived at a stage where it found the development of its most important interests checked by the political constitution of the country—*by its random division among thirty six princes* with conflicting tendencies and caprices ”

“The political dismemberment of Germany into *three dozen of more or less important principalities* is equally explained by this confusion and multiplicity of the elements *which compose the nations*, and which again vary in every locality. The German Confederation, it is true, was declared everlastingly indissoluble yet the Confederation and its organ, the Diet, never represented German unity ”

It is quite obvious that what Engels was describing above was the feudal dismemberment of the German nation under thirty six feudal principalities, that what Marx and Engels were opposing was the federal State structure of these feudal estates, that what the unitary State they were advocating was for the dismembered German nation and what they were opposing *in this specific* case was the federal set up which perpetuated disunity and division of the nation, and consequently, the division, disunity and dismemberment of the German working class movement

It is quite improper to cite the opposition of Marx and Engels to the principle of federalism and confederation and their upholding of the principle of a unitary State in the Germany of 1850s and basing on that to register opposition to the concept of building the multinational Indian Union as a federal set up

In fact, the typical case, such as that of the present Indian Union, was neither in existence at that time for Marx, Engels and Lenin nor could they express their views on it. The type of federalism that they were opposing and the type of centralism they were advocating very much differ from that of our views on these in the concrete case of the present day Indian Union. Words and phrases used out of context undoubtedly lose their real meaning. The abstract discussion and polemics on the topic of federalism versus centralism leads us nowhere near the solution of the problem under discussion

The present Party Programme of the CPI(M), as was amended at its Ninth Congress in the year 1972, has the following description of "The State Structure of People's Democracy"

"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 opposed to all disruptionist and secessionist movements "

"(1) The Indian Union shall be a Federation based on Democratic Centralism" (Pages 34 35 of the Party Programme)

The CPI(M) has found it incorrect to counterpose the principle of federation with that of unitary State. As things stand in India and as the nationalities problem exists in the concrete manner as is found in the case of present day India, we can neither advocate the principle of unitary State as in the case of single nation State nor could we agree to the perpetuation of the post independent Indian Union, co existing with 500 or so Princely States

The Princely States had to be abolished, the States had to be reorganised, on the linguistic basis, and a political State structure, corresponding to the needs of the people and their growing democratic urges, had to be built. We are still in the midst of that process. The discussion and debate on the so called Centre State relations are going on in that context

Why reduce the whole discussion to the abstract controversy whether Marxism is opposed to federation or is wedded to centralism? Why argue that the demand for greater autonomy to the States necessarily leads to the weakening of the Centre and thus weakens 'the unity of the working class'?

Lenin while arguing how "the great centralised State is a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to the future Socialist unity of the whole world", observed "that it would, however, be inexcusable to forget that in advocating centralism we advocate exclusively *democratic* centralism. On this point all the Philistines in general, and the national Philistines in particular, have so confused the issue that we are obliged again to spend time clarifying it "

"Far from precluding local Self Government, with *autonomy* for regions having special economic and social conditions, a

distinct national composition of the population, and so forth, democratic centralism demands both ”

“Obviously, one cannot conceive of a modern, truly democratic State that did *not* grant such autonomy to every region having any appreciable distinct economic and social features, populations of a specific national composition, etc The principle of centralism, which is essential for the development of capitalism, is not violated by this local and regional autonomy, but on the contrary is applied by it *democratically*, not bureaucratically The broad, free and rapid development of capitalism would be impossible, or at least greatly impeded, by the *absence* of such autonomy, which *facilitates* the concentration of capital, the development of productive forces, the unity of the bourgeoisie and the unity of the proletariat on a countrywide scale ” (Critical Remarks on the National Question)

Let us understand how Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin had not made the “principle of federalism or centralism” the axis of the entire national question, and how many more important and vital aspects are involved in the issue We are afraid that citing long passages from Marx, Engels and Lenin might reduce this discussion to a sort of “quotation war” But our friend Ajit Roy has left us with no other choice because of his long quotations from the founding fathers of Marxism to oppose the CPI(M) s stand on Centre State relations

Ajit Roy who cites Lenin in support of his contention should have known certain other equally important propositions of Lenin, such as that “the categorical requirement of Marxist theory in investigating any social question is that it be examined within *definite* historical limits, and, if it refers to a particular country e g , the National Programme for a given country—that account be taken of the specific features distinguishing that country from others in the same historical epoch ” (Right of Nations to Self Determination)

In the specific case of India the national question presents itself as an extremely complicated question Here it is not a question of one or several nations or nationalities oppressing or exploiting certain other nations or nationalities The multilingual or

multinational Indian Union of ours, i.e., the post independent and post States' Reorganisation of Indian Union, presents a picture which is not comparable to any other State, which was discussed by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin

There exist in India not only big linguistic States with populations as big as 50 to 60 million in each, such as West Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, etc., but even 250 to 300 million Hindi speaking people are organised into different big and small States, with their own historical, social, economic and political conditions. It is more than a country in the usual sense of the term, it is a huge Sub Continent. Among the newly liberated and developing countries, it ranks as a more developed capitalist State, occupying the tenth place among the industrially developed countries. Modern capitalist development had been taking place in India for a hundred years and more. Its rate of progress, however tardy and distorted from the point of view of the possibilities and needs of the people, is more rapid in the last three decades, following the attainment of political independence.

Commenting on the possible course of development of the national question in Asia, Lenin had stated "We cannot say whether Asia will have had time to develop into a system of independent national States, like Europe before the collapse of capitalism, but it remains an undisputed fact that capitalism, having awakened Asia, has called forth national movements everywhere in that Continent, too, that the tendency of these movements is towards the creation of national States in Asia, that it is such States that ensure the best conditions for the development of capitalism" (Page 41, Right of Self Determination)

The above was said by Lenin in the year 1916, some full sixty years ago. Capitalism though it has collapsed in the "backward" Russia, and still more backward Eastern Europe, China and some more countries of Asia still remains firmly entrenched in all the developed capitalist States of Western Europe, Britain, Japan and North America. No one can prophesy the exact or even approximate timing of the collapse of capitalism either in the developed States

of capitalism and imperialism of the world or in the newly independent and developing States in the so called Third World

Lenin, who was reiterating the views of Marx and Engels on the principles of federalism and centralism, had also stated "The national State is the rule and norm of capitalism, the multinational State represents backwardness, or is an exception. From the standpoint of national relations, the best conditions for the development of capitalism are undoubtedly provided by the national State. This does not mean, of course, that such a State, which is based on bourgeois relations, can eliminate the exploitation and oppression of nations. It only means that Marxists cannot lose sight of the powerful *economic* factors that give rise to the urge to create National States" (Right of Nations to Self Determination)

If the entire question of nationalities in India and the Indian political set up is sought to be reduced to the abstract discussion whether Marxism upholds "federalism" or "centralism", as is being proposed by Ajit Roy, and then argue that a federal set up in India harms the growth of the revolutionary working class movement while a centralised set up is beneficial for the proletariat, it becomes difficult to explain the above cited statements of Lenin on the merits of a single nation State and the demands of a multinational State

If world capitalism, and along with it Indian capitalism does not collapse as quickly as we wish it to, one does not know what sad impact it will have on the national question in India and what future awaits the present multilingual and multinational Indian Union. As Communists and Marxist Leninist revolutionaries, we can only strive our utmost to defend the unity of the Indian Union and thereby defend the unity and united struggle of working class for the victory of Democracy and Socialism

But by opposing the greater autonomy of States and by fighting for increasing concentration of power at the Centre, we can neither defend the unity of the multilingual Indian Union nor the unity of the multilingual and multinational working class of India. The demand for greater and real autonomy for the States

is essentially a democratic demand. The working class and its Marxist Party can ill afford to ignore or bypass it though it should never subordinate its struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois rule to the democratic demand of national autonomy or self-determination.

We will examine some of the other points raised by Ajit Roy in subsequent issues.

A careful examination of the contents of the memorandum or a closer study of the issue as dealt with in the Programme of the CPI (Marxist) by any unbiased person would convince him that the concrete federal set up proposed by the West Bengal Left Front Government does not damage either the principle of democratic centralism or the united struggle of the revolutionary working class of India. It is an earnest attempt to apply the Marxist-Leninist theory to the concrete conditions obtaining in India, at the present stage of development, drawing on lessons of the earlier shortcomings and mistakes of the Indian Communist movement on the subject of national question in India.

A glance at the list of subjects exclusively reserved to the Centre by the West Bengal memorandum would show that the essence of political power remains with the Centre, and the autonomy of the States in no way encroaches on the authority of the Union Centre. The very fact that subjects such as defence, foreign affairs, foreign trade, currency, communications, the general direction and coordination of economic planning, etc., are unreservedly put in the Central list goes to demonstrate that the real political power remains with the Centre, and the States in no way come into conflict with the Centre.

Concentration of Power

Ajit Roy himself admits that “all through the post Independence period”, there has been “growing concentration of power at the Centre—at the cost of the States”. But he does not believe in curbing this authoritarian trend of the Centre by the redefinition and redelineation of Centre State relations, as proposed by the Left Front Government of West Bengal. He argues that the real and lasting remedy lies in building an “all India democratic front

led by the united working class, for a democratic reconstruction of the entire State structure embracing the Centre as well as the States” Shorn of its vagueness and ambiguity, it amounts to saying that a successful democratic revolution led by the working class, replacing the present bourgeois landlord set up alone is the solution, and anything short of it is no solution. And hence he is of the view that the present struggle as sponsored by the West Bengal Government harms the struggle for such a solution.

Victories of Struggle

We cannot subscribe to such views on the subject. Without entertaining any illusions that the national question in India can be justified, democratically and finally resolved under a class set up of the bourgeois landlord State and Government, we are of the view that struggle in the direction will have to be waged against the powers that be right from now. Any reforms, if they come about, are the product of a revolutionary struggle. The struggles the working class and the Communist movement in India have conducted so far on this national question, in alliance with all other democratic forces, have certainly yielded revolutionary dividends.

The struggle for the abolition of Princely States and their merger with different linguistic States, the struggle against the forcible imposition of Hindi as the official language of the Indian Union, the struggle for equality of all Indian languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, the struggle for the protection of minorities and their rights, etc., have not been in vain. These struggles have not led to the weakening of unity either on an all India scale or at the level of nationalities.

The topic of how to unite the Indian people in the struggle against British imperialism came up before the leaders of the Indian National Congress. As the struggle was extending the problem of taking the freedom message to people speaking different languages in breadth and depth and organising them under the Indian National Congress had come into the forefront. There were two contending opinions, one maintaining that the unity of the freedom movement would be adversely affected if the

former composite British Provinces or Presidencies were divided and organised on a linguistic basis and the second maintaining that the organising of the Congress on linguistic lines alone would enable the Congress message to be taken to the people at large

In 1970, the dominant leadership which till then was opposing the reorganisation of the Congress on linguistic lines had to yield to the opposing trend. The needs and compulsions of the mass anti imperialist movement forced the hands of the then National Congress leaders to reorganise the Congress organisation on linguistic lines. Life and history have demonstrated that linguistic reorganisation did not weaken the united onslaught of the anti imperialist forces, but on the contrary helped to forge much wider unity

The Patent Reality

The patent reality in India is that big linguistic populations which in Marxian terminology are described as nationalities and nations, have come to be organised in different States of the Indian Union. The idea of India wide unity of the working class can materialise by uniting the working class of different nationalities in their respective language speaking State units, and the issue of lesser or greater autonomy for the States does not obviate this truth

“Language is the most important means of human intercourse. Unity and unimpeded development of language are the most important conditions for genuinely free and extensive commerce on a scale commensurate with modern capitalism, for a free and broad grouping of the population in all its various classes and, lastly, for the establishment of a close connection between the market and each and every proprietor, big or little, and between seller and buyer

“Therefore, the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of national States under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied” (Lenin)

Trade Union Movement

The present trade union movement, in spite of the multilingual character of the composition of the workers in most of the cities, towns and other industrial enterprises, is organised, unionwise,

Statewise, industry or tradewise and on an all India scale. The view that the granting of more autonomy to the States would disunite the working class and thus weaken the united onslaught on the centralised power of the monopolists, landlords and their foreign collaborators has no substance.

Ajit Roy finds fault with the West Bengal memorandum for urging upon “the Governments in the States and at the Centre, the political parties and the people at large to recognise the unity in diversity”, since he thinks that such an appeal is born out of the illusion that this will be recognised by all the political parties, State Government and the Central Government, and such a consistent democratic demand can never be expected to be conceded by forces which are not committed to “consistent democracy”. If the demands in a memorandum of this nature are to be formulated only on the condition that all those on whom the demands are being made should be surely in a position to concede those demands, then no demands can be formulated, and no memorandum can be submitted by a working class party to the non working class parties and the Governments run by them.

Another strange argument advanced by Ajit Roy—that it is wrong on the part of the CPI(M) to oppose “one party authoritarian rule” and prefer a “multi party democratic pattern”—is born out of a formalist outlook, and it does not strengthen democracy. Why? He answers that “a multi party pattern comprising political forces like Jana Sangh, BLD, Akali Dal or even AIADMK and DMK can be and definitely are anti democratic in essence”. May we ask our friend Ajit Roy by what yardstick he has come to the conclusion that the above listed parties are defined as definitely anti democratic in essence? May we also know why many other parties such as the Janata, the two Congress Parties of ‘S’ and ‘I’, Kerala Congress, Muslim League, National Conference, etc., which are there in the country and which in class essence are not very much different from those listed by Roy, are left out? Does he consider them all as “democratic in essence”?

It is rather curious to argue in defence of the monopoly rule of one party, and oppose the multi party pattern on the assumption that some of the non ruling parties or certain parties which are in

the Governments at the States' level might be anti democratic "in essence" The demand for the right of multi party existence in a multi class society is an elementary democratic demand No proletarian party worth the name can subscribe to the perpetuation of monopoly rule by one bourgeois landlord party

Multi Party Pattern

We do not propose here to go into the discussion as to which parties are "democratic in essence" and which are not But we would like to state that our opposition to a one party monopoly rule in a bourgeois landlord State and our demand for the right of several political parties and groups to exist and freely function are guided by the principles of democracy under a bourgeois democratic set up

The opposition to the multi party pattern, in this specific case, is nothing short of defending the right of "one party authoritarian rule", either of the Janata or the Congress We are at a loss to understand as to why Ajit Roy has slipped into such a non serious critique of the memorandum of the Left Front Government of West Bengal Anyway it is wrong to oppose the multi party pattern in a bourgeois set up on the plea that one or several political parties are not democratic to our satisfaction

The CPI(M) or the Left Front Government's memorandum does not counterpose "one party authoritarian rule" to "multi party democratic pattern" as Ajit Roy alleges Our opposition to one party monopoly rule and the demand to reckon with the reality of the existence of a multi party pattern does by no means imply that we should *ipso facto* uphold the right of one or the other undemocratic party

Answering the criticism that the Marxist demand of the right of nations to self determination "imply support of any demand of every nation for self determination", Lenin argues "After all, the fact that we recognise the right of all citizens to form associations does not at all commit us, Social Democrats, to supporting the formation of any new association, nor does it prevent us from opposing and campaigning against the formation of a given association as an inexpedient and unwise step We even recognise

the rights of the Jesuits to carry an agitation freely, but we fight against an alliance between the Jesuits and the proletarians ” (All emphasis original, *Collected Works*, Vol 6, page 455)

The CPI(M)’s defence of the multi party pattern does not commit it to the recognition of one or the other political party to be “democratic in essence”, and Ajit Roy’s contention that some of the political parties are “anti democratic in essence” cannot be a justification for opposing the multi party pattern and implicitly upholding one party monopoly rule

The thesis of Ajit Roy that “generally speaking Marxism stands for a centralised State—both in the pre and post revolution period” misses one very key point Marxism upholds democratic centralism, not simply “a centralised State”, as Roy puts it

On the question of residuary powers, whether they should remain with the Centre or the States, Ajit Roy vehemently argues that such “powers of legislation should remain with the Centre” The CPI(M) thinks that under the existing class set up and the constitutional set up it is safer that these residuary powers of legislation remain with the States than in the hands of the Centre

One is at a loss to understand why Ajit Roy entertains such total mistrust of the States and State Governments, and why he places such undue trust in the Centre and its Government If it is his contention that States are ruled by the anti democratic classes and parties, it is all the more true of the Centre which is being ruled by the bourgeois landlord classes led by the big bourgeoisie

Our demand for the revision of Centre State relations on a more democratic basis where divergent nationalities, constituted as they are in different States of the Indian Union, enjoy equal rights, is not based on the premise that States are being ruled now by “angels” while the Centre is being ruled by “devils” We proceed on the assumption that a huge multilingual and multinational Indian Union as ours will have to be built on a completely democratic basis which alone will put an end to the present distortions and the consequent friction and conflict between the Centre and States, and ensure lasting and durable unity—both in the pre Socialist revolutionary stage and post Socialist revolutionary stage

A careful reading of the memorandum and unbiased assessment would make it clear that its advocacy of a specific federal set up in the Indian conditions neither violates Marxian principles nor divests the Indian Union of democratic centralism, necessary for the progress of democracy and Socialism in India, as apprehended by our 'X rayist' Ajit Roy

Ajit Roy, in his "X ray" article, observes that "there is no necessary relationship between the devolution of powers and the warding off of fissiparous tendencies", as argued by the authors of the West Bengal memorandum. We can only point out to our learned critic that there exists a very close relationship between the two equally vital aspects of democratic centralism. A lop-sided drive towards centralism at the expense of democracy is bound to lead to the worst bureaucratic and totalitarian practices which in their turn is bound to give rise to fissiparous tendencies, and even to secessionist trends.

Monstrous Concentration

In the concrete case under discussion, the monstrous concentration of all powers in the hands of the Central Government and the drastic curtailing of the States' autonomous rights and powers, is, certainly, causing not only legitimate concern in all the democratic and Socialist forces in our country, but it is also engendering fissiparous tendencies. If the democratic devolution of powers to States is no answer to meet the democratic aspirations on the one hand and to rebuff the divisive trends on the other, one is at a loss to know by what other method our critic proposes to foster the unity among different nationalities of the Indian Union!

According to Ajit Roy, Article 249 of the Indian Constitution is a must, because "a balanced, democratic socio economic development of the country as a whole" can be ensured only if it remains intact in the Statute Book, while the authors of the West Bengal memorandum demand its deletion. What is this precious Article? It empowers Parliament to legislate on any subject in the States' List, besides the Concurrent List of 47 items! In other words, there remains nothing of what is known as the States' List,

except what is allowed from time to time by the Centre. It virtually reduces the already truncated status of the States to the status of municipalities.

Emasculation of States' Powers

The argument, that Article 249 can be invoked only by the approval of the Council of States or the Rajya Sabha where "two thirds of the members are present", is simply a fig leaf. The present Rajya Sabha though named as "Council of States", is neither constituted in a manner that guarantees the equality of different linguistic States and nationalities nor can its majority resolution, when two thirds of its members are present, deter encroachment by the Central Government on the States' autonomous rights. There are any number of provisions in the Constitution to prevent any likely "abuse" of authority by a State Government or Governments. The specific Article 249, which states that Parliament can enact on any States' subject it likes nullifies States' autonomy in terms of the statutes.

It is strange that persons who declare themselves Marxist Leninists, passionately argue for more and more powers for the Centre, and for emasculation of the States' rights, knowing pretty well that the present Indian State and Government, in class terms is a State and Government of the bourgeois landlord classes, led by the big bourgeoisie who are collaborating with foreign capital and its irresistible tendency is to constantly encroach upon the democratic rights of the people, including the democratic rights of the States.

Let alone the academic arguments about the probable "abuse" or "misuse" of authority by one or the other State of the Indian Union and the "necessity" of Article 249 on the Statute Book to curb such abuses, can our critic deny the fact that in actual life and experience, during the last 26 years, there has been hardly one instance which justifies the retention and perpetuation of Article 249? On the contrary, the history of the last two and a half decades demonstrates that the Central authorities have been making constant and serious inroads into the States' autonomous powers and the democratic rights of the nationalities.

Many State Governments have been dismissed by the Central Government in the past, not because these State Governments were guilty of any undemocratic actions but because the Centre was functioning dictatorially. President's assent was delayed or refused to many State Bills, not because they were undemocratic measures but because the Centre wanted to force the States to amend them in reactionary directions. The Planning Commission, Finance Commission, etc., are constituted without representatives of the States. The meetings of the National Development Council have been reduced to a farce and Chief Ministers' conferences have been reduced to lecture classes by the Prime Minister. It is this concentration of powers at the Centre that has to be fought.

Serious Proposals

The West Bengal memorandum is demanding a nationwide debate on the issue of Centre State relations, and is putting forth some serious proposals to redefine and redelimit Centre State relations on the basis of some concrete experience of the working of the Indian Constitution and the hurdles it is presenting, in furtherance of the defence of democratic rights of the people and their expansion, and for strengthening the unity of the people and nationalities of the Indian Union who speak different languages. The opposition to the democratic demands of the States and the support to the perpetuation of the highly centralised authority and power of the Indian Union, objectively, play into the hands of the divisive and reactionary forces, no matter under whatever garb of Marxist terminology those arguments are couched. It does not help either the unity of the working class or the unity of the Indian people speaking different languages, who are now organised in different linguistic States of the Indian Union.

Our friend Ajit Roy is so afraid of certain proposals of the West Bengal Government that he sees in them, "dangerous possibilities" which "may set the country ablaze and consequently disrupt the unity of the working class and the democratic forces on a national scale." In what specific proposal does our critic smell such catastrophic possibilities? The proposal to delete "Article 356 and 357 which, enable the President to dissolve a

State Government or its Assembly”, and also “Article 360 which empowers the President to interfere in a State administration on the ground of a threat to financial stability”, etc., are fraught with dangerous possibilities, according to our critic. According to him these are proposals that “the Centre should have neither the power to intervene in the sphere of law and order in a State” even though “a particular Government connives with the oppression of and atrocities on tribal, caste, religious or linguistic minorities”, etc.

Unabashed Apology

First of all, the entire outlook of the critic seems to be permeated with the misapprehension that most of the States and Governments, barring one or two Left orientated Governments are out and out reactionary, and anything may happen to endanger the rights of the people and the unity of India and the working class of India under the rule of these Governments. The second alternative, premise of his seems to be that the rule of these Governments, as it is constituted and composed, is capable of defending the democratic rights of the people, defending the unity of the Indian Union, and defeating the forces of disunity and anarchy that are embodied in most of the existing State Governments.

To put it mildly this is nothing but an unabashed apology and defence of bureaucratic centralism and its authoritarian inroads into States’ autonomy, while choosing to be scrupulously silent regarding the defence of either States’ autonomy or the democratic character of the States’ demands.

Admitted Malady

The author of the critique, after putting up a stout defence of the existing Central authority on the one hand, and on the other roundly denouncing States and their demand for greater powers on the pretext that they might be misused and abused, has a consoling word to say. He writes “All this is not to deny the fact that the growing concentration of power at the Centre—at the cost of the States that has been taking place all through the post Independence period and that enormously accelerated during the Emergency period—is a thoroughly reactionary development.”

So, a malady does exist! It has grown over the last three decades! But “its remedy lies not in the direction of any redefinition of Centre State relations” as the West Bengal Government is demanding, but it rests in building an “all India, democratic front led by the united working class, for a democratic reconstruction of the entire State structure”, etc

This is trying to be too “revolutionary”, and attributing to the opposite point of view total ignorance of Marxism—and its principles

Who told our critic that either the CPI(M) or the West Bengal Government sees a revolutionary remedy in the demand for redefining Centre State relations? What convincing arguments are being advanced by him to show that this demand for redefining of Centre State relations would weaken the struggle for building a democratic front led by the united working class? None

But Ajit Roy, editor of the monthly *Marxist Review*, asserts “The demand for greater autonomy for the States would diffuse the focus on the Central task of uniting all democratic forces against the chief enemy of the Indian people, viz, the multi nationality Indian monopoly capital ”

He sums up his central thesis thus “any success gained in the struggle for greater autonomy or federalism will only serve to deflect the Indian working class from concentrating on its central task and revolutionary goal of overthrowing the existing social system and get itself involved in the *inter bourgeois quarrels*” (Emphasis added)

Why CPI(M) is Interested

He tells the CPI(M) in a serious vein as a Marxist that it should not “get itself involved in the inter bourgeois quarrels”, and it should “concentrate on its central task and revolutionary goal of overthrowing the existing social system”

We hope that Ajit Roy agrees with us that the invasion of “the multi nationality Indian monopoly capital”—into the rights of different linguistic States and nationalities is despotic and dictatorial, and the opposition to and struggle against such

despotic inroads do not cease to be democratic, if some capitalists from non multi nationality monopoly circles of some States cooperate in such a struggle! Let us hope that he does not dismiss such cooperation as “involving in the inter bourgeois quarrels” on the part of a working class party

As for as the CPI(M) which happens to be the principal signatory to the memorandum of the West Bengal Left Front Government, it is interested in this question of Centre State relations since, first, it involves the issue of democratic rights of the people of India speaking different languages and their States, and secondly, the CPI(M) believes that the struggle for the unity of the working class of India is inseparably linked with the struggle for the unity of different linguistic States in the Indian Union

Democratic Centralism

We have no reason to doubt the profound correctness of the statement made by no less a Marxist than Lenin, who was sharply critical of “federalism”, and was a fervent advocate of democratic centralism Lenin had said, “Whoever does not recognise and champion the equality of nations and languages, and does not fight against all national oppression or inequality, is not a Marxist, he is not even a democrat That is beyond doubt” (*Critical Remarks*)

The CPI(M) is striving to understand the national problem, and its different aspects, as it has come to exist in India at the present time It pledges to defend what is democratic and progressive in it while opposing what is anti democratic and disruptive

The West Bengal memorandum deals with as many as sixteen points, and it requires volumes to elaborate every one of them at length, and to meet all arguments, for and against all of them Before concluding our comments on Ajit Roy’s critique, we wish to highlight at least one important question, namely, the official language issue as it confronts us

Working Class Democracy

It is the Leninist dictum, which says “No privileges for any nation or any one language! Not even the slightest degree of

oppression or the slightest injustice in respect of national minority—such are the principles of working class democracy” (*Collected Works*, Vol 19, Pp 91-92)

“It would be a radical mistake to think that the struggle for democracy was capable of diverting the proletariat from the Socialist revolution or of hiding, overshadowing, etc. On the contrary in the same way as there can be no victorious Socialism that does not practise full democracy, so the proletariat cannot prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie without an all round, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy” (*Collected Works*, Vol 22, P 144)

Unfounded Fears

We expect that the fears of critics that our struggle in defence of the democratic rights of States—the demand for redefining Centre State relations—may divert our struggle from fighting for the cause of Socialism are unfounded

In post Independent India, the Constituent Assembly that was constituted by the Congress Party in power at that time, had adopted a resolution, by a one vote majority, declaring Hindi as the official language of the Indian Union. There was neither adult franchise nor direct election to that Constituent Assembly. And yet that august body forced this decision on multi lingual and multinational India. This single high handed and most undemocratic measure, if allowed to be pursued to its logical end, may prove to be dangerous dynamite which would blow up the much cherished highly prized and greatly needed unity of India. The history and the costly experience of this experiment during the last three decades provide enough lessons to teach us that the imposition of any one language as the official language on our multinational Indian State was, and is, a thoughtless and hasty decision.

Coercion Opposed

Some political “pundits” raise their eyebrows and exclaim, how can an administration be run without an official language, Hindi is the language spoken by the single biggest majority in the

country—as big as 40 to 42 per cent or so, why should it not be accepted as the official language by the rest, and why are the non Hindi speaking people and States not accepting Hindi, when they could meekly submit to the British when English was imposed as the official language? Such are the train of questions addressed to the majority of the Indian people whose mother tongues are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Bengalee, Marathi, Punjabi, Assamese, Oriya and several other languages

Here is what Lenin had said stoutly opposing the idea of forcing Russian as the official language on the peoples of Russia, and those who fanatically advocate one official language for the Indian Union might derive benefit, if they wish to, from these utterances of Lenin

“What does compulsory official language mean? In practice it means that the language of the Great Russians, who are a minority of the population of Russia, is imposed upon all the rest of the population of Russia. In every school the teaching of the official language must be obligatory. All official correspondence must be conducted in the official language, not in the language of the local people

“What we do not want is the element of coercion. We do not want to have people driven into paradise with a cudgel, a compulsory official language involves coercion, the use of cudgel

“That is why Russian Marxists say that there must be no compulsory official language—that a fundamental law must be introduced in the Constitution declaring invalid all privileges of any one nation and all violations of the rights of national minorities” (*Collected Works*, Vol 20, Pp 72 73)

We hope that the opponents and critics of the West Bengal memorandum on Centre State relations would ponder over the issue a hundred times more carefully, attentively and patiently, if they are really interested in the genuine unity of the Indian Union and the unity of the revolutionary working class in its struggle for Democracy and Socialism, instead of evincing a zeal for fault finding

Morarji's Threat

Prime Minister Morarji Desai is reported to have stated that if there is any agitation for more autonomy for the States, he was not made the Prime Minister to "sit and watch" "I shall crush it even if I have to use the army", he added (*The Statesman* July 29, 1978)

We are reminded of the statement made by the late Winston Churchill that he had not become the Prime Minister of Great Britain to preside over the liquidation of the British empire. But as the irony of history would have it, he lived to see the end of the British empire.

Sri Morarji Desai who had the experience of "crushing" the movements for Samyukta Maharashtra and Maha Gujarat ought to have pondered over the matter before such ill tempered outbursts.

Let Ajit Roy and others who voice opposition to States' autonomy and argue for greater centralisation remember that it is such "Central authority" as exhibited by Morarji Desai that has to be fought and defeated, if India and the working class of India are to remain united.

The Shah Commission Report and After*

E.M.S. Namboodiripad

The Congress(I), the major opposition in both Houses of Parliament and the ruling party in two states (besides being partner in a coalition Government in a third state), is on the warpath. Its leaders are threatening dire consequences if their leader, Indira Gandhi, is arrested and put on trial in pursuance of the findings, recommendations and observations of the Shah Commission. Words and phrases like "massive agitation", "civil war", "bloodshed", etc., are freely being bandied about.

Among those who have joined this chorus are the Chief Ministers of the two Congress run States—Chenna Reddy of Andhra Pradesh and Devraj Urs of Karnataka.

The Congress(I) leaders have no doubt been emboldened to take such an offensive because of the utter failure of the Janata Government in solving the problems of the people. The acute discontent rapidly spreading among the people is the soil on which they hope to sow the seeds of a mass upsurge in favour of dictatorship. The unseemly quarrels within the Janata Party among its former constituents and between some of the topmost leaders of the party—have further strengthened their conviction that the time has come for mounting a big offensive against the Janata Party and its Government.

The clumsy manner in which the former Prime Minister was arrested in the first week of October last and had to be released within 24 hours had made the Janata Government a laughing stock in this country and abroad. This too had encouraged the Congress(I) leaders to think that, if only they mount the offensive

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on the Janata Government, they can force it to retreat on the proposed trial of the former Prime Minister and the caucus around her

The challenge thrown by the Congress(I) leaders is thus directed not only against the Janata Party and its Government, but against all those who joined together in resisting the authoritarianism of the Government headed by Indira Gandhi, those who succeeded in throwing that Government out and who are today determined to see that the notorious caucus and its acknowledged leader shall never be allowed to stage a come back. The trial and punishment of those who have been proved guilty of establishing the authoritarian rule has therefore become the crucial question on which depends the future of Indian democracy.

It will be useful in this context to go back a little, see what happened in the fortnight that passed between the delivery of the judgement of the Allahabad High Court in the well known election case, Indira Gandhi versus Raj Narain (January 12, 1975) and the proclamation of the Emergency (June 25, 1975). Indira Gandhi in her reply to the Shah Commission dated November 21, 1977, made the following claims:

"If the professed purpose of the enquiry is to check abuse of power in the future, it is equally imperative that the circumstances which created chaotic conditions in the nation before the Emergency should also be enquired into and not allowed to be repeated. For two years preceding the Emergency, the country was in the grip of a grave crisis. The economic situation had deteriorated mainly due to internal and international causes beyond our control. Interested parties and groups tried deliberately to aggravate the situation for their own gain. Freedom of speech and expression was used to spread hatred and parochial regional sentiments. Noble institutions of learning were turned into hotbeds of political intrigue. Public property was destroyed at the slightest excuse. A Minister in the present Cabinet is reported to have proudly claimed 'in November last (1975) in the Union State of Karnataka alone, we caused derailment of 52 trains'. The attempt was to paralyse national life" (Interim Report I, pp 26-27)

This is as brazen a defence of Emergency as can be imagined. The argument is that, since the opposition was bent upon creating unrest and anarchy, the Government had necessarily to take action in order to save the country.

One does not know whether Mrs. Gandhi is aware of the implications of this argument. For, if the declaration of Emergency in 1975 is justified on this ground, will it not be possible for the present Government to consider the threats issued by the Congress(I) leaders today as sufficient ground for dealing with its opposition along the same lines? Can Mrs. Gandhi argue that the talk of "civil war", "bloodshed", "taking things to the streets", etc., indulged in by the Congress(I) leaders including the Chief Ministers of two States is something better than the alleged threat of direct action by the opposition leaders in 1975? Does she suggest that, while it was correct for her to have adopted repressive measures going to the extent of declaring internal Emergency throughout the country to meet the opposition threat in 1975, it would be impermissible for the present Government to adopt the same or similar measures to suppress the Congress(I) agitation today?

To pose these questions is to answer them if the declaration of Emergency in June 1975 was a heinous attack on democracy, it will be an equally heinous crime for the present Janata Government to follow in the footsteps of its predecessor. Every democratic party, organisation and individual who is committed to the defence of civil liberties and democratic rights is and should be against the proclamation of internal Emergency today as it was done in 1975. The Janata Party, along with all other democratic parties and organisations, is in fact committed to such changes in the Indian Constitution as would preclude the declaration of any internal Emergency, though the Janata is not faithfully adhering to its earlier commitments. They are also committed to such measures as repealing the MISA and other legislations providing for the detention of persons without trial, though the Janata Party and its Central and State Governments have often strayed from the path mapped out in their declarations.

It is with a view to getting the Janata Government to fulfil the promises made in these respects that the CPI(M), alongwith other left and democratic forces, is extending critical support to the Janata Government. We would therefore be the first to come out against the Janata Government if it proceeds to deal with the present day opposition in the manner in which Mrs Gandhi dealt with the then opposition before and after June 25, 1975.

This, however, does not justify the stand adopted by the Congress(I) that the former Prime Minister and caucus around her should not be proceeded against under the normal laws of the land. Their trial and punishment are the pre requisites for restoring democracy. It is no doubt the duty of the Janata Government to provide the former Prime Minister and her aides all the facilities for a fair trial. But the Congress(I) or other supporters of the caucus around the former Prime Minister should not be allowed to thwart the legitimate efforts made by the Government to put the Emergency criminals on trial. For, the facts revealed in the two interim reports of the Shah Commission are too serious for any mercy to be shown to the main perpetrators of the Emergency crimes. Their trial and punishment would prove to be the best if not the only guarantee that what happened in 1975 June and the succeeding months shall never be repeated.

Before proceeding to an examination of the facts revealed by the Shah Commission, let us make the preliminary point that the enquiry conducted by the Commission gave full opportunity to the former Prime Minister and her colleagues to clear themselves if they wanted to do so. The Shah Commission was keen that Indira Gandhi and her close colleagues like Pronab Mukherjee, V C Shukla and D P Chattopadhyaya come before the Commission, rebut the charges contained in the depositions of others (including such Cabinet colleagues of Mrs Gandhi as Brahmananda Reddy, Gokhale, Subramaniam and Pā). They could very well have done all they could to substantiate their contention that the offensive against democracy was launched not by them, but by the then opposition.

But in spite of repeated requests made by the Commission, they declined to participate in its proceedings, assist it and the people to

weigh the various facts and arguments advanced by the supporters and opponents of the then Government. If in spite of this deliberate non co operation on their part, the Commission has drawn certain inferences on the basis of depositions made by witnesses and of the official records made available to it, the Congres(I) leaders of today can have no room for complaint.

Even today, they can avail themselves of the opportunity provided by a trial to prove by facts and figures that the conclusions arrived at by the Commission are wrong and that everything that was done by them (the former Prime Minister and her colleagues) was not only legally and constitutionally correct, but in the larger interests of the nation. They should therefore welcome the proposed trial in a court of law, since it will give them an opportunity to clear themselves of the charges.

That they resisted the enquiry by the Shah Commission and are today resisting a trial in a court of law show that they are themselves conscious of the weakness of their case. It is to cover up this weakness that they are trying to oppose the arrest and trial of those who will be accused of committing heinous crimes if the Janata Government finally decides to launch prosecutions against Mrs. Gandhi and her close collaborators.

The crimes or excesses committed before and during the Emergency can be classified into two categories. Those in the first category may be called crimes against democracy, the most important among them being the declaration of Emergency itself. The second category consists of crimes against individual citizens whose number comes to several hundreds of thousands.

A proper judicial scrutiny of the Shah Commission's findings on these crimes or excesses will expose the former Prime Minister to have been a butcher of democracy, a murderer and torturer of several tens of thousands of men, women and children. We shall in the following pages go into these crimes and excesses, as have been narrated by the Shah Commission in its report.

The circumstances in which the internal Emergency was declared on June 25, 1975 are according to the Commission totally different from what Mrs Gandhi describes in her letter to the Commission. For, the information gathered from the official records and the deposition of several witnesses before the Shah Commission have been summed up as follows in the first Interim Report of the Commission

- "(a) on the economic front there was nothing alarming. On the contrary, the wholesale price index had declined by 7.4 per cent between December 3, 1974 and the last week of March 1975 as per the Economic Survey 1975-76, a Government of India Publication,
- "(b) on the law and order front, the fortnightly reports sent by the Governments of various States to the President of India and by the Chief Secretaries of the States to the Union Home Secretary indicated that the law and order situation was under complete control all over the country,
- "(c) the Home Ministry had received no reports from the State Governments indicating any significant deterioration in the law and order situation in the period immediately preceding the proclamation of Emergency,
- "(d) the Home Ministry had not prepared any contingency plans prior to June 25, 1975, with regard to the imposition of internal Emergency,
- "(e) the Intelligence Bureau had not submitted any report to the Home Ministry any time between 12th of June and 25th June 1975, suggesting that the internal situation in the country warranted the imposition of internal Emergency,
- "(f) the Home Ministry had not submitted any report to the Prime Minister expressing its concern or anxiety about the internal situation in the country" (*Ibid*, page 26)

The above findings of the Commission give a picture which is completely at variance with that Mrs Gandhi claims. There was no justifiable ground either in the prevailing economic or the political situation for the declaration of Emergency. What then

was the real reason why the Emergency was declared? The Commission answers

"Following the judgement of the Allahabad High Court, setting aside the election of Smt Indira Gandhi, there was a spurt of political activity in Delhi in particular and in the rest of India in general

"Apparently an effort was made by the followers of Smt Indira Gandhi to create an atmosphere that she should, notwithstanding that she was unseated and disqualified to stand for election, continue to remain and function as Prime Minister of India regardless of the High Court verdict With that object in view, a number of demonstrations, rallies, and meetings were arranged by her supporters in Delhi and elsewhere "
(P 17)

In the process of organising such demonstrations, rallies and meetings, the State machinery in Delhi and the surrounding states was utilised This is described in detail in the Commission's report We are giving below a few relevant extracts from the Commission's report

"Shri Kishan Chand, the then Lieutenant Governor, Delhi, stated that soon after the pronouncement of the Allahabad High Court judgement he was called to the Prime Minister's house, but he sent Shri Navin Chawla, his Secretary, to proceed to the Prime Minister's house He stated that he learnt from Shri Navin Chawla that in order to cope up with the law and order situation that might develop from the threatened opposition rallies, it was decided to organise rallies in support of the Prime Minister and for this purpose, people had to be collected from various places Shri Kishan Chand also stated that he was told that public utility services would also be mobilised for the purpose These services included the New Delhi Municipal Committee, Delhi Transport Corporation and Delhi Electric Supply undertaking He further stated that rallies and bringing of people to the house of the Prime Minister continued

after the 17th June in order to show support to the Prime Minister "

The Commission then explains in detail how trucks, buses and other vehicles were commandeered for the purpose of organising pro Indira Gandhi demonstrations and rallies from Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and U P besides Delhi itself. Public vehicles were diverted and private vehicles commandeered for organising these demonstrations, rallies and meetings. The question involved in these political activities—whether Indira Gandhi should continue in power or should step down till she is cleared in an appeal to the Supreme Court—has nothing to do with the interests of the nation at large or its people. It was a matter which concerned the then Prime Minister and those around her. By no stretch of imagination can it be considered that the answer to the question did in any way affect the interests of the country. Let us once again quote Mrs. Gandhi's reply to the Shah Commission

"Nothing had been found by the High Court against me which smacked of moral turpitude. I had lost on a legal technicality but the law also gave me the right to reconsideration of the judgement by the High Court. And the act of seeking to remove a duly elected leader of the majority party through threats to gherao me and a call to the army and the police to revolt could not be justified in the name of any known democratic principles " (P 27)

Mrs. Gandhi makes the above observation as if it is an incontrovertible truth. There were, however, a large number of people (including a considerable section within her own ruling Congress Party) who thought that constitutional and moral propriety demanded that she should step down for the intervening period between the delivery of the Allahabad judgement and the final disposal of the case by the Supreme Court.

There were thus two points of view on the significance, implications, and the action that should follow the delivery of the Allahabad judgement—one held by Mrs. Gandhi's supporters and the other by her opponents including a considerable section within

her own party. The two points of view and those who adhered to them came into conflict with each other. The democratic solution to this conflict was to allow the Parliamentary institutions including the democratic discussion inside the ruling party to go on and come to a decision.

This, however, did not suit or conform to the interests of Mrs. Gandhi. For, a public debate on the issue, combined with a free debate inside the ruling party, would have obliged her to step down till the Supreme Court gives its decision. She therefore decided to use everything in her power, including the use of official machinery for her own purposes, to create a political atmosphere in which her adversaries inside the ruling party would first be cowed down, followed by a total suppression of the opposition. The services of a section within the ruling party was therefore used to organise rallies demanding that she should continue as Prime Minister despite the Allahabad judgement. The Delhi and neighbouring administrations were also made to join the pro-Indira section of the ruling party.

As this was a naked violation of the law as it stood, some of the officers drew the attention of their political bosses to it. They were however overruled. Here is what the Chief Secretary of Punjab told the Commission:

"When it came to my knowledge that official machinery was being utilised for organising transport and mustering men and money for the purpose, I advised the then Chief Minister not to let Government and semi-government agencies and their personnel being used in support of a political struggle with which they as such were not concerned. This advice was not liked, nor did it have much effect and official machinery continued to be utilised for mobilising men, money and transport to be sent to Delhi." (P. 19)

Behind these attempts at building an ostensibly "democratic" movement to see that Mrs. Gandhi does not step down, steps were being taken to suppress any democratic movement that would develop around the demand that she should step down. "Several meetings", the then Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, Shri Kishan

Chand, told the Commission, "were held in the Home Ministry to consider as to how best the situation developing from the speeches of Shri Jayaprakash Narayan could be dealt with. At the official level, the view was that whatever might be done in respect of other leaders, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan's arrest would make it more difficult to preserve public peace than if he was not arrested. This view eventually did not prevail." (P 20)

That such views were being expressed by a section of the officials, while a section of the Congress MPs and other party leaders were making the demand that she should step down made it necessary for the then Prime Minister to take into her confidence only that section of the officials and her party colleagues who would stand with her through thick and thin. Some of her cabinet colleagues were considered "security risks." They were considered on par with the opposition leaders.

Jagjivan Ram for instance stated before the Commission that "even before the imposition of the Emergency his movements were watched and that his telephone was tapped. This he was able to assert on the basis of the information which was furnished to him by the concerned officials who owed loyalty to him. He was very critical of the Intelligence Bureau who, he said, was feeding the Prime Minister with information—some correct, some incorrect and some fabricated. After the imposition of the Emergency, the watch on him was intensified. Shri Jagjivan Ram felt very strongly about the physical watch on the Ministers and citizen as it was a gross interference with the rights of citizens and their individual freedom which should not be permitted in a democracy. He felt that this was happening even before the Emergency." (P 20)

It was in these circumstances that, to quote the Commission's finding, "the decision to take certain drastic steps including even the declaration of Emergency was apparently in contemplation even as early as June 22, 1975. On June 22, 1975, Shri R. K. Dhawan rang up the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Shri J. Vengal Rao and told him to be available at Delhi on June 24, 1975, when the judgement of the Supreme Court relating to the stay order applied for by Smt. Gandhi pending decision of the appeal filed by her was expected to be announced. Presumably, the order which

the Supreme Court would make was to be the deciding factor on whether the drastic action contemplated to be taken should in effect be instituted. If the judgement had been in the nature of a categorical and an unconditional stay, probably no action of the nature which was ultimately taken would have followed. But the Supreme Court gave only a conditional order "

"Since the judgement was confidential, it appears to have been decided that the plan of taking drastic action was to be gone through with expedition and despatch. According to Shri Kishan Chand, Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, even as early as the evening of 23rd, a decision had been taken to take the opposition leaders into custody soon after the 'Opposition' rally scheduled for June 24 was held. Lists of the 'Opposition' leaders who were to be arrested were also under preparation " (P 21)

This was followed by hectic moves in Delhi and many of the State capitals. Some Chief Ministers and a section of the top officers were taken into confidence, while the other Chief Ministers, and key officers concerned with the adoption of the "drastic steps" contemplated, but who happened to be not in the good books of the Prime Minister, were kept in the dark. To quote the Commission again

"In varying degrees, the Chief Ministers of several States were taken into confidence as early as the morning of June 25 and they had been instructed to take steps to take action on receipt of the advice from the Prime Minister's house that night. Those who had information to this effect were the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, M P, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar and West Bengal. The Lieutenant Governor of Delhi was fully in the picture even before June 25, 1975 " (P 23)

As for the officers and Ministers of the Union Cabinet, the Commission says, "on the basis of the evidence it is clear that some of the important functionaries in the Home Ministry, Cabinet Secretariat, and the Prime Minister's Secretariat who should have been consulted before such an important decision was taken did not know anything about the proclamation of

Emergency till very late and some of them learnt about it only on the morning of June 26, 1975 " (P 25)

Among the officers who were thus kept in the dark were the Secretary to the Prime Minister, P N Dhar, the Cabinet Secretary B D Pandey, the Director of Intelligence Bureau, Atma Jayaram and the Home Secretary to the Government of India, S L Khurana Every one of these officers came to know about the declaration of Emergency only after the declaration was made—some of them only in the morning of June 26 As for the Cabinet Ministers,

"Shri H R Gokhale, former Minister of Law and Justice, came to know about the proclamation of the Emergency for the first time at the Cabinet meeting held on the morning of June 26, 1975 Neither he nor his Ministry was consulted with regard to the proclamation of Emergency at any time before, nor was the proclamation whetted by him or by his Ministry " (P 25)

"Shri Om Mehta, the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, appears to have been taken into confidence much earlier than the Home Minister, Shri K Brahmananda Reddy, who came into the picture only when the draft proclamation was forwarded to the President "

"Shri Uma Shankar Dikshit and Shri Keshav Dev Malaviya, the Central Ministers, were as surprised as he (the then Chief Minister of U P, Bahuguna) was about the proclamation of Emergency "

It is worthy of mention that the Government of India (Transaction of Business) Rules provides that "cases relating to proclamation of Emergency under Articles 352 to 360 of the Constitution and other matters related thereto" should be brought to the Cabinet Only after the Cabinet has given its approval shall the Prime Minister recommend to the President that the Emergency be declared" This, however, was not done in the present case The Prime Minister made the recommendation and had the President sign the declaration and then placed the question before the Cabinet

Shri K Balachandran, Secretary to the President, stated in his deposition to the Commission that "the Prime Minister had stated that she was not consulting the Cabinet due to shortage of time and the matter was urgent and that she was therefore

permitting a departure from the Transaction of Business Rules in exercise of her power under Rule 12 thereof" According to Shri Balachandran, he had advised the President that "It would be constitutionally impermissible for him to act in the manner suggested in that letter and that he had to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers and therefore his personal satisfaction would not arise The letter from the Prime Minister indicated that the Cabinet had not considered the matter Moreover, it was worded in such a manner as would make it appear that the decision to declare the Emergency was that of the President based on his personal satisfaction The President apparently saw the force of this argument and contacted the Prime Minister on the telephone immediately thereafter Afterwards, he left the President's room and came back after about ten minutes In the intervening brief period, Shri Dhawan had visited the President and had delivered the draft of the proclamation of Emergency for his signature The President told him that he had signed the proclamation and given the same to Shri Dhawan, who had taken it back with him along with the Prime Minister's letter" (Pp 24 25)

It is not known what happened during the ten minutes that intervened between Shri Balachandran's departure from the President and his return when he was told that the President had already signed the proclamation The Prime Minister's advice was—this is the main point here—in violation of the rules of procedure The argument that she had no time to consult the Cabinet would not hold water For, as the Commission observes

"If a Cabinet meeting could be convened at 90 minutes' notice, as it was actually done on the morning of June 26, there was no reason why a Cabinet meeting could not have been held at any time between her first visit to the President at 5 p m on June 25, and the signing of the proclamation at about 11 to 11 30 p m on the same night At any rate, the Commission has enough evidence to show that Smt Indira Gandhi planned the imposition of the Emergency at least as early as June 22 She had also shared the thought with some of her political confidants as early as the morning of June 25 " (Interim Report II, Pp 140 141)

The decision on the declaration of Emergency in June 1975 was thus contrary to all the laws and established procedures of the democratic Government prescribed under the Constitution of India Mrs Gandhi did not care for such rules and established procedures under the democratic set up She in fact compares herself to the late President De Gaulle of France who, as is well known, used his authority to replace the parliamentary democratic set up by personal rule In her reply to the Shah Commission, she observed

"A chaotic state of affairs similar to that in India before July 1975 prevailed in France when De Gaulle took power in 1958 His major response was constitutional reform and the intervention of Art 16 under the new Constitution which goes a long way to show how necessary it became for my Government to resort to the Emergency provisions of the Constitution if India were to pull herself out of the impending disaster The new article of the French Constitution provided *inter alia* that 'when the regular functioning of the Constitutional Governmental authorities is interrupted, the President of the Republic shall take the measures commended by the circumstances' to restore order" (Report I, P 27)

Here is a brazen defence not only of the declaration of Emergency but of the subversion of the Constitution which was subsequently attempted by Mrs Gandhi and the caucus around her

We are referring to the proposal made by some of her closest confidants to make such far reaching changes in the Constitution as to replace the parliamentary system (under which the Executive is responsible to the legislature and through it to the people) by the Presidential system (under which the personal rule of the Head of the State has no such checks) That such a proposal was seriously considered but had to be abandoned, thanks to the vigorous resistance offered not only by the Opposition but by influential sections within the ruling party itself is well known Mrs Gandhi and her colleagues in fact denied any connection between that notorious proposal and the ruling circles in the ruling party

Here however is the cat coming out of the bag. Even after all that happened in the latter half of 1976 and during the first ten months of 1977, Mrs Gandhi in a serious document—argues that the situation in which she had the Emergency declared was one in which the Presidential system was needed to save the country.

Fortunately, for us now, all that she had stood for in 1975 June and the subsequent months till she was thrown out of office has been negated by history.

The Emergency regime has not only been overthrown but denounced by several sections of the people who had supported it then. The CPI as a whole has done it. That section of Congressmen who broke with Mrs Gandhi and are now in the Swaran Singh Congress, have not yet denounced the Emergency as such, but publicly disapprove of the excesses committed under it.

All the political parties in the country, including the Congress(I) have agreed that the notorious 42nd Amendment of the Constitution should be drastically amended, if not repealed. Furthermore, that the provision for declaring internal Emergency should be taken away from the Constitution.

It is also generally agreed that what we call the basic features of the Constitution (which includes the parliamentary system) should not be amended by Parliament unless the question is put before the people and their consent secured in a referendum.

In spite of all these developments of the last year and a half however, the Congress(I) President and former Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, is putting up a stout defence not only of the Emergency but also a change from the parliamentary into the Presidential system. This shows that the threat of authoritarianism is still present before us. If in the wake of the disillusionment of the people after a year and a half of the Janata rule, large sections of the people plump for the Congress(I) as the alternative to the Janata rule, it is clear, 1975-77 will be repeated with intensified fury.

Before going into the political meaning of this attempt of the Congress(I) to stage a come back, let us note that, although the proposal mooted to so amend the Constitution as to establish the Presidential system of administration was not successful, the

Emergency regime happened to be the Presidential system in fact, though not in words. For, although the post of President as the ornamental head of State continued in existence, the Prime Minister assumed to herself all the powers which the head of State under the Presidential system normally wields.

As a matter of fact, the Prime Minister of India in 1975-77 was more powerful than the President of say, the United States. The latter is the head of only the Executive administration of the country. He is held in check on the one hand by the legislature (the two Houses of the Congress) and on the other hand, by a vigilant judiciary. Over and above these statutory checks on the President is the powerful press which is free to expose him to such an extent that a good part of the misdeeds of a former President, Richard Nixon, came out in public and then was taken up by the Congress and the judiciary. No such checks were available against the authoritarian Prime Minister of India in 1975-77. Let us make extensive quotations from the observations of the Shah Commission.

The Second Interim Report of the Commission has certain observations to make on the basis of its findings on a number of aspects of the Emergency regime contained in the First and Second Interim Reports. The concluding chapter of the Interim Report begins as follows:

"The Commission has by now a fairly comprehensive view of the excesses committed in Delhi from the period covered by the terms of reference, especially in relation to the circumstances in which the imposition of the Emergency was recommended, the manner in which certain key appointments were made for collateral purposes, the callousness with which arrests were ordered on false allegations to serve personal or party objectives and with a view to smother protest, the manner in which statutory provisions governing detentions, confirmations of detentions and review of the detention orders were honoured in their breach, the total indifference displayed in considering even reasonable requests for paroles and for revocation of detention orders and the ease with which established administrative procedures and conventions were subverted for the benefit of individuals, who had

contacts at the right places. With the press gagged and a resultant blackout of authentic information, arbitrary arrests and detentions went on apace. Effective dissent was smothered, followed by a general erosion of democratic values. High handed and arbitrary actions were carried out with impunity. The nation was initially in a state of shock and then of stupor, unable to realise the directions and full implications of the actions of the Government and its functionaries. Tyrants sprouted at all levels overnight—tyrants whose claim to authority was largely based on their proximity to the seats of power. The attitude of the general run of public functionaries was largely characterised by a paralysis of the will to do the right and proper thing. The ethical considerations inherent in public behaviour became generally dim and in many cases, beyond the mental grasp of many of the public functionaries. Desire for self preservation as admitted by a number of public servants at various levels became the sole motivation for their official actions and behaviour. Anxiety to survive at any cost formed the keynote of approach to the problems that came before many of them. The fear generated by the mere threat and without even the actual use of the weapon of detention under MISA became so pervasive that the general run of public servants acted as willing tools of tyranny. That the primary and not infrequently the sole motivation in the case of a number of public servants who acted unlawfully to the prejudice of the rights of citizens was the desire for self protection—desire for survival, may be regarded as some extenuation of their conduct. Yet, if the nation is to preserve the fundamental values of a democratic society, every person whether a public functionary or private citizen must display a degree of vigilance and willingness to sacrifice. Without the awareness of what is right and a desire to act according to what is right, there may be no realisation of what is wrong. During the Emergency, in many public functionaries, the dividing line between the right and wrong, moral and immoral, ceased to exist " (Interim Report II, P 140)

This indeed is an indictment not only of the former Prime Minister and her colleagues but of the entire political system. It shows that democracy can be turned into its very opposite if the

people at large including the leaders and ranks of the ruling party, are not vigilant and if the administration of the country and the organisation of the ruling party are taken hold of by a power hungry individual, who rallies around him or her a team of operators in the political and administrative fields whose sole qualification is loyalty to that individual Mrs Gandhi, as is known, first won the confidence of large numbers of radically minded people by her apparently leftist stance but subsequently seized full control over the administration and party organs—making and unmaking Chief Ministers and provincial heads of the ruling party and resorting to the same technique to the administrative personnel It was this process which ultimately ended in clamping the Emergency on the country This should be a lesson to all those who are interested in defending democracy and resisting authoritarianism Let us however confine ourselves here to what was done during the days of Emergency The Commission has the following to say with regard to the restrictions imposed on the press and its consequences

"Absence of the freedom of the Press and the severity of the censorship rules coupled with *ad hoc* authoritarian oral orders rendered the channels of communication over the Sub Continent choked and polluted Rumours became the accepted channels of communication The Commission noted with surprise the deposition of a research scholar, Kumari Aditi Gupta of the Delhi University who had visited the Turkman Gate areas in the days immediately following the firing She herself believed that about 400 people had been killed in the police firing on April 19, 1976, whereas official figures given at that time and sustained till today is only 6 Censorship of news and the manner in which the media were manipulated should be a lesson to the Government and to the people that in a vast country like ours blanketing of news in the way in which it was done has serious repercussions on the lives and thought of the people The Commission noted with concern the observations made by Shri Kuldip Nayar that there were not many people even among senior journalists to go along with him when he took up the matter of censorship with the Press Council " (P 141)

While we are on the suppression of the Press during the Emergency, we may note that at the very time when the Emergency was being declared, a decision was taken "at an irresponsible level" as the Commission states, "for closing down the Courts and cutting off the electricity connections to the Press. What happened in the months following the declaration of Emergency with regard to the High Court Judges appears to have been merely an extension of the idea conceived on the night of the 25th on account of which Shri S S Ray had felt very uneasy and had spoken to Smt Indira Gandhi before leaving her residence that night " (P 141)

"The administration in a democratic society," the Commission goes on, "has a special responsibility to ensure that the proceedings of the Law Courts and the Parliament are available to the people at all times through the Press and other media. But this was sought to be smothered during the period of Emergency. The tell tale notings left in the file of Justice Agarwal of the Delhi Court regarding the judgement in Kuldip Nayar's case and the consequences that followed both for Justice Agarwal and Justice Rangarajan raise certain very grave issues on the subject of the independence of the judiciary. The state owes it to the nation to assure that this vital link of the Government will not be subjected to strains which might even indirectly operate as punitive merely because of pronouncements not to the liking of the executive authority " (Pp 141 142)

The cases of Justice Agarwal and Justice Rangarajan referred to above have been dealt with in the report in great detail. We may just summarise it by saying that these are the Judges who gave their judgement against the Government in regard to the detention of Kuldip Nayar. This naturally was not to the liking of the Government.

It was with this in mind that the then Prime Minister herself dealt with the recommendations made by the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court and by the Law Minister to make the appointment of Agarwal permanent (he was then holding the post of High Court Judge only provisionally). Overruling the recommendations of the Chief Justice of the High Court and the

Law Minister, the Prime Minister rejected the proposal to confirm Agarwal in the permanent post of High Court Judge and reverted him to the post of Sessions Judge

In the case of Rangarajan, there was no question of his promotion or demotion, he was already occupying the permanent post of High Court Judge. But he was transferred from Delhi to Assam

This, however, is not confined to the Law Ministry. In the Finance Ministry, too, with regard to certain key appointments, the Minister concerned had made certain recommendations on the basis of the qualifications and the experience of the candidates concerned. The Prime Minister, however, turned down these recommendations and had people appointed on the basis of recommendations made by the men and women of the caucus around her. Considering these cases and several others concerning all Ministries and Departments, the Commission has given its finding

" that a calculated effort was made to place persons in vital positions who were willing to further the interests of the centre of power in gross violation of established administrative norms and practices. Indisputably, every Government must have the right to select its own functionaries, especially for performing duties pertaining to important jobs, but in doing so, the rules of Government as framed for making such appointments should not be thrown to the winds. In some of the cases brought before the Commission, the recommendations of the Public Enterprises Selection Board were brushed aside and persons who had been interviewed and not considered fit for appointment by the PESB were appointed. Important financial institutions such as the Reserve Bank, the State Bank of India and the Punjab National Bank came to be controlled through postings of men whose selection did not conform to the accepted norms. The conduct of the Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes, in certain

matters has come to the adverse notice of the Commission. Some of these beneficiaries of Government actions were willing to go along with the power centres, though in the process they had to disregard the accepted norms and practices. These posts are some of the important levers of power. This is evident from the use to which some of the incumbents of these posts are shown to have been put " (P 147)

Having studied a number of cases in which persons had been detained under the provisions of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, the Commission says that the persons so detained included "acknowledged national leaders, members of banned and not banned organisations and political parties, students, teachers, trade union leaders, lawyers, juveniles, respected writers, journalists and ordinary criminals—in short, a broad spectrum of cases of persons drawn from almost every walk of life " (P 147)

What is the finding of the Commission with regard to the use of MISA?

"Forging of records, fabrication of grounds for detention, ante-dating of detention orders, the callousness with which the requests of the detenus for revocation of orders of detention or even parole were ignored—in short, the manner in which a large majority of these persons were incarcerated for the only fault, namely, dissent or suspected dissent from the views of the centres of power should be a warning to every thinking man as to how an act initially intended to serve an extremely limited purpose in dealing with the misdeeds of a special category of persons can be given such a wide and comprehensive application so as to embrace all sections of population to penalise dissent " (P 147)

Let us finally come to the case of demolitions carried out in Delhi. The Commission says "There is the poignant story of a vast majority of the demolitions carried out by the authorities which were attended by complete disregard for the human suffering of persons in every humble walk of life to whom the demolition of their houses meant complete ruination and in some cases, the loss of a life time's savings " Having made recommendations to the Government that it should take

"immediate steps to remedy the wrongs and also to ensure that the conditions in the resettlement colonies are rendered safe, clean and convenient," the Commission adds

"It was disconcerting for the Commission to note that some of the demolitions were carried out at the instance of and to pander to the whims of Shri Sanjay Gandhi who was not answerable to anybody and who held no position whatever in the administrative scheme. Tragic stories regarding the doings of Shri Sanjay Gandhi in the matter of demolitions, pressurising the District Magistrate of Delhi and the other Magistrates to own up a firing order at the Turkman Gate area in the face of pleadings of the concerned Magistrate about his not having issued the said firing order have been unfolded in the course of the evidence before the Commission. Even arrests of responsible citizens were carried out at the instance of Shri Sanjay Gandhi. The Commission had probed the case of the Boeing deal and seen how the financial projections of the Boeing deal were shown to people who were not at all concerned with the matter. The Government has a special responsibility to ensure that extra constitutional centres of power are not allowed to grow, and if and when located, to snuff them out ruthlessly. As the Commission had occasion to observe, 'in the final analysis, this country will be governed well or ill, by the competence and character of the Government officers. If they are content to be mere tools and willing to lend themselves to questionable objectives, there will never be a dearth of unscrupulous operators. There is no substitute for a vigilant inquiring and enlightened public opinion which keeps a close watch on the doings of the public servants' " (P 144)

Here is personal rule in its most naked form. Democratic functioning of the ruling party, the strict observance of the rules of procedure laid down for the functioning of the administrative

system, the right of the press and popular organisations to expose the misdeeds of any political leader or officer of the Government—all these are thrown to the winds. Only the will of the supreme leader of the party and the Government who has before her the model of De Gaulle for her to imitate is relevant. Such is the political organisational set up that came into being and which ended in the painful Emergency regime.

The regrettable part of the whole story however is that the very same leader who stood at the head of all this during the 21 month long Emergency period is today trying to re enact the tragic drama once again. She has been emboldened to stake her claim for getting absolute power once again because of the failings and weaknesses of the Janata leaders and because of the opportunism of some Congress leaders who want to bask in the sun of the "charismatic personality".

Everybody who values democracy would agree that this is a serious threat to the nation. Averting this threat is therefore the common duty of all those who might disagree on a number of other questions but agree that the resurgence or rebirth of authoritarianism should at all costs be prevented. No political party, organisation, group or individual is safe if the perpetrators of the crimes of the Emergency period are allowed to go scot free, rather than being given exemplary punishment.

It is worthy of note in this context that Mrs. Gandhi in her letter to the Commission takes objection to the very idea of trying and punishing those who had participated in the crimes of the Emergency. "It would be impossible", she says, "for a democratically elected Government to function effectively if it has to live under the fear of politically inspired inquisitorial proceedings against its policies and decisions by a subsequent Government".

This is nothing but a plea for licence for any Prime Minister to do what he or she likes during the tenure of office. It might be recalled that an attempt had been made by Mrs. Gandhi during the Emergency to push through both Houses of Parliament a Constitution Amending Bill providing for exemption to the Prime Minister from being proceeded against for any crime during the

whole of his or her life. This was too much even for the docile Congress Parliamentary Party of the Emergency period and had therefore ultimately to be dropped. It is this discredited proposal that she once again makes after being thrown out of office.

This should be seen along with the theory that she propounded at the time of declaring the Emergency that any danger to her continuing in power was a serious danger to the nation and that therefore anything is permissible to avert it, including the abrogation of fundamental rights inscribed in the Constitution. This whole theory was immortalised in the notorious slogan which became popular during the Emergency period—"India is Indira, Indira is India". It reminds us of the notorious claim made by a French ruler, "I am the State".

The question arises whether a person who remained in the office of the Prime Minister for nine years and then, faced with a situation in which she had to step down from the office following a High Court judgement, came down with a heavy hand on anybody and everybody who joined in demanding that she step down, should be allowed to go unpunished. Everybody who has the interest of democracy at heart would agree that exemplary punishment should be meted out to such a person, so that the story shall not be repeated.

Objections are raised that this is impossible under the existing laws. An attack on the democratic institutions of the country by the head of the Government, it is argued, does not find a place among the crimes listed in the relevant laws. Ministers and leaders of the ruling Janata Party give expression to their sense of helplessness and argue that, even if a new legislation is enacted now to make this a punishable offence, it cannot be applied retrospectively.

We would, however, submit that the crime which the former Prime Minister is proved to have committed (in terms of the Shah Commission Report) is heinous enough to deserve exemplary punishment. Trial and punishment of the former Prime Minister and her aides is therefore morally and politically justifiable, one might go further and say that this is an obligation on Parliament and the Government of the country. If there are loopholes or

lacunae in the provisions of the existing laws which bar such proceedings against her, it is the duty of the legal and constitutional *pundits* who are advising the Government to remove the lacunae

Involved in this are the lives of several thousands who were thrown to the wolves during the 21 month long Emergency and the lives of many more who would have to share the same fate if the lacunae in the existing laws are not removed. This is a moral political question which cannot and should not be evaded under the cover of legal technicalities. Law after all, is for the people, and, if the interests of the people require a change in it, the change should be made

RSS-PAC Hand In Aligarh*

Harkishan Singh Surjeet

For the last ten days since October 5, 1978 all attention has been riveted on the happenings in Aligarh in which inhuman atrocities have been committed against the Muslim minority, they have been attacked and killed, some of them even burnt alive, and their houses and shops have been looted and set on fire. The Muslim minority is desperately and rightly asking the question—is it for this that we fought against the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi and played our part in bringing the Janata Party to power?

The Press on the whole has given a correct version of the Aligarh incidents. But the statements by some responsible leaders of the Janata and some spokesmen of the Janata Government of U.P. have created serious misgivings in the people belonging to the minority community.

I went to Aligarh on October 15, went round the affected areas and also visited the hospital. I met some of the victims admitted to hospital, others who were sufferers and eyewitnesses. The facts they gave about the tragic events are incontrovertible, and from all accounts it is clear that it was an organised force under the leadership of the RSS, actively aided and abetted by the local police and the Provincial Armed Constabulary, that was responsible for the bloody pogrom in Aligarh.

I went to Manik Chowk where poor Muslims—vendors, rickshaw pullers etc.—live in a small pocket surrounded by the houses of well-to-do people belonging to the majority community.

*Published as a booklet in October 1978. RSS is the abbreviation of Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh—the parent organisation of erstwhile JANA SANGHA and present BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY. PAC means the Provincial Armed Constabulary of the State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

The mansion of City Janata Party President, Krishna Kumar Navman, an RSS leader, houses of some other Janata leaders are located in this area. Here all the houses of Muslims have been burnt down. Not only cloth soaked in kerosene, but explosives had also been used to blow up and burn the houses. This was one of the areas where people had been burnt alive. I myself saw in one of the houses, where a person had been burnt and then hanged, the rope with the noose still hanging from a beam, a mute witness to the horrifying brutality. In another house, a young boy Salim, who was recently married, was burnt alive. His father has been demented by the sight of his son being burnt alive and now wanders around carrying a photograph of his son and daughter-in-law. With all their belongings gone when their houses were razed women sit outside wailing. I saw a cart outside a house in which along with ashes were the bones of those who had been burnt. The people in this area told me of eight killings there.

In Phool Chauraha, again, which I visited next, I found that only shops owned by the Muslims had been looted and destroyed. Here the people reported six killings. In Chauraha Abdul Karim, seven shops including the well known Albert Tailors had been burnt down. Even on the day previous to my visit, Shahi Imam Abdulla Bokhari of the Delhi Jama Masjid had been struck by a stone while he was visiting that area.

It was in the Bani Israilan area that I found the biggest evidence of police vandalism. Here the Provincial Armed Constabulary had stood on top of houses belonging to the majority community and deliberately opened fire on the houses belonging to the minority community. The intensity of the firing can be gauged even today from the numerous bullet marks on walls of houses even in the gullies and also in a mosque. In the Shishewala Masjid one person was killed right inside the mosque. In the upper Court area just behind the Kotwali, shops of Muslims became objects of arson.

I was told that people had been taken out of cinema houses, tortured and killed. The gate keeper of Lakshmi Cinema said that four women were taken out of it and they have not been heard of since. In the Apsara Talkies, three persons were killed.

It is not possible to get a full tally of the killings. Many people are still missing. But one thing is clear, the Government's figure has no relevance to reality. Local people estimate that the number of deaths will be anywhere over a hundred.

I saw Shamim in the hospital. He is an employee of the Aligarh University. He was trying to protect children when the PAC were firing from housetops. A bullet hit him on the side of the head and pierced its way to the other just behind the forehead. He is still lying unconscious in the Medical College Hospital and the doctors are fighting a hard struggle to save him.

Another person who was similarly protecting children in an area was beaten and set on fire. He is alive and when I met him in the hospital I could see burns all over his body. He is also an employee of the University. Another victim I met in the hospital is Ayub, hit in the chest by a bullet. In another place, I came to know that the sixteen year old son of a Lecturer in the Department of Education in the Aligarh University, Sattar, and his friend, also sixteen year old, have been missing.

All the accusing fingers in Aligarh, not only of the Muslim minority but the all secular minded and democratic people, are pointed at the RSS leader, Krishna Kumar Navman, for the holocaust in Aligarh.

The existence of the Muslim University here has always been a sore point with the RSS. With the election victory of the Janata in the State and allegiance of some top officials to their communal ideology, the RSS leaders have been feeling that they are on the top of the world. In this background came a series of incidents.

First came the dispute over the opening of the door of a newly built cinema house into a mohalla. The owner of the cinema, said to be a relative of Navman, Navman himself and other RSS leaders were determined to have that door over the objection of the Muslim and Harijan residents of the mohalla.

Then came the Mahadev Mela at Khereshwar on September 12. A wrestling match was planned to decide the "Zila Kesari" and a group of Muslim wrestlers belonging to the Turrih Shah were asked to come to the exclusively Hindu Mela. Though the referee's verdict was a draw, the wrestlers of the majority group

refused to accept the decision and there was a free for all in which the Muslims were severely beaten up

Tension was mounting up in the city after the incident and the District Magistrate in an effort to keep the situation under control arrested 248 bad characters and put them in prison. But RSS leader Navman intervened and put pressure to get about a hundred of them released. But for these releases, the situation could still have been kept under control. The U P Agriculture Minister Rajender Singh himself is on record that the release of the persons arrested after the September 12 incident was unfortunate.

In the night of October 3, a known anti social element, locally known as "Bhura Pahalwan", was stabbed and injured and was removed to the hospital. Earlier, a follower of the Congress (I), he had switched his loyalties to the RSS. His assailants are known to be still at large, but the incident was enough for the RSS elements to whip up further tension and frenzy against the minority community.

Bhura Pahalwan succumbed to his injuries in the hospital at 2.35 p.m. on October 5. Just before that two events took place which have to be noted.

After the stabbing incident on the 3rd, several persons had been taken into custody as a precautionary measure. Krishna Kumar Navman and a group of RSS workers gheraoed the District Magistrate in the morning of October 5 and forced him through threats and abuse to announce the release of a number of persons belonging to the RSS. The second event, according to reports, was a meeting held in the office of the Vidyarthi Parishad. These two events were the prologue for what happened late on the 5th. Another ominous development was that the Minister whom the Chief Minister deputed to Aligarh was a known RSS man, Kalyan Singh, Minister of Health.

Some 60 RSS elements gathered in the hospital and were there at the time of Bhura Pahalwan's death. They were allowed by the PAC platoon to "snatch" the body from their hands while four gazetted officers were present, and take it in a procession shouting slogans like "khun ka badla khun se lenge", "ek ke badle das

marenge", etc It is being pointed out by every one that the core of the mob who took the dead body out in the procession consisted of those RSS elements who had been earlier arrested and then released at the pressure of Navman

The procession with the body did not take the direct and shortest route to the dead man's house It hurried from the Civil Hospital to the Baradari and then to Mahavirganj through Chauraha Abdul Karim to Kanwariganj on the other side of the town It was not by accident that this route was taken, it was deliberately chosen as it passed, through Muslim pockets in predominantly Hindu areas By that time about 2000 people had gathered in the procession and the attack on these Muslim pockets began

Curfew was imposed at 4 p m on the whole town except Civil Lines and the University areas

The connivance of the police and the PAC with the RSS mob on its murder and pillage mission becomes all the more clear when it is realised that it was after the curfew was imposed that the RSS crowd gathered at Manik Chowk Around 5 p m this crowd launched its surprise attacks on the unsuspecting Muslims of the locality confined to their houses because of the curfew and began killing them and destroying their property The attackers had with them balls of cloth soaked in kerosene and explosives to set fire to the property of the Muslim artisans and workers The attacks were directed against the houses of Muslims situated next to the palatial mansions of big traders belonging to the majority community and the cinema house mentioned earlier Shots were also fired on the Muslims confined to their houses from top of adjoining houses Later these positions were taken by the PAC who continued the firing against the same targets

The attacks on the minority community went on till 11 p m without the police or the PAC making the slightest effort to stop them On the other hand, the police and the PAC themselves launched attacks on the minority community The close liaison between the city Magistrate and the PAC Commanding Officer on the one side and the RSS elements on the other could be clearly seen by everybody

But this connivance went even further enabling the RSS thugs to continue their murderous activities. Under Minister Kalyan Singh's protection, with Krishna Kumar Navman's intervention and the help of the City Magistrate, the RSS elements were able to secure a large number of curfew passes which enabled Navman to transport his militia from place to place during the curfew hours. It is these elements who tried to spread the disturbances to the Civil Lines and University areas. In the morning of October 8, a PAC Officer tried to stop some of these RSS workers who were roaming around the Manik Chowk area and he was reported to have been assaulted by Navman and his followers. Navman was arrested for this but was immediately released at the intervention of RSS Minister Kalyan Singh. Even *The Times of India* commented critically on his release. And that issue of *The Times of India* was not allowed inside Aligarh.

When Chief Minister Ram Naresh Yadav visited Aligarh on October 8—till then he had not thought it necessary to visit the disturbed town, representatives of political parties including non-RSS sections of the Janata Party, strongly expressed their resentment against the free hand given to the RSS. As a result of this protest, the District Magistrate cancelled all curfew passes except those given to Government functionaries and Pressman.

But that did not deter the RSS hooligans. They continued to be on the streets with impunity. Even on the day the Chief Minister was in the town, Navman and his followers were seen jumping from housetop to housetop with lethal weapons in their hands.

On October 10, two prominent RSS workers—Vijay Prakash and Hari Nath Singh—were stopped by City DSP Piyarelal while they were moving about in the Madar Gate areas close to Manik Chowk. They were arrested and brought to the police station. But as soon as their arrests were known, Minister Kalyan Singh rushed to their rescue. Not only were the two RSS men released immediately on mere personal bonds, the DSP was asked to proceed on leave and made to leave Aligarh on the same day. The DIG Onkar Sharma expressed public regrets over the arrests and promised to investigate the RSS men's charges against the DSP.

These few incidents out of many more like them are illustrative of the way the RSS took over control of the town on October 5 and in the following days and continued to terrorise the minority community. They manufactured explosives with impunity, roamed the streets and burst crackers at night to spread alarm and terror.

Against these events of murder and pillage organised by the RSS against the minority community, it was refreshing to find that communal passions had not swayed the vast bulk of the town's population. Many are the Hindus who gave protection to their Muslim brethren. The students and teachers of Aligarh University under the leadership of Dr. Naseem Ansari did splendid work, both in the matter of maintaining peace and giving relief to the victims of the RSS onslaught.

A Janata Party delegation visited Aligarh to make an on the spot study. I was told that Krishna Kant, one of the members of the delegation, had expressed to many people belonging to the minority community that what happened in Aligarh was a ghastly affair by the RSS.

The occurrences in Aligarh denote a menacing development. They not only belie all the claims that the Janata Party has been making, but portends a serious danger to the entire democratic movement. They are a warning that unless all the secular and democratic forces unitedly exert their efforts to bar the path of communalists like the RSS, the country will witness many more such attacks in many other places against the minority community. That will mean the death knell of everything that the secular and democratic forces cherish.

The Muslim masses are gradually being drawn into the democratic movement. They took a brave stand against the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi and contributed their honourable share to the defeat of that regime. They are also being drawn into the movements of the working people—of the working class, peasantry and so on. All this is certainly not to the liking of the vested interests in the minority community. They would like to keep the Muslim masses under their thumb by appeal to religion so as to advance their own narrow interests. The aggressiveness

of majority communalism will be exploited by them to build up what can be termed as "reverse" or "defensive" communalism in the minority That will also be a grievous blow to the democratic forces

The ruling classes and the vested interests have ever used casteism, communalism, linguistic chauvinism, etc , to hide the real face of their exploitative regime and divert the attention of the people from their own misrule, to divert them from the struggle against the anti people policies of the ruling classes by dividing them and making them fight each other

All the democratic forces in the country to whichever party they may belong, have to unitedly campaign to expose and isolate arch communalists and to protect the minorities

The democratic forces in the Janata Party should remember that if any one surrenders before communal forces like the RSS because of the compulsions of their inner party situation, nothing will be able to save them or their party They should firmly take their place along with other democratic forces to wipe out the communal canker in our body politic

[Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet, member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) after visiting Aligarh, had issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on October 16, 1978

I am amazed to find that Janata Party President Chandia Sekhar has been misled into issuing a statement not only exonerating the RSS from responsibility for engineering the attacks against the Muslim minority in Aligarh but going to the length of giving a general certificate to the RSS that it is not interested in communal riots at the moment It is not accidental that this certificate of the Janata Party President has emboldened RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras to challenge everyone who has rightly pointed the accusing finger at the RSS

The facts of the situation in Aligarh totally belie these statements Anyone who visits Aligarh and goes round the area where the incidents occurred on October 5, cannot but come to the conclusion that it was a deliberately planned attack on the minority community by an organised force led by the RSS which

was aided and abetted by the local police and the Provincial Armed Constabulary

The violence against the Muslim minority in Aligarh on October 5 surpasses all that has happened in the past. There was stabbing and killing even burning of people alive, houses and shops were looted and burnt down even while the police was looking on]

In fact it is clear that the PAC instead of stopping the blood thirsty mob on the rampage, made the minority community the target of their attack, shooting and killing many

Although the Government has stated only 11 persons have been killed, people on the spot have stated that the death toll will be anything more than a hundred. One can still see numerous bullet marks on houses and walls even in a mosque. One person was killed inside a mosque. Bloodstains can still be seen in houses and streets in Manik Chowk, Phool Chauraha, Chauraha Abdul Karim, Bani Israilan, etc. The houses in these areas are generally those of poor Muslims.

All this makes it clear that the attack was planned and had the connivance of the City Magistrate and the Commanding Officer of the PAC.

I demand a judicial enquiry by a High Court Judge into the incidents after the officials who are responsible are suspended.

I also demand that the victims of the riots be fully compensated and rehabilitated speedily.

Democratic Decentralisation*

E.M.S. Namboodiripad

1 I had hoped that, in spite of our differences on the basic approach to the problems dealt with by the Committee, I would be able to agree with my colleagues on the concrete proposals being made with regard to democratic decentralisation. On a study of the report, however, I find that the differences in the basic approach have expressed themselves in some concrete proposals. I am, therefore, obliged, while signing the report, to add this note.

2 Let me at the very outset make it clear that I agree with the main conclusions arrived at, and recommendations made, by my colleagues, namely,

- (a) "Panchayati Raj should not be singled out for criticisms, failures and pitfalls which are not particular to it alone" (I 10 1)
- (b) "Both from the political and socio developmental angles, it is imperative to decentralise power, planning process and developmental activities below the State level", (III 1)
- (c) "Our recommendations about the transfer of substantial quantum of powers from the State Governments to the local bodies has implications for the existing scheme of distribution of powers between the Union and the States which would require a detailed but separate consideration " (III 5)

*This was a Note submitted by E.M.S. Namboodiripad on the Report of The Ashoka Mchta Committee on the PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTION. This was published as a booklet in November 1978. This Note was also published in PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY New Delhi of October 27, 1978.

- (d) "The first point of decentralisation below the State level should be the district " (IV 2)
- (e) "The present trend as also the past experience points to the size of Panchayats being larger " (IV 4 4)
- (f) "Next to the district, Panchayat will have to be the hub of developmental activities " (IV 4 8)
- (g) "A Committee system at the district and other levels as required should be introduced The salient ones to be suggested now would be on Agriculture, on Education, on Small Industries, on Finance and Public Works A Committee of the chairmen of these committees will be the standing committee with Chief Executive Officer as Secretary The composition would be on proportional representation " (IV 10)
- (h) "Political parties should be allowed to participate effectively at all levels We have reached a stage of political evolution when it would be unrealistic to expect that political parties would keep themselves away from these elections " (IV 14 1)
- (i) "There was not much enthusiastic response (to Nyaya Panchayats), though many advocated their relevance and revival to settle petty disputes The dilemma facing the rural people seems to be that, while they want justice at their doorsteps, their experience does not encourage them to place faith in Nyaya Panchayats as constituted today " (IV 18 2)
- (j) Recommendation regarding the decentralisation at the district level as spelt out at paras V 5 1, 2, 3
- (k) "All the staff engaged in development that is now available at the district and lower levels for these programmes will have to be placed under the elected representative bodies This would mean that all the staff relating to decentralised items at the district level, and those subordinate to them in the respective departments should be working for the Zilla Parishads " (VIII 2 1 & 2 2)

- (l) Class III and Class IV staff should be fully handed over to Zilla Parishads (VIII 3 3)
- (m) "When it is postulated that all the developmental staff will be under the Zilla Parishads, it is also assumed that they will be under the administrative control of one Chief Executive Officer like the Chief Secretary at the district level who will be under an elected body " (VIII 4)
- (n) Recommendations regarding the system of line hierarchy at para VIII 11
- (o) "Similar to the lack of will that is attributed to the political executive, an administrative will to work an alternate system should also be developed Till now, control has never included a horizontal co ordinating point As far as State Head of the Department is concerned, an alternation has to be fostered " (VIII 12)
- (p) "The decentralisation of powers by the State and the entrustment of these powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions should take into account the aspect of financial capabilities " (IX 1 1)
- (q) 'One of the important recommendations of the Committee is the transfer of functions relating to implementation of projects at the district level to the Zilla Parishad This automatically involves transfer of the finances along with projects ' (IX 9 4)
- (r) Paras IX 10 1 to 9 regarding grants from the State and IX 11 1 to 6 regarding remunerative enterprises
- (s) "Any proposals for financial devolution or financial decentralisation should not emanate from a traditional approach but from our basic commitment to the logical imperatives of the dynamics of development which clearly postulate the entrustment of a great deal of developmental functions at the district level, with the Mandal Panchayats playing a key implementational role " (IX 12 1)

3 The above recommendations, if accepted and implemented by the Central and State Governments, would go a long way to transform democratic decentralisation from a dream to a reality I, therefore, hope that there will be no further delay in implementing these recommendations

4 I, however, have basic differences in the approach to the problem of decentralisation as is explained in the report as a whole, particularly in Chapters I, II, VI, and VII. These differences on approach get reflected in several concrete proposals, spelt out in other Chapters. I would, therefore, explain what the basic differences in approach are.

5 I have already noted my agreement with the report where it states that Panchayat Raj should not be singled out for criticism. But, in noting other elements which too should be subjected to criticism, the report has omitted what according to me, is the crucial factor—lack of political will on the part of the former and the present ruling parties at the Centre with regard to decentralisation of powers.

It is for instance, well known that the 30 years of Congress rule resulted in increasing encroachments into the powers of the States as laid down in the Constitution. Many including the State Chief Ministers belonging to the then ruling party were in fact, resentful but did not open their mouths at the Chief Ministers' gathering (I have myself had personal experience of several of them supporting me in private whenever, as the Chief Minister of Kerala, I was raising these questions at the meetings of the National Development Council and Chief Ministers' conferences, they told me that they are not free to express themselves. I was, they said, in fact, defending their interests as well).

There was, therefore, the natural expectation after the present Government assumed office that the question of Centre State relations would be given a second look. Many Chief Ministers including some who belong to the present ruling party, were sympathetic to the idea. But like his predecessors, the present Prime Minister too, is preventing any change in the constitutional set up. He is doggedly refusing even to have a national debate on this question.

6 That this is actually hampering the process of decentralisation from the State to the lower levels is in a way acknowledged by my colleagues who have clearly stated in Chapter III para 5, that "the existing scheme of distribution of powers between the Union and the State would require a detailed but separate consideration."

This however, does not, according to me, bring out to the full the crucial importance of recasting the constitutional framework regarding Centre State relations. I am of the view that, unless the whole question is fully reconsidered, leading to radical amendments in the Constitution, all that is proposed in this report would remain as much on paper as the Balvantray Mehta and other recommendations have so far remained.

7 It is true that the Constitution while defining the Directive Principles of State Policy, mentioned the formation and functioning of Panchayats. The importance of this for the effective implementation of the five year plans has also been emphasised in innumerable documents of the Central Government and of the Planning Commission. It was in pursuance of this that the Balvantray Mehta Study Team was appointed. The report of the present Committee is based on these recommendations and the attempts to put those recommendations into practice. That is why the resolution appointing this Committee and the draft under discussion now are based on the idea of Panchayati Raj, the vehicle of rural development. The idea implies that, while there is maximum possible decentralisation of the developmental function of administration the regulatory functions will not be decentralised.

8 I am opposed to this whole approach. The Constitution itself, according to me, failed to envisage an integrated administration in which, apart from the Centre and the States, there will be elected bodies which will control the permanent services at the district and lower levels. Democracy at the Central and State levels, but bureaucracy at all lower levels—this is the essence of Indian polity as spelt out in the Constitution. Added to this is the fact, in the actual work of the Constitution, the Centre made increasing encroachments into the rights and powers of the States. This trend reached its high watermark in the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution.

It was with such a centralized administration as its core that Panchayats were envisaged in the Constitution and the Balvantray Mehta Report. It is, therefore, not surprising that neither the bureaucrat nor the politician at the State level is prepared to decentralise whatever power has been conferred on the State under

the Constitution. The point is to make a radical change in the very concept of democracy and adopt what is called four pillar democracy. It is regrettable, that while acknowledging the force of this reality, the report in the Chapter on "Review and Evaluation" does not nail down the chief hindrance to decentralisation at the district and Panchayat levels.

9 I am in disagreement also with the approach to the "Dynamics of Development" as projected in Chapter II. This, in its turn, has implications for Chapter VI on "Planning" and Chapter VII on "Weaker Sections". Before discussing the recommendations made in these two Chapters, let me briefly state my criticism of the "Dynamics of Development" as projected in Chapter II.

I am of the view that the achievements in the field of planning have been so listed in the Report that the wood is missing for the trees, by the terms "wood". I mean the fact that the entire process of planned development which began in 1952 (the inauguration of the first five year plan) has been one of capitalist development without either breaking with foreign capital or ending land monopoly, usury, caste oppression, etc. All the "Technological revolutions" that have been mentioned in the report are, according to me, the trees each of which is sought to be described in detail.

I have no quarrel with the description of these technological changes that have been taking place during the entire post-Independence period, particularly during the 26 years of planning. My criticism is that these technological "revolutions" have been so enthusiastically praised that their social implication, i.e. the increasing division of society into an exploiting minority and an exploited majority, is missed.

In all the countries where capitalism supplanted feudalism (beginning with the United Kingdom), development of capitalism meant as big revolutions in the technological sphere as or even bigger than are now taking place in India. The "technological revolutions", however, inevitably led to the enrichment of a handful of the owners of the means and instruments of production at the expense of the vast majority who are deprived of their small property. Nowhere has a bourgeois "technological revolution" taken place without creating a wide gulf between an ever prospering

minority of the exploiters and a growingly impoverished majority of the exploited

India, however, stands on a footing entirely different from the countries which witnessed this process of bourgeois revolutions (Mainly in Western Europe, North America and Japan) Unlike in these latter and like many other Asian and African countries, India has had its capitalist development without making a complete break either with foreign economic domination or with those pre capitalist institutions like feudal land monopoly, usury, caste oppression, socio cultural backwardness, etc , which provide the biggest obstacle to the very technological revolutions that are necessary if the country is to be modernised This makes the sufferings undergone by our exploited majority still more unbearable, the mass of the working people have to bear the double burden of feudal (including caste) oppression, backwardness, exploitation, etc , and of capitalist exploitation

10 It is this double burden of pre capitalist and capitalist modes of exploitation that gives the problem of what are called "the weaker sections" its specific character For, what are called the weaker sections include two distinct categories of the working people

The first category consists of those who, even after several decades of capitalist development (under the British and in the post Independence years) are still subjected to many forms of landlord, usurer, caste and other exploitations of a pre capitalist society These are the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward castes

The second category consists of people who, a few generation ago, *i e* under the then existing socio economic and political system, were free from caste oppression and exploitation the 'upper castes'—a section of whom have, under the inexorable logic of capitalist development, been thrown into the army of the landless, the unemployed and otherwise oppressed and exploited sections of capitalist society

Included in the latter category are the women who were subjected to antiquated forms of oppression, exploitation and backwardness in the conditions of pre capitalist society and who, under the system of capitalist exploitation, are subjected to new forms of oppression

and exploitation. The overwhelming majority of women are subjected to the oppression and exploitation of both kinds which makes 50 per cent of the total population a really 'weaker section'

What is called 'the problem of the weaker sections' is thus the problem of two kinds of oppression and exploitation—feudal and capitalist—to which the overwhelming majority of our population are subjected. All the proposals, schemes etc. intended to 'help the weaker sections of society' will remain at best mere palliative unless and until the people as a whole are emancipated from the feudal as well as the capitalist modes of oppression and exploitation. The 'weaker sections' have to uplift themselves, through their own fighting organisations, political parties, etc. rather than depending on the benevolence of others. In the absence of this self-conscious organisation and struggles of the toiling masses, the 'schemes' meant for helping the weaker sections will become so many new devices to fool them. It is from this view point of the organised struggle to end the system of exploitation (pre-capitalist as well as capitalist) that I am looking at the entire problem of defending and extending democracy.

By democracy here, I mean the system of Parliamentary democracy with adult suffrage, periodical elections, the executives responsible to the elected legislature, the role of law, full protection of the citizens' rights and freedoms which are known in our Constitution as the fundamental rights of citizenship, etc. These constitute a set of valuable rights which our working people won after decades of struggle and which can be used by the exploited majority in its struggle against the exploiting minority.

Our experience of working this system proves that since the Parliamentary democratic system as prevails today provides the exploited majority a powerful weapon with which to fight the exploiting minority, the latter does its utmost to reduce democracy to a mere formality to subvert it whenever and wherever the exploited majority uses it to get anywhere near the seats of power. Defence of parliamentary democracy at the Central and State levels (where it exists but is very often threatened by the authoritarian forces) and its extension to the district and lower levels as envisaged

in the four pillar democracy is, therefore, of extreme importance in the advance of Indian society

My faith in democratic decentralisation is in other words, arises from the fact that it helps the working people in their day to day struggles against their oppressors and exploiters. I cannot, therefore, think of the Panchayati Raj Institutions as anything other than the integral parts of the country's administration with no difference between what are called the 'developmental' and 'regulatory' functions. What is required is that, while certain definite fields of administration like defence, foreign affairs, currency, communications, etc. should rest with the Centre, all the rest should be transferred to the States and from there to the district and lower levels of elected administrative bodies.

11 Considering the proposals made in the report from this angle I now propose to examine some of these proposals on which I have reservations, objections and alternate suggestions.

Firstly, I am opposed to the suggestion of including the nominee of district level co operative federation and other categories of members of Zilla Parishad and other Panchayati Raj Institution bodies. I am for purely elected bodies at all levels of Panchayati Raj. Having co opted members as suggested in the report is a hang over of the idea that Panchayati Raj Institutions are concerned with development alone and not the elected organs of administration at the appropriate level.

Secondly, with regard to the elections to all Panchayati Raj Institutions, I suggest that proportional representation with the list system should be adopted. Since the Mandal Panchayats are according to the report, to consist of 15 members directly elected, the whole Panchayat area can be considered a single 15 member constituency. This will give enough opportunity for any organised group (political party, religious minority, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women, etc.) which has the support of not less than 1/15th of the electorate (about 7 per cent) to return one member. At the other levels of Panchayati Raj like the Panchayat Samiti, (wherever it continues) Zilla Parishad, etc. elections should be organised on the basis of multi member constituencies with no less than 10 seats in every constituency and not more than 15

This will provide every social or political group which has electoral support of 1/10th to 1/15th of the people the possibility of returning one member. The argument advanced in the report (VII 9 2) that "the list system is alien to the territorial approach in the election system" does not convince me. I am, on the other hand, of the view that Indian politics and the State of political parties in our country have reached a stage in which the adoption of the list system even for State Legislatures and for Parliament would help the solution of many problems which are now considered insoluble. One of the suggestions that I have to make on the amendment of the Constitution, in fact, is the adoption of this system.

Thirdly, I have already stated that I am in full support of the idea of a two tier Panchayat Raj—the larger Panchayat which has been given in the report the name of Mandal Panchayat and the Zilla Parishad. I am in support of it because of the general consideration that the two tier set up is likely to be less expensive and more effective as well as my own experience in Kerala.

I am, however, conscious that some other States have other patterns of organisation which involve more than one tier below the district level. The recommendations that we make should not bar such arrangements in a particular State where this is considered necessary. It should nevertheless be stated that every endeavour should be made to replace the three tier system by the two tier system, since that will help the process of democratic decentralisation.

Fourthly, I oppose the recommendation made at para IV 18 4 'in favour of a qualified judge to preside over an elected Nyaya Panchayat being associated with him'. The report itself admits that there is no enthusiasm for Nyaya Panchayat, the reasons being that people do not expect elected panches to be objective and do justice to the poor. Any proposal for bringing the judiciary closer to the people can, therefore, be considered only as a matter of reforming the judicial system and not as a part of democratic decentralisation of administration. The Government may consider the various reports, referred to in our report separately and not as part of strengthening Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Fifthly, I have already referred to the integrated powers and responsibilities to be conferred on the Panchayat Raj Institutions.

in which no demarcation is made between developmental and regulatory functions. I can understand the position if it were argued that, under the present circumstances, law and order should remain with the State and not shared with the District or Mandal Panchayats, even though on this question too there is room for difference. But, as the report itself admits in Para XI 4 "the co operative system has a number of regulatory functions beginning with registration". How then can it be argued that "all functions such as law and order or the actions under other regulatory acts including social legislations may remain with the Collector only?" (V 10 1). I am afraid that the ghost of the earlier idea that Panchayati Raj Institutions should be completely divorced from all regulatory functions and made to confine themselves only to developmental functions is haunting my colleagues.

Sixthly, the problem of what is called "the weaker section of society" is, as I have already pointed out, a product of the existing social order in which two kinds of oppression and exploitation—pre capitalist and capitalist—are mixed. The solution for that problem is ultimately the ending of this double oppression and exploitation. The essential pre condition for this is the unity of the overwhelming majority of the oppressed and exploited, belonging both to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward castes on the one hand and the so called "upper castes" on the other.

Looked at from this point of view, reservation for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward communities has a positive as well as a negative aspect.

Positively, it helps, up to a point, in raising the educational level and securing some position in the official hierarchy for the millions of people who have had for centuries remained oppressed and exploited under the caste system. Emergence of a small group of intelligentsia, the professionals and members of the official hierarchy drawn from castes which were completely excluded from a share in administration under the caste system is certainly a gain not only for these castes but for the very cause of social advance.

Its *negative feature* is that, if this is looked upon as a method of securing jobs for the castes concerned, it sets the poor and the

oppressed belongings to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes against their brethren belonging to the so called "upper castes" As was noted above, the inexorable law of developing capitalism is throwing larger and larger sections of those who have been born in the so called "upper castes" families into the ranks of the landless, the unemployed, and otherwise oppressed and exploited

The basic problems of the poor belonging to both categories being the ending of caste as well as class oppression, what is required is that the poor regardless of caste, should join together in the struggle against their common oppressors The manner in which the masses belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and backward communities are made to believe that reservation is the panacea for all their problems sets them against their brethren belonging to the so called "upper castes" and weakens the struggle against the common oppressors

Striking a personal note, I may mention that I have for the last 45 years been an ardent advocate of reservation of jobs not only for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, but also for other backward communities This, in fact, has been the stand adopted by all the major political parties in Kerala Gradually, however, a situation developed in which the poor belonging to the so called "upper castes" began to feel that they are being denied those opportunities which are given to the rich belonging to the backward castes

A demand, therefore, arose that the criterion of reservation should be not caste but economic status After a good deal of public debate, all the major political parties in Kerala have now come to the position that, while for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes reservation purely on caste basis should continue for some time more, a combination of caste and economic status should be used in providing reservation for the other backward communities

I would not claim that what has been proposed in Kerala is the last word even for that State There is, therefore, no question of applying what has been suggested in Kerala to the other States I am, however, convinced that the question of reservation for government jobs as well as jobs in private institutions is

becoming an extremely explosive subject, setting one section of the poor against the other. This is doing great damage to the common cause of the poor belonging to all communities. Fresh thinking is, therefore, necessary on the question, so that ways and means can be found for ensuring the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward communities that they would get a legitimate share in employment opportunities, while the unity between them and the poor belonging to the "upper castes" is preserved.

Several recent incidents like Villupuram in Tamil Nadu, Marathawada, Kanjawala in Delhi, etc., show that the problem of unity among the poor belonging to all castes and communities is of over-riding importance today. It is easy for a demagogue to whip up passions either by "taking up cudgels on behalf of the "Harijans" or by appearing to "fight for the owning but working peasants." Dividing the two sections on this basis and making them fight against one another would help only the rich and well-to-do, who want at all costs to prevent the poor uniting themselves in their common struggle.

The fact, after all, is that none of the developmental plans, the plans of helping the Harijans to uplift themselves, the plans of modernising the rural areas, etc., has helped the agricultural labourers, working peasants, artisans, low-paid middle class employees, etc., at whose expense are growing a narrow stratum of the rural and urban rich. Reservation of posts would not help more than a handful out of an ocean of the landless and unemployed to get jobs. While this is good so far as it goes, it has harmful consequences for the poor masses as a whole in that it divides them into mutually conflicting groups. What is required, therefore, is to evolve some formula or other (depending on the specific condition in a particular State) through which the two considerations of caste and economic condition would be combined, so that the poor belonging to both categories can come together on a common platform of struggle, rather than getting divided into two hostile camps.

This question of reservation with regard to posts in governmental or other services has, of course, no direct relevance

to the subject matter which we are discussing in this report. It, however, has its relevance in considering the reservation of 20 per cent of the Chairman's posts to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Let me at the outset make it clear that I am as much concerned as my colleagues at the total inadequacy of the representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Panchayati Raj Institutions, particularly in the key posts of Chairman. I am, therefore, fully with my colleagues in desiring to do whatever is possible to overcome this lag. This question is of the method to achieve this desirable objective.

With regard to the manner of filling the posts of members of Panchayati Raj Institutions, I have already indicated that proportional representation with the list system is better method of ensuring this. This system, which is eminently practicable in our conditions, will perhaps ensure greater representation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes than reservation of particular constituencies since every political party which contests the elections is likely to include at least one candidate belonging to this category in its list. If, as I have suggested earlier, the constituencies will each have 10 to 15 members to be elected, it is very likely that the number of Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes candidate selected will be more than under the system of reserving certain seats for them.

I am, however, more concerned at the recommendation made by my colleagues that certain definite Panchayati Raj Institutions (Mandal Panchayats, Zilla Parishads, etc.) should be declared as those which should compulsorily have Chairman drawn from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This goes against what my colleagues state at Para IV 11 4 in the report, where attention is drawn to "the occasional frictions between the panches and the Chairman which might arise if the Mandal Panchayat Chairman represents a direct electorate are sought to be avoided." I would humbly suggest that the same friction would develop between a Chairman who occupies that post on the sole ground of belonging to a particular caste, if the majority of his colleagues who have to work with him are temperamentally against him. Such frictions in

the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions are bound to have their repercussions in the public life of the Panchayat or district concerned

It should, in this connection, be noted that the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes being by the very definition of the term part of the "weaker sections of society" and acknowledgedly a minority in any Panchayat or rural area, they cannot defend themselves in any situation of frictions and confrontations on a caste basis unless they have the support of the majority of the poor belonging to the other castes. It is, therefore, in the very interests of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes that whatever proposals are being made to assure them a reasonable share in the Panchayati Raj administration would unite them with the poor belonging in the other castes.

I would therefore, suggest that, instead of having a statutory provision that the Chairman of such and such Panchayat or Zilla Parishad shall always be drawn from the Scheduled Castes and/or Scheduled Tribes, a convention should be established among all the political parties contesting the elections that a minimum percentage of every party's candidates for the Chairman's posts shall be drawn from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. If this is adopted—and I see no reason why it should not be adopted—every political party which wins elections in Panchayati Raj Institutions will set up that percentage of candidates for the Chairman's posts. This in fact may be more than what the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes get under the proposal made in the report.

Seventhly, the problems of administration and financial resources dealt with in Chapters VII and IX should in my view, be dealt with from a different angle. I have indicated above that the four pillar democracy envisaged by me, should mean an integration of the Central, State, District and Panchayat as the essential parts of an organic whole—the administration of the country.

The manner in which the Central and All India Services, State Services and the Services of Local Bodies have been separated, with different terms and conditions of service are creating heart

burnings among the employees. The Central and All India Service employees look upon the State employees as poor relations, while the latter look upon the local employees in the same manner. It is necessary that this is put an end to and uniformity of government officials. This alone will make the administration an integral whole.

In the matter of financial resources, too, there is great urgency to have a fresh look from the point of view of the financial resources of the whole country. After all, the resources which are at the disposal of the State and Central Governments are those which can be attributed by the people at lower levels. It is, therefore, unreasonable to expect that after the Centre and State tap all the financial resources, which have been allotted to them and which are in fact collected from the very district and local areas where Panchayati Raj Institutions are working, these latter should find their own resources independently of the Centre and the States.

There is nothing derogatory for the Panchayati Raj Institutions to demand and secure grants and other forms of financial assistance from the State and the Centre. Here again what is required is that the Central and State Governments, together with the Panchayati Raj Institutions, should have an overall review of the financial resources of the entire administration and agree on the proper collection and distribution of all the resources that can be tapped.

I am not raising this as a matter of theoretical generalisation. I am obliged to raise it because the report does talk of "the need for some taxes being binding upon the Panchayati Raj Institutions" (IX 54). Amongst such taxes to be compulsorily levied and collected by the Panchayati Raj Institutions are land cess, surcharge on stamp duty, taxes on commercial crops, etc. It is obvious that all these are in effect additions to the burden of taxation that the rural people have to bear, since these suggested taxes are over and above what the State and/or Centre have already levied. Making these "compulsory for the Panchayati Raj Institutions is a proposition with which I cannot agree. That is why I suggest that fresh thought should be given on the incidence

of taxation on particular sections of the people, on particular forms of property or on particular commodities which are levied by the Centre and the States and now proposed to be levied by the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Such additions to the burdens at a time when rural poor are rightly demanding relief from the burdens of existing taxation will rouse resentment and resistance.

Finally, it is unfortunate that the report does not take into consideration the fact that there are voluntary organisations which have a sizeable membership and are active in the rural areas such as the Kisan Sabha, Agricultural Labour Organisations, Students and Youth and Women's Organisations etc., which are not and would refuse to be non-political. Many of them are very active and enjoy the confidence of the people. Wherever such organisations exist, they should be given an important role in the schemes of human resources development. I am afraid that this aspect is ignored by my colleagues because of their prejudice against political parties or organisations oriented towards them.

Let me, in the end, reiterate that, in spite of these reservations, criticisms and suggestions, I am of the view that the report, if accepted and implemented, would go far in decentralising and democratising the administration.

The Conflict in Janata Party Over The RSS*

E. M. S. Namboodiripad

Mr Sundar Sing Bhandari, Deputy Leader of the Janata Party in the Rajya Sabha, is a self confessed activist of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh. He has posed the challenging question to his present leaders whether they consider his parent organisation (the RSS) a communal organisation. He says

"We who owe (note that it is owe and not owed) allegiance to the RSS are working for strengthening the Janata Party and cannot tolerate any baseless and mischievous propoganda in this regard" To which Bhandari adds that it is for the leadership of the Janata Party to "once for all decide whether the party wanted to have any truck with the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh" He wanted the Janata leaders to decide "whether the party should have relations with the RSS and the RSS men in the party"

The same idea is, in another form, increasingly coming from non RSS quarters inside the Janata Party. Such well known leaders of the party as Madhu Limaye, Raj Narain, etc., have minced no words in saying that the RSS was mainly responsible for the Aligarh and other communal riots.

From State after State, reports are appearing that the leaders and cadres of the Janata Party are getting restless since the RSS connection is losing them the support of the minorities, the Scheduled Castes and backward communities, all of whom have learnt from their bitter experience that the RSS poses a grave threat to their very existence. They are demanding that the relations between the Janata Government and the RSS should be defined. The RSS should be either controlled by the Janata Party

as a volunteer organisation acting under instructions from the party, or the Janata Party should be free, like any other party, to come out in denunciation of that para military organisation

As early as during the first post Lok Sabha election months, leaders like Madhu Limaye have proposed that the RSS, like other youth organisations formed by and functioning under the leadership of one or other former constituents of the Janata Party, should be wound up or made a subordinate organisation of the Janata Party. Patrons and well wishers of the Janata Party like Jaya Prakash Narayan had made the same proposal. There was a general demand that the RSS should be thrown open for Muslims and other non Hindus.

Best of Both Worlds

The RSS leaders, however, rejected all these demands. They wanted to have the best of both the worlds.

They would continue the separate identity of the RSS with its "Sakhas", parades, training in the use of arms, route marches with arms in hand, etc. Janata leaders who are in the Ministry of outside belonging to the erstwhile Jana Sangh, will have to submit themselves to the discipline of the RSS and its Gururji. The Janata Party would have no right to intervene. Even, on the question of admitting Muslims and other non Hindus into the organisation, they prevaricated and said they would take a long time to take a decision to that effect.

Expansion of Activities

At the same time, the RSS leaders demanded that, as an integral part of the Janata Party, they should have all opportunities to expand their activities, they would use their connections with the Janata Party and the Government for this. Pleading that theirs is a "cultural" organisation, they wanted to use educational institutions as forums where they can hold "Sakhas" where rabidly chauvinistic Hindu revivalist ideas would be forced into the heads and hearts of the growing generation who will also be trained in the use of arms. These "Swayam

Sewaks" would then be asked to make provocative route marches particularly in areas inhabited by non Hindus, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and backward communities with a view to striking terror in their hearts

The loyal followers of the Sangh in the bureaucratic set up will also be asked to make demonstrative participation in "Guru dakshina" and other functions of the Sangh This, in its turn, is to be utilised for securing official patronage for the extension of RSS activities and for the connivance of the administrative personnel in the Hindu revivalist propaganda and communal activities of the Sangh How disastrous all this can be seen in communal riot after communal riot, the latest of them being in Aligarh

Non RSS Leaders' Position

Several non RSS leaders of the Janata Party have, of late, been asserting themselves against these aggressive activities of the RSS They find that not only is the RSS connection contrary to the cherished ideals of secularism and democracy which they have inherited from the freedom movement The RSS connection is also becoming a losing concern

These Janata leaders recall that it was the support of the minorities, Scheduled Castes and other weaker sections of society that enabled them to win the historic victory over the authoritarian forces headed by the former Prime Minister This valuable asset is being squandered because of the continuing connection with the RSS They, therefore, feel, like Bhandari and other RSS leaders, that the Janata leaders should decide one way or the other The RSS should not be allowed to have the best of both the worlds

The RSS leaders, it is well known, have been making clever use of the differences within the Janata Party, particularly among its top leaders They had, in the beginning, an understanding with the BLD with whom they shared the Chief Ministers' posts in the Janata run States Subsequently, however, they modified their stand by supporting the BLD in State politics but the Prime Minister at the Centre Later, still, they changed the whole tactic and gave whole hearted support to the Prime Minister Some of

their recent pronouncements and activities have raised doubts whether they would join those who are trying to replace Morarji Desai by somebody else in the Prime Minister's post

However, regardless of whether they are with this or that individual or group, they are using the key position they occupy in the Janata set up to dig themselves in and get an increasing hold on the administration. They have already succeeded in launching attacks on secular minded historians and getting several text books withdrawn as a first step towards transforming the teaching of history as an exercise in the propagation of Hindu revivalism. In other academic fields, too, they are trying their might and main to have their own men in key posts, so that the academic and intellectual world will be fully subjected to Hindu revivalism.

The Two Alternatives

The time, therefore, has come for the Prime Minister and other leaders of the Government and the ruling party to accede to the demand made from opposite ends, define your attitude to the RSS, either continue the connection with the RSS and increasingly lose the support of the minority communities, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, other backward communities and secular minded people in all castes and communities or sever the connection, lose the electoral gains thanks to the continuing connection with Hindu revivalists but be able to prevent the flow of minorities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, backward communities and secular minded people everywhere to the camp of authoritarianism. It is increasingly becoming impossible for the Janata leaders to make further delay in taking a decision.

Ridiculous Formula

This is a situation which should make the leaders of the Swaran Singh Congress and the CPI to sit up and think. Their simple formula Janata equals Jana Sangh equals RSS is disproved by the abovementioned developments in the Janata Party.

It is on the basis of this ridiculous formula that they have been demanding that those who want to build the Left and democratic front should sever their connection with the Janata Party, cease to support the Janata Government. It was from this that their inability to join hands with those who launched the campaign to defeat Indira Gandhi at Chickmagalur arose. It does not matter to them whether Indira Gandhi wins or not, the Janata should not be supported.

From this openly declared position, Swaran Singh and company "advanced" towards the notorious Parliamentary Board resolution while the CPI Chairman went to the extent of hailing Mrs. Gandhi's victory. It redounds to the credit of a section of the leaders of the Swaran Singh Congress that they came out openly against the decision of their Parliamentary Board. It is a pity that the CPI leaders have not yet been able to draw the necessary conclusions from this experience.

CPI(M)'s Record

The CPI(M) proudly recalls that at no stage has it equated the Janata Party with the RSS. Even while hailing the Janata victory in the Lok Sabha election of March 1977 and offering critical support to the Janata Government, our Central Committee demarcated itself from the RSS and its Hindu revivalist ideology. Ever since then, it has lost no opportunity to expose the RSS whenever and wherever it has resorted to such activities as lead to the rousing of communal passions.

Nothing Incompatible

The Party, however, has never made these activities of the RSS the reason for mounting an attack on the Janata Party and its Government. It knows very well that neither is the RSS under the control of the Janata nor is the latter subordinated to the RSS, though, of course, many of its leaders including Ministers, MPs and MLAs are subjected to the iron discipline of the RSS.

Our activities in this regard are clear proof to show that the struggle against the ideology and activities of the RSS is not incompatible with the support to the Janata Party and its

Government in so far as they proceed to dismantle the authoritarian regime. Nor does the support to the Janata Party and Government on the anti authoritarian issues prevent us from fighting the anti working class, anti people, anti democratic policies and measures adopted by the Janata Government.

Combined Attack

The developing strains between the RSS and the other constituents of the Janata Party thus should wake up all the anti communal, secular forces inside and outside the Janata to mount a combined attack on the forces of authoritarianism represented by Indira Gandhi on the one hand and Hindu revivalism and communalism represented by the RSS on the other. The biggest obstacle to such a unity is the irrational hatred of the leaders of the Swaran Singh Congress and the CPI for the very name of the Janata Party which they equate with the RSS.

Janata's 22 Points

Editorial of "People's Democracy", January 28, 1979

The four day meet of the National Executive of the Janata Party has come out with a 22 point programme with the claim that if it is implemented by the Central and State Governments, it would retrieve the country from the socio economic crisis which has been plaguing it since long

Before we examine the merits and demerits of the Janata Executive's programme, it has to be realised that such resolutions of ruling parties, whether it is the Congress or the Janata, are neither mandatory on the Central and State Governments nor are they seriously meant for implementation. Starting from the AICC's Avadi resolution on the Socialistic pattern in the mid fifties, the people have been fed with many such resolutions as the Nagpur resolution, the Bhubaneswar resolution, the Narora programme, the 20 point programme, the Garibi Hatao Charter and so on by the former ruling Congress Party. There is no reason to think that the present 22 point programme of the Janata Executive awaits a different fate at the hands of the Janata Government. After all, the crisis that plagues our country is basically a product of the bankrupt capitalist path pursued by the bourgeois landlord ruling classes. The basic character of the Janata Government's leadership and the class policies they are pursuing are in no way different from the predecessor Congress Government. The long record of the leaders of the Janata Government and the 20 month experience of that Government fully confirm this truth.

The very opening paragraphs of the Janata Executive's resolution with its nauseating self adulation of the 20 month long performance of Janata rule at the Centre and in the States make a

mockery of the programme itself and calls into question the earnestness and seriousness behind it. It makes the ridiculous claim that the 20 month rule of the Janata Party has already cleared much of the rot that had set in during the three decades of Congress rule and that in the remaining forty months of the present Lok Sabha, wonders will be performed in solving the rural and urban unemployment problem, in alleviating the misery and indebtedness of the peasant producers, in uplifting the down trodden Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and in developing big as well as small scale industries. To put it mildly, the entire 22 point programme is totally unrealistic and smacks of cheap populism for which Indira Gandhi has long been notorious.

George Fernandes and Biju Patnaik came forward with the slogan of nationalisation of Tata's Iron and Steel unit, Birla's Aluminium industry, etc. It is the same Fernandes who is playing havoc with the public sector Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd with the proposed agreement with Siemens and is flirting with other multinationals. But the massive protest roused by the proposal not only in Big Business circles and the Press controlled by them but also among certain Janata leaders of the Swatantra, Congress (O) and Jana Sangh vintage, has imparted some sort of a fictitious radicalism to some of the leaders of the Janata Executive and the 22 point programme they have cooked up.

But the anti climax to all the rhetoric about "decentralisation of economic power" of Big Business is reached when it is proposed that the Janata Party Chairman "shall appoint a Committee to study the position in depth and make necessary recommendations in this regard". Is it that there has been any dearth of in depth studies of these things? Have our people forgotten all about the Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission and how the whole thing has been reduced to a farce in the last ten/fifteen years? What has happened to all the investigations into Big Business houses like the Birlas? When the Janata leaders talk about in depth study and all that at this stage, it only means that they are just indulging in gimmicks and that Big Business has nothing to worry about.

The seriousness or otherwise of the Janata Executive can well be gauged if only one looks at the land reforms programme. This foremost issue of land reforms is pushed to point 15 in the long list of 22! The Janata Executive, of course, deserves our thanks and congratulations for recommending that "all land ceiling laws be included in the Ninth Schedule", since such a measure, if adopted, reduces one source of inordinate delay and sabotage by landlords by taking the issue to law courts in order to frustrate the very purpose of the land ceiling laws. But if the Janata leaders are serious about this point, they should immediately ask their Central Government to include the West Bengal Land Reform Amendment Act in the Schedule as has been demanded by the Left Front Government for quite some time.

The recourse to law courts to defeat the land ceiling legislations is only one part of the sabotage by the big landlords. There are hundred other devices by which the landlords have successfully scuttled land reforms measures, and it is done mainly with the active connivance of the State apparatus, corrupt bureaucracy and police and revenue officials. It is an established fact that as much as 40 per cent of the total cultivated land, even after a series of land ceiling laws over decades, remains in the hands of five to six per cent of the landholders, while 60 to 70 per cent of the landless and the poor hardly possess five per cent of the land. What does the Janata Executive propose further to implement land reforms besides recommending the ceiling laws to be put under Ninth Schedule? It has solemnly promised that "other suggestions made by the Raj Krishna Committee of the Planning Commission should be examined and necessary steps taken to implement them". Why only Raj Krishna Committee's suggestions? Are there not other constructive and radical suggestions made in the past by official and semi official agencies such as the Appu Commission and the like? Does not this type of formulation that they "should be examined and necessary steps taken", etc., smack of the style of hardened bureaucrats and the apologists of landlordism?

The twenty two point charter which sheds profuse tears for the oppressed millions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has nothing concrete to offer them by way of real and radical land reforms and their genuine implementation with the active co-operation of the popular masses directly and vitally interested in the reforms. Can there be any real uplift of the downtrodden Harijans and Adivasis without land redistribution in the interests of the landless and land poor?

It is true that there are several points such as the parity of prices between the prices of agricultural produce and the prices the farmers have to pay for industrial products like fertilisers, pesticides, etc., and also the demand to announce the support price for the peasants' produce before the sowing season. Similarly, the demand to allot 25 per cent of the newly generated power to agricultural sector, the demand to make the "food for work" programme a permanent one, the stamping of maximum retail prices on all consumer goods, the proposal to select 1000 Blocks for furthering rural development with special emphasis on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, etc., are welcome, in so far as they go and actually get implemented.

But the resolution of the Janata National Executive is really disappointing. It refuses to reckon with the realities of the situation—the serious industrial and economic crisis, the mass scale unemployment of both the educated and the uneducated, the plight of the 50 to 60 per cent of our people below the poverty line, the continued illiteracy of 70 per cent of our population, the merciless exploitation and loot by the big capitalists, foreign monopolists and landlords, the alarming proportions of the growth of corruption, nepotism and all sorts of social crimes etc.—are not touched by the resolution of the Janata Executive.

The Left, democratic and radical minded among the Janata Party leaders and ranks should not be beguiled with the seemingly radical and populist slogans and proposals put forth in the 22 point charter by the Janata Executive. It is all the more surprising that not a word is said regarding the industrial working class, the employees in the private and public sectors and the minimum wages for the workers and employees in the private and public

sectors, and minimum wages for agricultural labourers who are anywhere between 40 and 50 per cent of the total peasant population of the country

It is clear that the Janata leaders are treading the beaten path which the Congress leaders followed. Points and programmes are shop soiled wares with which the representatives of the bourgeois landlord classes have always sought to cheat the people. The Janata Government is proving that it is no exception. This underlines all the more the need to unite the Left and democratic forces in the country to provide the only real alternative to the present bourgeois landlord rule and its anti people policies.

Jyoti Basu's Letter To Vinoba Bhave*

The following is the text of the letter written by Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister, West Bengal to Acharya Vinoba Bhave on December 23, 1978

Dear Acharya Vinoba Bhave,

We are all very concerned at the announcement that you are going on fast from the 1st January in support of the demand for a total ban on cow slaughter. On the issue of banning of cow slaughter in West Bengal, the State Government has had prolonged correspondence with the Government of India, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, Sarvodaya leader and the Akhil Bharat Krishi Goseva Sangh. I myself had discussion on this matter with Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and the Akhil Bharat Krishi Goseva Sangh and I have made our position clear to them. Kindly permit me to explain our stand on this issue.

2. Under the West Bengal Animals Slaughter Control Act, 1950, only those cows which are over 14 years of age and are unfit for work or breeding or are diseased or incapacitated can be slaughtered. This Act extends over Calcutta and all the municipal towns. We are also taking steps to extend the operation of this Act to non municipal areas. It is true that the restrictions imposed under this Act are not being properly enforced but we want sincerely to enforce them. We have recently amended the Cattle Licensing Act in order to prevent indiscriminate and unrestricted import of cattle by 'khatal' owners and to assure better treatment to milch cows. The Akhil Bharat Krishi Goseva Sangh has also

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, January 7, 1979. This is in connection with Acharya Vinoba Bhave's 'fasting' against cow slaughter.

agreed to cooperate with us to see that these Acts are implemented. We also requested some Sarvodaya leaders to depute some persons to advise us regarding proper implementation of the provisions of the Acts. We are taking steps to create the necessary infrastructure. We had intended to take up the work much earlier, but the floods interfered.

3 We are, however, not in favour of a total ban on cow slaughter. We would like to look at the issue from the economic aspect rather than the religious aspect. A total ban on cow slaughter will lead to an increase in bovine population which would strain our slender cattle feed resources. This will undermine the capacity of useful animals and will hinder the scientific growth of animal husbandry. A total ban on cow slaughter will also become a very sensitive issue in this State where there is a large beef eating population mainly belonging to the minority communities.

4 These views are not ours alone. The preceding Chief Ministers of this State had expressed the same opinion in their communications with the Government of India. Shri P. C. Sen, Shri Ajoy Mukherjee and lastly Shri S. S. Ray had pointed out these factors to the Government of India when the State Government was requested to enact a legislation banning cow slaughter totally.

5 West Bengal is beset with a lot of problems. There are basic and long standing problems like unemployment, lack of proper shelter and nutrition, etc. There are also severe problems which are peculiar to West Bengal like the massive arrival of refugees on many occasions. Very recently the devastating floods have added to the sufferings of our people and the State will take quite a long time to recover from the effect. Without in any way meaning disrespect to the ideals you may cherish, I would like to say that these are our priorities to resolve these long standing problems of our State and to reduce the sufferings of our people. We are working single mindedly to achieve these objectives and I would request you not to take any steps that may add to our problems. It is a shame that millions of children in our country are going without milk. We have taken up a number of projects

for increasing milk production in our State. For this, banning of slaughter of cows which are over 14 years old or are diseased or incapacitated or unfit for breeding is of no help. We are as concerned as you are to improve the quality of our cattle population and to save milch cows and to prevent unnecessary and senseless cow slaughter. We are taking all the necessary steps in this regard and I would request you to watch our performance before you decide on your future course of action. We set much store by your good health and long life and shall be happy if you decide not to undertake the fast.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Jyoti Basu

Namboodiripad's Letter to Vinoba Bhave

The following is the text of the letter written by Comrade E M S Namboodiripad, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist), to Acharya Vinoba Bhave on December 23, 1978

Dear Shri Vinobaji,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Polit Bureau of the Central Committee of our Party. We are perturbed to hear that you are contemplating to go on a fast from January 1, 1979 on the question of imposing a legal ban on cow slaughter in West Bengal and Kerala.

You are aware that only a month ago, West Bengal went through a national calamity of floods, unprecedented for 500 years according to our Prime Minister, affecting the life, living and property of over a crore and half of the population. The entire administrative machinery and the people are engaged in the stupendous task of rehabilitation. We would request you to consider whether it is advisable to raise the question at this time and also taking into account the complexities of the problem in a State like West Bengal.

We have had the opportunity to discuss with some of your colleagues in the Sarvodaya movement, viz., Sarvashri Krishna Das Mehta, Dayanidhi Patnaik, R K Patil and Kumari Nirmala Deshpande. We have also studied the booklet brought out by the Akhila Bharat Krishi Gosewa Sangh which contains the basic information and copies of connected documents on the question.

We are fully aware of the depth of your feeling on this question

We have given careful consideration to all these

At the same time as a Party working in the interest of the entire people, we cannot but take into account all other aspects of the question

You will agree that ours is a secular State Apart from Hindus, our country's population consists of Muslims, Christians who do not believe in this and are accustomed to eating beef In certain parts of the country, sections of Harijans are also accustomed to eating beef Apart from this, tribals also eat beef Such population is not a negligible minority, but run to 10 to 15 crores

No secular minded person can ignore the sentiments and food habits of these vast numbers of our population and adopt a policy based on purely the religious belief of the majority Both the majority and the minority should be allowed to act according to their beliefs, without any attempt on the part of either to impose its belief on the other

Our Party bases its policies on this question, as on all other questions, on national economic and social points of view and not on the religious beliefs of any section of the population

Considering the shortage of milk in our country, there should be no difference of opinion on prevention of slaughter of milch cows The West Bengal Act also prevents it

A total ban on cow slaughter will increase the communal tensions, instead of bringing about harmony between the various communities in our country, so very necessary for preserving and cementing our national integrity

Taking all these factors into consideration, we are of the considered view that a total ban on cow slaughter is inadvisable

We have explained the basic stand of our Party on this question Comrade Samar Mukherjee, member of our Polit Bureau and leader of our Party in the Lok Sabha, who is carrying this letter, will further explain our point of view and give any explanation you may require

Our colleague Comrade Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, has already explained the position of his Government to Shri Radha Krishna Bajaj, Secretary, Akhil Bharat Krishi Gosewa

Sangh As he had already stated, the previous Government of West Bengal had enacted a legislation banning slaughter of cattle below 14 years of age and applied it to all cities and towns. The present Government has already strengthened the administrative machinery for more effective implementation of the ban. The Government is contemplating to extend the Act to other parts of the State.

In conclusion, we want to place before you for consideration the fact that there are so many problems like colossal unemployment, poverty and misery of vast masses of the people, oppression of and atrocities on Harijans and weaker sections as well as on minorities and land to the millions of landless labourers. The country is passing through a period of great stress and strains and tension. All men of goodwill should harness all their energies to tackle these problems. In these conditions we feel that the raising of this complicated question will divert the attention of the people from these pressing and urgent problems.

We, therefore, appeal to you take all these factors into consideration and desist from the contemplated fast.

With respectful regards,

Yours sincerely,
E M S Namboodiripad,
General Secretary

Wrong Theories of The Chinese Communist Leadership*

—*M. Basavapunnaiiah*

The four week war against Vietnam by China, though it has ended with the withdrawal of the main forces of the Chinese army, has neither ended in its real sense nor have the talks to peacefully settle the disputed issues yet begun. From all accounts it appears that it is more and more becoming a sort of cold war, and the Chinese Communist leadership, through its thoughtless invasion into Vietnamese territory, has found itself in a political and military quandary.

Through this military action against another Socialist State, Vietnam, the Chinese leadership has, no doubt, inflicted heavy losses and dislocated the reconstruction work of Vietnam, but in the process it has also grievously suffered in both men and material, its biggest loss is of its face as the big Socialist State comprising 800 to 900 million people. Whether the Chinese Communist leaders draw correct lessons from this fiasco and reverse their path or pursue it further and invite a much bigger disaster, time alone can tell us.

But the glorious traditions of anti imperialism of the Chinese people, the Socialist and Democratic socio economic base built in the country during the last 30 years since the triumph of the Chinese Revolution and the Marxist Leninist ideas and the sense of proletarian internationalism preached among the working people of China for the last 50 years and more, create the confidence in us that the healthy forces in the Chinese Communist Party will assert themselves, and reverse their disastrous policy of "Three Worlds" which makes the Socialist USSR the chief enemy of the world, arbitrarily characterising it as so called "social imperialism" and fascism.

*Published in "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY", New Delhi, April 1, 1979

The Particular Politics

As the well known historical generalisation teaches, war is nothing but a continuation of politics. China's war against Vietnam, too, will have to be traced to the particular politics, the politics of changing Socialism to capitalism, imperialism and fascism, at one's own will and choosing!

The Chinese Communist Party, as late as in November 1964, while denouncing the policy of Khrushchov as "one of alliance with imperialism against Socialism, alliance with the United States against China, alliance with reactionaries everywhere against national liberation movements and the people's revolutions", etc., was asserting that "beyond all doubt, the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the great Soviet people, with their revolutionary traditions, are fully capable of making new contributions in safeguarding the great Socialist achievements, the lofty prestige of the first Socialist power founded by Lenin, the purity of Marxism Leninism and victorious advance of the revolutionary cause of the proletariat" (The Polemic on General Line, Foreign Language Press, Peking 1965, Page 482)

All this vanished overnight, and Socialism in the USSR, according to Mao Zedong and other Chinese Communist leaders, was transformed into capitalism, imperialism and fascism by 1966! The criticism that the CPSU under Khrushchov's leadership was advocating some Right revisionist policies was overnight shifted into the downright denunciation of the USSR as the imperialist and fascist power! This fits in only with the old adage that "there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous" The outright denunciation of the USSR as imperialist and fascist, totally abandoning the Marxist Leninist class analysis to prove one's contention, does not conform to science and truth and that is exactly what the Chinese leaders began following in their so called "tit for tat" struggle against the leaders of the CPSU

Why Such Grievous Errors?

Mao Zedong and other Chinese Communist leaders, who had built the Chinese Communist Party and had led the Chinese Revolution to its victory in 1949-50, were undoubtedly great men

in their own right, and as Lenin observed, "history long ago proved that in the course of the struggle, great revolutions bring great men to the forefront and development of talents that had previously seemed impossible" (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol 29, Page 93)

But, again, history has also proved that great men who were capable of performing great things were not immune from committing some great blunders too. As Lenin aptly remarked, "men's vices, it has long been known, are for the most part bound up with their virtues," and "this, in fact, applies to many leading Communists" (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol 32, Page 145)

This alone can explain how a Communist leadership, seasoned and tempered in decades of revolutionary struggle, can slip into grievous errors such as the building of the "Three Worlds" theory, the theory of changing Socialist USSR to an imperialist and fascist State and the dangerous theory of Socialist China going along with the imperialist USA, Britain, West Germany and Japan for united action against the Soviet Union, branding the latter as the chief enemy of peace and mankind, and coming out against national liberation movements, joining hands with the worst reactionaries everywhere like Mobutu of Zaire, the murderer of Patrice Lumumba, the murders of Allende, the hangman of the Iranian people and so on

One Question and Our Answer

On reading our criticism of the Chinese leaders and their policies, questions are raised by some as to why we criticise and oppose the Chinese armed invasion of Vietnam, and why we support the line of the Vietnamese Communist Party in its dealing with the Pol Pot regime of Kampuchea, which according to them, was aggressed by Vietnam. Our answer is, we totally differ with their analysis of the Pol Pot regime and its disastrous internal and external policies, policies that led to the overthrow of his regime, and the new Kampuchean regime securing fraternal assistance and support from Vietnam

We do not subscribe to, in fact, we are totally opposed to the theory of any Socialist regime claiming the right of armed intervention against another Socialist regime, and to some other

theories such as "limited sovereignty" which were in vogue in certain circles some years ago. We stand by the inviolable principle of equality of and non interference between different sovereign States, whether they are capitalist or Socialist.

In all our decisions we strive to be strictly guided by Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and it is this Marxist-Leninist and proletarian internationalist outlook that led us to accept the world assessment of our era, as defined and described in the world Communist documents of 1957 and 1960.

It was this world outlook that was still guiding the Chinese Communist leaders in 1964-65 when they were declaring that "in the contemporary world, opposition to or alliance with U.S. imperialism constitutes the hallmark for deciding whether or not a political force can be included in the united front against imperialism." The Chinese Communist leaders have now abandoned that "hallmark."

But we have no reason to abandon that hallmark, the hallmark of opposition to U.S. imperialism, as the most ferocious enemy of peace and mankind. It is again this hallmark that guided our decision regarding the dispute between the overthrown regime of Pol Pot and the Government of Vietnam. In the maze of countless arguments and counter arguments some people tend to lose their Marxist bearings and moorings and accuse us of "double standards." Our only answer is that no such "double standards" are followed by us, we judge each concrete issue on its merits, and get guided by one hallmark, the hallmark of irreconcilable opposition to imperialism and U.S. imperialism in particular. Merits and demerits apart, which can be discussed later, there is one overriding consideration for us—and that is that imperialism should not be allowed to again intervene in Indo-China. It is this consideration that led us to support the Soviet veto in the U.N. Security Council.

Why Not The Same Yardstick

Returning to the topic of the USSR getting transformed into "social imperialism" because of the pursuit of Right revisionist policies by the leaders of the CPSU, a thesis on which the Chinese

Communist leadership has been harping since long and which reached its apex with Deng Xiaping's statements during his recent tour of the USA, we have some observations to make

The entire argument of the Chinese leaders was built on the premise that Right reformist and revisionist mistakes of the Soviet leaders were bound to result in undoing Socialism in the USSR and in ushering in capitalism and imperialism, and they assert that this had already taken place by 1966. We ask the Chinese leaders, and others who uphold these theories of the Chinese leaders, whether they would measure the Chinese developments with the same yardstick which they are using to measure the Soviet Union.

The Chinese Communist leaders, on their own admission, state that in Socialist China, so called capitalist roaders had arisen who even captured State power for a time, that Left infantile leaders had arisen such as Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four", and they had captured "a part of State power", "enforced a fascist dictatorship" and played havoc for ten years, that inner Party democracy, and consequently democracy for the people, was completely denied, etc.

If Chinese Socialism, which is much younger, weaker and tender, could withstand all these distortions and abuses and remain Socialist and embark on the four modernisations correcting the mistakes, what grounds are there for them to conclude that Soviet Socialism which is far stronger and older, disappeared under the mistakes of the Soviet Communist leaders?

From Their Self Criticism

We cite the following self critical passages from recent writings in Beijing Review, dated February 23, 1979

"From 1958 to 1962, China's Socialist construction met a major setback and tremendous difficulties were encountered by the national economy. Both subjective and objective factors were responsible but the major cause was the lack of normal democratic life within the Party and the damage of the Party's democratic centralism. Some leading cadres abandoned the Party's fine style of work and they arbitrarily issued orders, refused to listen to differing views, would not countenance criticism and freely carried out character assassination."

Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four" "maliciously magnified the mistakes of veteran cadres and other good comrades, framed charges against them, wilfully put innocent people in prison and even made all members of their family and relatives, running into millions, suffer along with the innocent victims Their attitude to Mao Zedong thought and Comrade Mao Zedong's words was self serving They established all sorts of fetishes and taboos so that it was impossible, inside and outside the Party, for the masses in general and leaders at the top level to speak out "

"How could Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four" run amok for over ten years inside such a great Party as the Chinese Communist Party? The Party has millions of members, in particular a large group of tested veteran cadres who could effectively cope with Kuomintang reactionaries and imperialists But why were they powerless against a handful of scoundrels like Lin Biao and the gang? There is only one answer political life inside the Party had been abnormal for years and democracy had been missing inside the Party These had led to an absence of democracy in society as a whole So that most fundamental lesson to be drawn today is the necessity to have full democracy inside the Party " (Pp 18 19)

The lesson to be drawn is not only about the necessity of inner party democracy and democracy in society as a whole, but many more serious and urgent lessons by Communists of the entire world

Intolerance to Criticism

One of those lessons is that several of the ruling Communist Parties, the big Parties of big Socialist States, have developed the habit of intolerance to any fraternal criticism by fraternal Parties, invariably dubbing them as either "anti Soviet" or "anti China", etc Some of these leaders developed the taste for flattery and sycophancy, began putting blinkers, and also insisting that other fraternal parties put on blinkers—all under the spurious plea of proletarian internationalism

Proletarian internationalism demands mutual support and solidarity in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism, but not mutual admiration of mistakes, howlers and crimes either under the false pretext of interference in each other's internal matters or

on the unfounded fear that such a constructive, timely and mutually beneficial criticism—normally between the Parties at Party level and sometimes even openly—endangers Socialist solidarity and fraternal relations

Such a criticism not only exercises salutary influence on the theoretical and ideological debate under way in different Parties, but also develops the critical faculties and independent assertion of individual Communist Parties and establishes their Marxist Leninist bona fides among the respective working class millions and people at large

Our criticism of the present Chinese Communist line of "Three Worlds", "the USSR as the chief enemy of peace and Socialism", etc , has nothing in common with those who had, since long, come to virtually write off Chinese Socialism as lost to "militarism and fascism" Our Party belongs to the category of Marxist Leninist and proletarian internationalists who ardently desire the speedy rectification of both Right and Left revisionist deviations in the world Communist movement, and the restoration of world Communist unity, on a principled basis and on a new higher level, corresponding to the contemporary world realities

Vinoba's Indefinite Fast*

Editorial of "People's Democracy", April 15, 1979

The 84 year old Acharya Vinoba Bhave has served an ultimatum on the two State Governments of West Bengal and Kerala that either these two States at once enact laws banning "cow slaughter" or he would resort to a fast unto death from April 27. Several leaders belonging to different political parties, holding different views on the issue of "cow slaughter", have written to Vinoba Bhave requesting him not to resort to this indefinite fast and give more time to deal with this highly complicated and delicate question. Prime Minister Morarji Desai had personally met him to dissuade him from undertaking the fast. The leader of the CPI(M) group in the Lok Sabha had gone to Vinobaji and requested him not to resort to the hunger strike on this sensitive issue. An all party delegation led by the Home Minister, Mr H M Patel, had specially visited Vinoba Bhave to request him not to precipitate the issue, but to allow more time to tackle the question in a more satisfactory manner. All these requests have been rejected outright by Bhave and he has decided to undertake his indefinite fast. It is greatly distressing to note that this aged and veteran Sarvodaya leader has not found any other urgent issue that is affecting the lives of millions of men, women and children in our country on which to stake his life, except the issue of banning of "cow slaughter" in the two States of West Bengal and Kerala.

The great Bhoodan movement that Vinoba Bhave started with fanfare three decades ago, and which roused the hopes of millions of starving landless and the land poor, has been silently swept under the carpet, the issue of "cow slaughter" taking precedence over other burning issues in the country.

*Refer Documents under Appendices (xvii) and (xviii) of this volume

Millions of people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are undergoing terrible social insults and indignities in the country, after 30 years of unbroken Congress rule and two years of Janata Party rule. These millions are not only leading miserable lives under the grinding poverty, but thousands among them are also being beaten, maimed, raped and killed by the so called caste Hindus and their goonda gangs. Yet Vinobaji, the acclaimed disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, the crusader of the Harijan cause, has not been moved by the plight of these Harijan millions, as he is moved by the cow to stake his life! The way saints like Vinoba Bhave think, decide and act, is, of course, their own exclusive privilege.

The phrase "cow slaughter" has a wrong and misleading tone of its own. Besides its ordinary meaning of slaughtering the cow and its breed for the purpose of beef eating, it also gives a mischievous ring of wanton and inexcusable killing of milch cows. There is no such slaughter of milch cows permitted either in West Bengal or Kerala. There have been strict regulations prohibiting such slaughter, and these laws were enacted by the former Congress State Governments. What Vinoba Bhave is now demanding is not the protection of the milch cow and its breed in India, but the imposition of a total ban on the killing of any cow, at any age, irrespective of its utility. It is a demand arising out of an orthodox, Hindu religious sentiment of worshipping the cow as the "Mother". It is a demand virtually aiming at prohibition of beef eating. Vinoba Bhave has the least consideration for tens of millions of Indians who are used to eating beef, such as Christians, Muslims, several sections of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, and even some caste Hindus. Nor does he care to go into the question of how the Indian peasantry can either afford to feed the infertile cattle or dispose them off when such cattle become crippling burden on his economy.

In this connection it is relevant to remind Vinoba Bhave and other enthusiasts of the ban on cow slaughter about the views expressed by some other prominent Gandhians. Mr. P. C. Sen,

the former Chief Minister of West Bengal, in his letter to the then Home Minister Nanda, dated October 19, 1966, writes "Imposition of a total ban on the slaughter of cows in this State, as is being pressed from time to time in certain quarters, will not, in our considered view, be in the interest of the country" "Besides, beef is consumed by a large section of the population in the State" "Thus a total ban on cow slaughter, however noble the intention, will, in practice, be detrimental to agriculture, at least ineffectual in augmenting milk and render the difficult overall feed position more precarious"

Mr Ajoy Mukherjee, in his capacity as the Chief Minister, wrote to the Central Government in June, 1967, that "a total ban on cow slaughter is, in our view, bound to upset the existing balance between the different classes of bovine stock, and will also, let me repeat, lead to an absolute increase in the total bovine population", and "such a step would not be in the interests of the country "

The third former Congress Chief Minister, Mr Siddartha Shankar Ray, in his letter addressed to the Central Government in November, 1973, repeated the arguments of P C Sen and Ajoy Mukherjee and further stated that "it will also be difficult to meet the demand of the beef eating population in this State, who are considerable in number " and "I am afraid it will be inopportune to go in at the present for a total ban on the slaughter of cows in this State "

Comrade Jyoti Basu, the present Chief Minister of West Bengal, while repeating some of the arguments of former Chief Ministers of the State, has assured the delegations which met him in this connection that he would strictly implement the existing laws in this regard and take further necessary steps to protect the cow population without resorting to a total ban

It is rather distressing that Vinoba Bhave is threatening to go on fast disregarding all this, and he also does not seem to realise how diversionary such a hunger strike of his at this juncture of our political life, will be

Let us hope that more sober and rational thoughts will prevail on Vinobaji and other advocates of "total ban" and that he will not embark on this fast unto death programme at this ripe old age when his health is also delicate. Let us also hope that all the secular and rational men and women write to Vinobaji requesting him not to undertake his proposed indefinite fast on April 22.

We again appeal to Vinoba Bhave to reconsider his decision and abandon the proposed hunger strike.

Shocking Revelations

Editorial of "People's Democracy", April 22, 1979

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, former U S Ambassador to India, has made some shocking revelations about the former Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi and the ruling Congress party to which she belonged. In his recently published book "A Dangerous Place" which is not yet available in Indian book shops, he is reported to have charged the ruling Congress party of having accepted American funds to fight the elections against the Communists in Kerala and Bengal. He writes that once when Indira Gandhi was the President of the Indian National Congress, the money was directly handed over to her. Mr Moynihan has further stated that "of the various joint Indo American enterprises none survived the strains of 1971 more successfully than those directed against China". He refers to one nuclear powered instrument pack which was washed away by the cyclone on Nanda Devi in the year 1965, and how a second one was placed atop Nanda Kot, adjacent to Nanda Devi, in the following year in order to spy on Chinese atomic secrets. The U S Ambassador also taunts the Prime Minister Morarji with how this report of nuclear disaster at Nanda Devi hilltop was "calmly acknowledged by the new Prime Minister".

Smt Indira Gandhi, in her usual style, has been fretting and fuming at the American administration saying that "they are against me", and described these devastating disclosures as "mischievous, motivated and absolutely baseless", that they are "part of a conspiracy" to defame her. This brazen faced denial of Indira Gandhi does not and cannot cover up the shady deals of securing huge sums of foreign funds by the ruling Congress party for its partisan political ends. Though Indira Gandhi, as one

of the top leaders and the Prime Minister for more than 10 years, has to bear the major responsibility for these and similar clandestine deals, most of the big leaders in the once united Congress party, who assume high moral postures, cannot escape their own responsibility in securing huge foreign funds for the furtherance of their party interests

Neither the flat denials of receiving American money by Congress(I) leaders like Kamalapati Tripathi, C M Stephen, Buta Singh and others nor the assertions of former Congress treasurers S K Patil, that the Congress never took foreign funds in order to use them for party purposes, will convince anybody

Mr Morarji Desai's remark that Mrs Gandhi is free to sue Mr Moynihan in court if she had not taken party funds from the US, is more cavalier in character, evading the issue on the ostensible plea that the matter is already before the Parliament. People have not forgotten his white washing of the entire issue of the US nuclear pack being washed down the Ganges, with the remark that the whole thing involved three former Prime Ministers—Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi

Whether the disclosures of Mr Moynihan are aimed at exposing Indira Gandhi and her hypocritical attacks on the CIA and US imperialist conspiracies against India, or meant to broadcast the truth that the Indian ruling bourgeois landlord classes, notwithstanding their pompous talk of anti imperialism, non alignment and Socialism, etc, are not averse to accepting US funds and any other foreign funds, if only they help to strengthen the capitalist class and its class rule, are damaging in the extreme. The people should not remain helpless spectators if the Indian Parliament is simply going to talk about this issue, singling out Indira Gandhi for some verbal attacks. They should demand that the Central Government place before the country all the information at their disposal regarding the operations and ramifications of foreign funds in India

The ruling bourgeois landlord classes, which have embarked on the bankrupt path of capitalist development in collaboration

with foreign monopoly capital, and who go about with a begging bowl to all the States and Governments which have some money to spare, donate, invest, grant and aid, can neither dare to offend the capitalists and imperialists nor prevent the ravages of foreign funds on the political life of our country. This type of national humiliation before the international money bags can be ended only if the present path of capitalist development is ended and an alternative path is pursued.

The brave anti C I A talk of Indira Gandhi at convenient intervals as well as the repeated declarations of their policy of "genuine" non alignment and national independence by the present Janata Ministers are utterly shallow, since there exist no material sanctions for this in the class policies pursued by our "national leaders"

Mrs Indira Gandhi who has always boasted about her nationalism and anti imperialist bona fides, who was arrogantly denouncing her political opponents as people who sell themselves for a few pieces of silver and a few bottles of foreign whisky, is now found in the totally indefensible position of receiving U S funds for political purposes.

Her periodical anti C I A chantings and anti U S diatribes are only meant to cover up her compliance with the imperialists and their foreign monopoly finance capital—all in the interests of pushing her path of capitalist development and her personal aggrandisement. Her talk of Socialism and her pretence of being wedded to Indo Soviet friendship, etc., are a smoke screen. Some times, in her ecstasies, she likened herself to Joan of Arc and the Rani of Jhansi. Certain political forces as her drummer boys used to compare her to the late Allende of Chile who fell fighting the U S inspired armed counter revolutionaries, clean forgetting her rupee devaluation at the bidding of the U S in 1966, her Government's liberal sanctioning of deals with the multinationals, her double faced Machiavellian political tactics and all her deals, as the Prime Minister, with several imperialist States.

Indira Gandhi and her receiving of U S funds for her own and her party's benefit shall not be allowed to pass without a thorough probe. Full facts must be placed before the Indian people, and effective and stern measures must be devised by the Government to defend the country from becoming a playground for foreign funds to manipulate politics in India.

The Delhi Meeting*

Editorial of "People's Democracy", May 27, 1979

The May 17 Meeting in New Delhi called at the initiative of Sri Madhu Limaye no doubt constitutes an important political development. It brought together leading personalities from parties other than the Congress (I).

The exclusion of the Congress (I) from this gathering underlined the recognition by all that the organisation represented the forces of dictatorship which have to be unitedly fought. Without this recognition there is no scope for united action in defence of democracy. The fact that this was accepted by all marked the progress made by many parties who till recently were hesitant to identify the forces of dictatorship.

The gathering for informal exchange took place in the background of the above and other political developments.

Till recently, the Swaran Singh Congress was deeply entrapped in seeking unity with the Indira Congress, a section of its leadership was prepared to accept humiliating terms to be able to do obeisance to Indira. Resistance was weak and the entire issue was posed in a wrong way as if it was only a question of democratic and collective functioning of the organisation and not of fighting imposition of dictatorship on the country.

But the arrogant rejection by Indira Gandhi of the demand for collective leadership and, above all, the emergence of Sanjay Gandhi exposed and unmasked the unity makers. The democratic anti dictatorial current got strengthened, the organisation had to break off the surrender talks carried on in the name of unity.

This represented a big set back for Indira Gandhi who was planning to liquidate the existence of the other Congress.

*Refer Document under Item No. 56 of this Volume

Yet another significant development took place which was also responsible for bringing these several parties together

Recent months have seen shocking communal carnages in Aligarh and Jamshedpur and every one could detect the sinister hand of the RSS behind them. It was not just a question of spread of obscurantist communal ideology or of unleashing of riots by rousing communal passions or manufacturing provocative incidents. The thinking and progressive minded public realised that with the increased RSS influence in the Janata Party, there was every danger of the administration itself being used for the intimidation of minorities and secular ideology being replaced by downright religious obscurantism. It was realised that the attempt of this agency to control the Government must be fought by all democratic forces.

It was, therefore, no surprise that elements from within the Janata Party should see the danger and warn that organisation against it. It is no wonder that the inner struggle of the Janata Party should partly at least echo this conflict between democratic and obscurantist communal outlooks.

Madhu Limaye in his speech nailed down this development with precision and force. "Whatever may be the immediate cause or provocation", he said, "the fact is that these riots are the result of a deep gulf dividing the Hindus and Muslims, of the growth of communal fanaticism, among the Hindus, as well as the Muslims, and, above all, of the sense of insecurity created by the recent aggressive tactics of the RSS under the protective umbrella of Government." He further spoke about "the aggressive speeches of RSS leaders and their systematic efforts to infiltrate the Government, the educational institutions and the Press."

Another development has been the rising discontent of the masses and their united actions, especially of the trade unions, against the reactionary economic and repressive policies of the Janata Government.

However, it is obvious that notwithstanding the common concern for the issues mentioned above, the different political parties had their own opinions about how to proceed and what is to be done immediately. To take but one instance, even on the

question of cow protection and the official Bill to transfer it to the Concurrent List, the parties do not have a common opinion. And this is a vital question affecting the secular character of the State and an important plank to fight the religious fanaticism of those who are responsible for the carnage of the minorities.

As the note submitted to the meeting on behalf of the CPI(M) stated "It would, however, be wrong to exaggerate the extent of these political developments and think that the situation has already become ripe for what is called a third force or a united front of Left and democratic forces. For, sharp differences exist among the various forces which are fighting against authoritarianism, for secularism and for a radical and democratic turn in Government policies." Last week's by elections to the Kerala Assembly in which our Party opposed the ruling coalition which included the Congress and the CPI, revealed that we were far away from a 'third force' or a Left and democratic front.

The participants in the meeting took a realistic view of the situation and decided to move on some immediate issues. They decided in the first place to organise symposia, hold seminars and organise conventions to rouse public opinion to highlight the menace of authoritarianism and checkmate the communal forces led by the RSS. They also welcomed the growing unity in mass struggles, the united action of the trade unions in defence of the economic demands and democratic rights of the workers.

They also agreed that Congress (I) quarters cannot be given a place in this combination under the plea of unity of all anti-communal forces. The struggle against communalism cannot be delinked from the struggle against dictatorship.

The meeting thus constitutes a small but important beginning in the task of consolidating the anti-authoritarian and anti-communal forces. How quickly this consolidation takes place depends on how quickly the participants overcome some of their differences and firmly stand by the common objective.

UNCTAD V

Editorial of "People's Democracy", June 10, 1979

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD V), held in Manila, like the earlier four conferences, ended in complete fiasco

This was by no means unexpected. The Western capitalist countries have been adopting a completely negative attitude to the demands formulated by the "developing countries"—a euphemism for the former colonies and dependencies of the Western capitalist countries. Just as in relation to their "own" working class and peasantry, so in relation to their former colonies, the ruling classes of the developed capitalist countries pursued policies of shameless exploitation.

Up till the last moment, the developed capitalist countries stuck to their iron grip over the underdeveloped countries of the world, kept them as their colonies or dependencies. It required the worldwide revolutionary upsurge following the defeat of fascism in the Second World War and the formation of the Socialist camp to make them give up their direct rule over the major part of the globe. Even, at this stage, however, they exercised through hundreds of ways indirect control over their former colonies—a control which has been given the correct name "neo colonialism".

The existence of the Socialist world and the assistance rendered by this new world to the newly independent former colonies and dependencies of the capitalist world enabled the "Third World" to put up various forms of resistance to the continuing grip of the developed over the "developing" countries. One of the forms of resistance was the demand for a "restructuring of the world

economic order", enabling the "developing" countries to catch up with the developed. Not only did this fail to get any worthwhile response from the Western capitalist countries but ever more and more new forms of attacks were launched by the developed on the "developing" countries. Hence, the failure of the earlier four United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development. Hence, too, the failure of the Manila Conference.

A part of the responsibility for this should, however, be borne by the overwhelming majority of "developing" countries who failed to follow up the attainment of freedom from direct foreign rule by such internal policies as would enable them to shake off all the neo colonial ties being foisted on them. They failed to put an end to the pre capitalist forms of socio economic relations, allowed the feudal lords, the tribal chieftains as well as the emerging forces of capitalism to have uncontrolled sway over the national economy.

The result is that the latent resources of the nation in material wealth and human labour power could not be mobilised for modernising and developing the national economy. There is no way out for them except to be at the mercy of the Western Capitalist Powers since they are not prepared to adopt radical agrarian reforms and otherwise facilitate the use of internal resources for national development.

There are in fact some "developing" countries which have adopted the alternate path of national development. The reference here is to those countries which after winning political independence, continued the struggle against imperialism (neo colonialism) and started reorganising their national economies by making inroads into the rights of the pre capitalist or growing capitalist classes in society. Self reliant national development is no empty slogan but a reality for such countries.

As opposed to such countries are the majority of "developing" countries who find no other way of developing themselves except to depend on "aid" from the developed capitalist countries. Every United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has turned to be the forum from which such "developing" countries put forward, and the developed capitalist countries reject, the demand for more and more "aid". The same story repeated itself in Manila and hence the fiasco which overtook UNCTAD V.

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The hectic efforts made at the last moment to salvage something out of the wreckage of UNCTAD V led to the adoption of a resolution on "protectionism". This however was adopted with many reservations from the developed countries while it did not satisfy the "developing" countries.

This reality is sought to be covered up by the opponents of the Socialist world who try to make it appear as if the responsibility for the fiasco of UNCTAD V lies neither in the neo colonialist policies of the Western capitalist countries nor in the unwillingness of the "developing" countries to adopt radical socio economic policies, but in the "selfishness" of the "rich" countries, regardless of whether they are capitalist or Socialist.

The assumption is that if only the Socialist countries are "generous" in giving "aid", the capitalist countries among the "rich" would be forced to do the same, furthermore, if both the capitalist and Socialist countries among the rich give this much of "generous aid", the "developing" countries will be able to overcome their backwardness and catch up with the "rich" countries.

The crucial question of class relations involved in the present day phenomenon of neo colonialism as well as in the socio economic policies pursued by the non Socialist part of the Third World, is thus completely hidden behind the talk of "rich versus poor". This, therefore, is nothing but an apology for neo colonialism.

Left Parties' Statement*

Representatives of the CPI(M), CPI, Peasants' and Workers' Party, Forward Bloc and RSP have issued the following statement after a meeting in New Delhi on August 20, 1979

Having regard to the present composition of the Lok Sabha, no party is in a position to form a Government which would measure up to the democratic standard or is going to be stable. We are of the considered view that no one can be entrusted with the task of forming a Government. Any such attempt can only lead to horse trading on a large scale and the invasion of money power, thereby tarnishing our democratic and public life. We are, therefore, firmly of the opinion that the fresh mandate of the people should be obtained through fresh elections to a new Lok Sabha as early as possible. This is the only correct solution to the present crisis.

The recent events have exposed the pretences of Indira Gandhi about her claim to fight Hindu communalism and chauvinism represented by the RSS-Jana Sangh combine. Her support to the RSS-Jana Sangh dominated Governments in Bihar and Haryana bears witness to this sordid fact. It is significant that such support has been based on some shady deals such as the "review" of the cases against her henchmen, Jagannath Mishra and Bansilal.

The signatories of the statement are P. Ramamurthi and Samar Mukherjee (CPI(M)), Bhupesh Gupta, M. N. Govindan Nair, C. K. Chandrappan (CPI), Tridib Choudhury (RSP), Chitta Basu, Amar Chakrabarty (FB), Dajiba Desai, K. N. Dhulup, V. G. Hande, (PWP)

On The Decision of The Central Committee*

M. Basavapunnaiiah

The decision of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) to vote for the Janata(S) Congress(S) Coalition Government had become the subject matter of bitter attack and denunciation by a number of bourgeois newspaper commentators. This wrath against the decision of the C C of the CPI(M) and this unusual interest evinced by these big newspapers prompt us to examine the reasons behind all this, and also to explain the rationale behind the resolution of the C C

What was the decision of the Central Committee?

First, "the CPI(M) is prepared to support the Charan Ministry in the coming vote of confidence though it has not freed itself from the support of the Congress(I) and is yet to give specific assurances to the masses", "in order to prevent the Jana Sangh dominated Janata Party from coming back and the Congress(I) exploiting the situation"

Second, the CPI(M) will be a party of opposition and no question of either its joining the Janata(S) Congress alliance or offering its support to the Charan Singh Government can arise

Third, "the CPI(M) will decide its attitude to the Government from issue to issue on the basis of its policies in relation to the masses and towards the struggle against authoritarianism and communalism"

Bourgeois Press Campaign

The Indian Express reporter characterised the decision of the Central Committee as "the Party's volte face", and broadcast the

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news that there was “a sharp division in the Polit Bureau” and that “there were hardliners who insisted that the Party should stick to its guns and oppose the Congress(I)—supported Janata(S) Congress(S) Coalition as well as the Jana Sangh—dominated Janata Party” (Emphasis added)

The Editor of *The Statesman* went a step further and asserted “that no political principles, let alone any ideological preference, is involved in their decision, which has been determined entirely by tactical considerations”, and “their arguments are too specious to merit detailed examination” He taunts the C C that it is violating the Jullundur Party Congress resolution saying “It had already decided to forget its earlier policy formulation that authoritarianism was still the greatest danger But if communalism had become as serious a menace as seems to have been just discovered, the Marxists had to oppose both contenders for power, or stay neutral” (Emphasis added)

The *Hindu's* Special Correspondent from Calcutta thought it fit and proper to advertise widely the “dope” of inner C C differences by writing that “all seven West Bengal members are understood to have supported a motion moved by Mr Jyoti Basu at the recent Central Committee meeting of the Party in New Delhi suggesting that the Party maintain its neutrality in the current political imbroglio” (Emphasis added)

He concluded his report by broadcasting “Politically, this would appear to be the most serious difference to crop up in the Party in more than ten years There is intense unhappiness in the West Bengal unit over the Central Committee decision” (Emphasis added)

Thus a widespread campaign was unleashed by the big bourgeois Press against the C C resolution of August 16, 1979, while pretending to support the earlier C C resolution of July 21, 1979 which had declared that “the CPI(M) cannot be a party to support a Ministry which comes to be dependent upon the Congress(I) for its survival” and “it is clear that the Janata(S) Government if it is formed will be heavily dependent on the Congress(I) for its survival and existence” (Emphasis added)

Since this motivated propaganda against the CPI(M) by the powerful bourgeois Press is likely to mislead even some well intentioned supporters of the CPI(M), we deem it necessary to explain the rationale behind the various resolutions of the C C that were under discussion, and also the reasons for the change in the August 16 statement of the C C from the P B statement of July 24

At the outset let us make it absolutely clear that the unanimous decision of the P B and C C to support the no confidence motion against the Janata Government headed by Morarji Desai was not only correct and unexceptionable, any hesitation or vacillation over it on the part of the CPI(M) would have meant the betrayal of the struggle against the twin menace of authoritarianism and the communalism of the RSS Jana Sangh brand

Correct Decision

The Janata Party, which rightly began the struggle to dismantle the Emergency regime set up by the Indira Gandhi Government, following its victory in the March 1977 election and its subsequent victory in the elections to the State Assemblies in June 1977, had slowly and steadily lost its momentum, and slackened its struggle against the authoritarian platform represented by Indira Gandhi

Growing Trends of Authoritarianism

Under pressure of the ever deepening economic crisis and growing mass discontent, and also due to the very class nature of the Janata Party and its leadership, most of the Janata run State Governments had begun to rapidly acquire the traits of authoritarianism. The banning of strikes, the repression on the people, the enactment of preventive detention laws and the increasing attacks on minorities and the oppressed Scheduled Castes and Tribes had become a normal practice with most of the Janata ruled State Governments. The issuing of anti working class Ordinances by the Central Government, its announced proposal to enact a preventive detention law, and the brutal manner it suppressed the legitimate agitation of the police, CRP

and CISF, who number several lakhs taking the country as a whole, etc , left no doubt in the minds of the people as to how authoritarian trends were rapidly overtaking the Janata leaders

Vicious and rabid communalism, represented by the RSS and Jana Sangh, which had played a role against the authoritarianism of the Indira regime, when it itself had become a victim of authoritarianism, once it found itself the single biggest organised detachment in the ruling Janata combine, began to throw its weight about for self aggrandisement at the expense of other components of the Janata. The RSS Jana Sangh combine began ganging up with the BLD component of the Janata in the year 1977 in order to capture between them the leadership of several State Governments like UP, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, etc , reducing components like Congress(O), CFD, Socialists and others into ineffective entities

In this very process the RSS Jana Sangh wing, after a year or so, came into head on conflict with its BLD ally, and began organising and mobilising the rest of the Janata constituents against the BLD, in order to isolate it and get on to the top both in the States and at the Central Government level. Playing upon the personal rivalry for the coveted post of Prime Ministership between Morarji Desai, Jagjivan Ram and Charan Singh, the RSS Jana Sangh lobby succeeded in converting the former Prime Minister, Desai, into its pliant leader

RSS Jana Sangh Domination

Utilising its newly acquired strength in the State Legislatures, Parliament and party organisation, the RSS Jana Sangh lobby had also succeeded in securing a firm hold over the dominant leadership of the Janata Party organisation

In the measure the RSS Jana Sangh had moved to dominate the Janata Party and Government, both at the States and the Central level, the fragile unity of the Janata Party which comprised disparate parties and groups, started crumbling—intensifying the power struggle amongst the different components leading to various permutations and combinations. Mass and class issues

were being raised in the process of this infighting with an eye to the electorate and under pressure of the growing mass discontent. Charges of corruption were freely hurled against each other by Desai, Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram. Even the charge of being soft or otherwise to Indira Gandhi and her Emergency crimes was freely bandied. Most importantly, the issue of RSS men enjoying dual membership in the Janata and the RSS became the major issue of the divide. The BLD, the Socialists of all brands as demonstrated by the Delhi Convention of July 7 and 8, 1979, and a section of the CFD had made the dual membership issue the principal plan of their political platform.

Janata's Present Character

This resulted in the devastating split in the Janata Party, the downfall of the Desai Government and the transformation of the Janata Party into an RSS dominated political force, losing both its character as an instrument in the struggle against authoritarianism, and also its secular face as presented during its formation and its Election Manifesto of February 1977. Thus the Janata Party its political character, role and complexion completely changed, demanding that the CPI(M) reassess and reformulate its attitude to the Janata Party as it had been reduced to, and during the current political turmoil.

The deepening economic crisis and the consequent rising mass discontent, the growing political instability of the bourgeois parliamentary system, and the struggle for sharing of political power between different bourgeois parties and groups, all had resulted in the splitting up of the political representatives of the bourgeois landlord classes into four major formations, instead of the emergence of the much campaigned for and propagated two party system as in the UK and the USA.

The Jana Sangh dominated Janata, the Janata(S), the Congress(I) and the Congress(S), today, are the four big parties which together constitute around 450 members in the present Lok Sabha consisting of 540 or so members. In the country, too, these four bourgeois led formations continue to command the confidence of 75 to 80 per cent of the electorate.

It was in this concrete political situation that the Left and democratic parties and groups were called upon to play their role in furthering the cause of the Left and democratic forces and strengthening the struggle against the twin menace of authoritarianism and communalism. These two evils, though not always, often complement and supplement each other.

Complicated and Difficult Task

The splitting of the Janata and the Congress, and their formation into four separate entities had undermined the struggle against both authoritarianism and communalism. The Indira Congress which upholds the banner of authoritarianism even after the rout of 1977 had gained, with its 74 members in the Lok Sabha, a new bargaining capacity with both the main contenders for power, the Janata(S) Congress(S) alliance and the Jana Sangh dominated Jagjivan Ram led Janata. The RSS Jana Sangh combine, though badly mauled in the present crisis, is still a force which can indulge in manipulations with its 90 or so strength in the Lok Sabha.

It was stated in our PB statement of July 24, 1979

“ it seems that with the process of counting of heads in full swing, principles were being jettisoned for the sake of numbers and certain Janata(S) leaders made a beeline for Congress(I) support” “This was confirmed by statements suggesting preference for Smt Indira Gandhi. With these developments it is clear that the Janata(S) Government if it is formed will be heavily dependent on Congress(I) for its survival and existence. The CPI(M) cannot be a party to support a Ministry which comes to depend upon the Congress(I) for its survival” “The PB expresses its firm opposition to the formation of a Ministry dependent on the Jana Sangh RSS combination”

This PB statement of July 24, 1979 was not only in complete accord with the C C resolution of July 21, 1979 it was also an open call to all the people to register their opposition to any compromise and collaboration with either Congress(I) authoritarianism or RSS Jana Sangh Communalism.

This was a call to all the anti authoritarian elements and trends both inside the Janata(S) and the Congress(S) to resist and fight

against the moves for closer co operation with and reliance on the Congress (I)

Stand Vindicated

Did this position and call of our P B statement of July 24 and the C C resolution of August 16 stand vindicated? It did

First, the Congress(I) mounted pressure on the Janata(S) Congress(S) alliance, demanding concessions including the abolition of the Special Courts and threatening to withdraw the “unconditional” support and to either remain neutral or to oppose the proposed confidence vote

Second, the Congress(I) for its own partisan ends began allying with the RSS Jana Sangh dominated Janata in Bihar and Haryana while opposing the Janata(S) Congress(S) alliance to which it had offered “unconditional” support only a few days before Thus the conflict between the Congress(I) and Janata(S) alliance had begun deepening

Third, the support that the Janata(S) alliance was securing from the AIADMK, Akali Party, Peasants’ and Workers’ Party, CPI, etc , had emboldened the leaders of the Janata(S) to adopt a stiffer attitude to the Congress(I) The inclusion in the Charan Singh Cabinet of several Congress(S) leaders who had given evidence against Indira Gandhi before the Shah Commission, the flat refusal to concede the demand for withdrawal of cases and the abolition of Special Courts, the open statement of Charan Singh that he would not meet and discuss with Indira Gandhi till the vote of confidence was over, etc , were estranging relations between the leaders of the Janata(S) and the Congress(I) Charan Singh was issuing statements to the effect that he was prepared to face a mid term poll rather than succumb to the pressure of the Congress(I)

Two Trends in Janata(S)

Thus a dual phenomenon was becoming increasingly discernible While a trend, represented by leaders like Raj Narain, for closer relations with the Congress(I) was surfacing, another stronger trend was asserting itself—the trend to lessen

dependence on the Congress(I) and to compensate the loss of Congress(I) support by mobilising the Left, democratic and regional parties and groups

It was at this juncture that the PB and the C C were called upon to assess the situation, and redefine the Party's attitude to the issue of confidence vote for the Janata(S) Congress(S) Coalition Government

The issue before the PB and C C for serious discussion and decision was whether the stand of no support to the new Coalition would strengthen the struggle against the authoritarian forces of the Congress(I) and the compromising forces in the Janata(S), or lending support to the specific issue of vote of confidence, without committing the party to overall support to the new Government, would help "the Ministry to disentangle itself from dependence on the Congress(I) and enable it to struggle both against authoritarianism and communalism"

Correctness of Estimate

The PB and C C, after a deep discussion and weighing the pros and cons of the issue, came to the conclusion that its offer of conditional support to the vote of confidence would strengthen the hands of the anti authoritarian elements and not give a fillip to the compromising forces whose line led to greater dependence on the Congress(I)

The conflicts and contradictions between the Congress(I) authoritarian forces on the one hand and the forces represented by the Janata(S) Congress alliance on the other proved stronger than the "secret" or "open" understanding between the two. The simple fact that Charan Singh resigned his Prime Ministership in the morning of August 20, refusing to be blackmailed by the Congress(I), goes to prove the correctness of the estimate of the PB and C C

Role of Various Parties

In this Government crisis, the mettle of every political party and group in the country had come under severe test

The Congress(I), which publicly offered its “unconditional” support for the formation of the Charan Singh Ministry, was not only found raising all sorts of conditions for its promised support but also ending up in its treacherous opposition to Charan Singh Ministry, entering into a shady deal with Jagjivan Ram’s Janata Party, abandoning all principles and public morals

The Congress(S), which first agreed to lend its support to Charan Singh Ministry and be its ally, staked its claim for the Prime Ministership in the beginning. By nominating all the members of its Parliamentary Board to the new Council of Ministers without democratic consultation with its Parliamentary wing or the party’s Working Committee, it landed itself in an inner party crisis and revolt which ultimately led to the handing over of the resignation letters of the Ministers to the party’s President. It got split, and lost face in the public.

The CPI which was a signatory to the Left parties’ statement of July 18, 1979, declaring support to the “formation of a Government by the forces which commit themselves to fight communalism and authoritarianism” had no scruples to line up, along with the authoritarian forces led by the Congress(I) without a word of protest or opposition, behind the Janata(S) Congress Coalition which included the names of Congress(I) members in its list of supporters to the President. Its General Secretary, Rajeswara Rao, was issuing public statements that their party’s intention in lending support to the Charan Singh Ministry along with the Congress(I) was for the disintegration of the Janata Party and to destroy all its components. All along the CPI in its blind hatred for the Janata, had totally failed to appreciate its role in fighting Congress(I) authoritarianism.

Two other Left parties, the RSP and the Forward Bloc, in utter disregard of the spirit and letter of the Joint Statement of July 18, declared war on both the Charan Singh Congress alliance and Jagjivan Ram’s Janata and decided to oppose the Charan Singh Ministry along with Jagjivan Ram’s Janata Party.

The AIADMK, which stood in firm support of the Desai Government during the course of the no confidence motion in the second week of July 1979, turned a volte face and plunged into

joining the Janata(S) Congress(S) alliance and its newly formed Council of Ministers in the second week of August 1979!

CPI(M)'s Principled Stand

The CPI(M), contrary to the conduct of several other political parties, took a principled stand of fighting against both the dangers of Congress(I) authoritarianism and the RSS Jana Sangh dominated Janata, its arch communalism and growing trends of authoritarianism. At every stage in this crisis the CPI(M) had striven its utmost to strengthen the forces that stood against communalism and in defence of secularism, and the forces that stand against Congress(I) authoritarianism and in defence of democracy. Such was the principled struggle against the twin menace of communalism and authoritarianism in the given complex conditions without any illusion that the bourgeois landlord parties will consistently and firmly fight against authoritarianism without any vacillations.

The CPI(M)'s support to the no trust motion against the Desai Government, its signing of the Left parties' statement of July 18 pledging to fight the twin menaces of authoritarianism and communalism, its offer of support to any Government that undertakes to fight against both the authoritarian and communal forces, its July 24 statement opposing the formation of the Charan Singh Government since it was becoming heavily dependent on Congress(I) support and finally its stand to lend support to the vote of confidence in the Charan Singh Government with a view to disentangling the Government from its continued reliance on the authoritarian Congress(I)—all were links in the single, principled chain of struggle against the authoritarian platform represented by the Congress(I) and against the arch communalists dominating Jagjivan Ram's Janata Party.

Balance Sheet of Struggle

What is the balance sheet of struggle of the CPI(M) together with all other allies, however temporary, vacillating and unstable they were during the six weeks of the political turmoil between July 9 and 20 August? Today, it becomes quite obvious that the

Left, democratic and secular forces, which take their stand against the menace of authoritarianism of the Congress(I) and the Communalism of the RSS Jana Sangh Combine, have emerged many times stronger, both on the floor of the Indian Parliament and outside among the people at large

If the Indira Congress's tall claims of its irreconcilable hostility to Jana Sangh communalism on the one hand and the "unprincipled" Janata Party on the other had proved to be totally hypocritical and a hoax in these six weeks of crisis, the RSS Jana Sangh combine, which was on its relentless offensive against every secular and democratic force during the last 28 months got a severe drubbing, and was thrown on the defensive

Life and experience during the six weeks of political turmoil have vindicated the policy pursued by the CPI(M), notwithstanding the slanderous attacks on it by the bourgeois Press and the consequent confusion created among some sections of the people. The propagandists who let loose the talk that CPI(M) is reeling under its inner party differences and divisions, and that it would take no time for internal quarrels to flare up and the party to disintegrate must feel ashamed that their forecasts have proved baseless and false

However, we neither underrate the galloping governmental crisis and its impact on different political parties, including the CPI(M), nor advance false claims that different views on the assessment of the different political aspects of the developing crisis are not being seriously and passionately debated inside our party. But that is what is normal and what ought to be in any living, dynamic and democratic party. But what our Party prohibits is the right to every member with differences to go about airing his or her views publicly

What Lenin had said

For the benefit of our readers and also our critics, let us cite some relevant utterances of Lenin on the subject

"Differences within or between political parties are usually resolved not only by polemics over principles, but also by the course of political developments. In particular, differences on

Party's tactics, i.e., its political conduct, are often resolved by those with incorrect opinions going over in fact to the correct path of struggle, under the pressure of the course of developments that simply brush aside erroneous opinions, making them pointless and devoid of any interest. This, of course, does not mean that fundamental differences on questions of tactics do not call for explanations of principles, explanations which alone can keep the Party equal to its theoretical convictions. No. This means only that decisions made with regard to tactics must be verified as often as possible in the light of the new political events. Such verification is necessary from standpoint of both theory and practice". (Collected Works, Vol. 9, Page 145)

This is exactly what the P.B. and C.C. of the CPI(M) have been striving to practise during the present galloping crisis in the period between August 10 and 20, 1979. Our critics, if they are honest, should judge our policies in the light of experience. Can they still charge that the line of the CPI(M) has weakened the struggle against the authoritarian forces led by the Congress(I)? If at all any weakening has taken place, the entire blame should be placed at the door of the Janata leaders who compromised with Indira Gandhi's authoritarianism, who themselves have acquired authoritarian trends, who had allowed the party to become a plaything in the hands of the RSS-Jana Sangh combine and who led the party into disruption and disintegration.

Lesson of Experience

It is true that the common people, the average newspaper reader cannot easily and immediately follow the political conduct of political parties, including that of the CPI(M). As Lenin Said, "the masses have to learn mostly from their own experience, paying dearly for every lesson". The lessons from the current six-week-old crisis—the crisis that is not yet resolved and not likely to be resolved soon—will be surely learnt by our people, and they would judge every party's conduct and pronounce their verdict. The verdict of the bourgeois critics that the policy of the CPI(M) in the present crisis is unprincipled, opportunist, etc., will find its place in the garbage of history.

CPI(M) Unit Formed In Jammu & Kashmir*

A Jammu & Kashmir unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) came into being in the last week of August when a group of 200, formerly belonging to the Naxalite group in the State, broke away from the CPI(M L) led by Ram Piara Saraf and organised a conference to declare that they were joining the CPI(M). In a statement, they have critically examined Naxalite policies which they themselves had been pursuing so far, and rejected them, pledging to work hereafter on the basis of the Programme and policies of the CPI(M).

Among those who have broken with the CPI(M L) and joined the CPI(M) are three members of the five member—Jammu and Kashmir State Committee of that party—Abdul Kabir Wani, Ghulam Nabi Malik and Mohammed Yusuf, the two remaining in the CPI(M L) State Committee being Ram Piara Saraf and his son, O P Saraf. Of the Kashmir Committee of the CPI(M L) consisting of five members, the above three and Abdul Hamid have joined the CPI(M), leaving only one behind in that committee.

The New Committee

The new Jammu & Kashmir Organising Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) consists of Abdul Kabir Wani, Ghulam Nabi Malik, Mohammed Yusuf, Abdul Hamid, Abdul Haliq and Bishen Das (with one more member to be added), with Mohammed Yusuf as its Secretary.

*Report published in PEOPLES DEMOCRACY New Delhi September 9 1979

Many of those who have now joined the CPI(M) had been incarcerated in prison or had been forced to work underground, many of them had been victims of police torture. Mohammed Yusuf had been detained without trial till recently under the Jammu & Kashmir Preventive Detention Act, he was released only on August 14 by the Supreme Court of India. They have considerable influence among the students in Srinagar and Anantnag and among the peasantry in Anantnag district, Shopian and some other pockets.

Intense discussions had been going on among them for quite some time regarding the policies of the Naxalite party. They were convinced that these policies were wrong and had nothing to do with Marxist ideology and theory and that their party did not follow any principles of Communist organisation. Inside Kashmir itself, they had followed the wrong slogan of a plebiscite which they have now repudiated.

When the R. P. Saraf leadership of the Naxalites came to know about these discussions and their plans to break with the CPI(M L), it went from house to house to approach these cadres and even their relations to bring pressure on them to remain in the party. When the leadership failed to convince them, it advised them to become an independent group, but under no circumstances join the CPI(M). This was only a continuation of their line of treating the CPI(M), and not the ruling classes, as their main enemy.

Some parties of the ruling classes also tried to intervene and keep them away from the CPI(M). Their advice was that they should either remain independent or join the CPI, but not the CPI(M).

The absence of Mohammed Yusuf in jail was also used by them to sow confusion. But after his release by the Supreme Court on August 14, Mohd Yusuf met all the cadres and conducted discussions along with the other leaders to remove whatever confusion had been created among them.

Conference in Srinagar

After these successful discussions, they organised the

invited the central leadership of CPI(M) to participate in the conference and guide them. Polit Bureau member Harkishan Singh Surjeet attended the conference in which 60 of the leading cadres participated.

The conference was presided over by Abdul Kabir Wani. He had been a delegate to the Seventh Congress of the CPI(M) in Calcutta in 1964. Referring to the period after he left the CPI(M) along with Saraf and others, he said, "we feel we have wasted a good ten years of our life fighting not the ruling classes but the CPI(M). We are happy we are again back in our home."

Mohd Yusuf placed before the conference a critical review analysing the wrong policies pursued by the CPI(M L). He said the cadres had raised many doubts about these policies but the leadership of that party never bothered to take notice of them. Not only were the policies pursued ideologically and politically wrong, there was no democratic organisational functioning which could have possibly corrected some of the mistakes. He said, we were not allowed to have access to any literature other than that of the CPI(M L).

Harkishan Singh Surjeet explained the incorrectness of the ideological and programmatic positions of the Naxalites and how they had disrupted the Communist movement. He concretely took up the wrong ideological positions of the Communist Party of China which the Naxalites declared they were following, and the wrong programmatic positions of the CPI(M L) in regard to the class character of the Indian State, role of the bourgeoisie, the path of the Indian revolution, etc. The Communist Party of China itself has had to give up many of these wrong positions. As for the Naxalites, they have been split into innumerable factions. And it is well known that imperialist agencies and the agents of the exploiting ruling classes have penetrated the Naxalite movement on a large scale.

But, said Surjeet, the danger should not be underestimated because of the conditions prevailing in the country and the weakness of the mass movement. It is very necessary, he said, to educate the Party in regard to the struggle against the Naxalites, against the ideological roots of Naxalism and their present role.

against the ideological roots of Naxalism and their present role

Naxalism, he continued, is a petty bourgeois phenomenon which has nothing to do with the proletarian ideology. They characterised the Indian bourgeoisie as a comprador bourgeoisie and called for armed struggle without mobilising the people. The fiasco of this line led them to concentrate their fire on the CPI(M) and organise murderous attacks on CPI(M) cadre. In West Bengal, the Naxalites operated as an arm of the ruling classes against the CPI(M). Their role in States like Kerala and Andhra Pradesh was no different. Their "armed struggle" degenerated into individual terrorism.

Many genuine elements joined the Naxalites because of petty bourgeois impatience with the pace of developments and disdain for patient day to day work to build mass organisations and mobilise the people. But there is no short cut to revolution. Revolution comes out of the intensification of the class struggle and the winning over of the majority of the population to the positions of the working class. It should be the task of the Party to draw to the proletarian ideology those militant young elements who are revolting against the atrocious conditions in towns and villages alike. Many such elements have joined the Naxalite movement, they have been misled and it is for us to win them over to revolutionary positions.

The participants in the conference raised numerous questions not so much on the positions of the Communist Party of China or the Naxalites, but about the basic reasons for this deviation.

With their bitter experience of the functioning of the Naxalite party, they demanded that the CPI(M) leadership should keep in constant contact not only with the State leadership of the Party but also the cadre, organise Party education to safeguard against any future disruption and arrange wide scale distribution of literature.

They were confident that they would be able to take immediate steps to organise kisan and student movements.

Press Conference

After the conference, Surjeet along with the members of the

State Organising Committee, met the Press. Many of the participants of the conference were present at the venue of the Press Conference and the Pressmen were struck by the militant young cadres.

Surjeet told the Press that he was taking the opportunity to inform them that a Jammu and Kashmir unit of the CPI(M) had been set up for the first time after the CPI(M) broke away from the revisionists in 1964.

This has come about as a result of the discussions that were going on inside the Naxalite groups in Jammu and Kashmir for the last three/four years and the discussions they had with the CPI(M) leadership recently. As a result of these discussions, these groups have decided to sever their relations with the CPI(M L) and join the CPI(M).

In the Srinagar Conference, said Surjeet, they have adopted a self-critical review repudiating the wrong ideological political positions of the CPI(M L) and accepted the Programme and policy of the CPI(M).

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) has welcomed this development and has set up an Organising Committee to organise the CPI(M) in Jammu and Kashmir to guide the work of the Party here.

Surjeet said in conclusion that in the political situation prevailing in the country, and in Jammu and Kashmir, he was confident that the newly formed Party unit would be able to rally the working class, peasantry, students, employees and other toiling people behind the political line of the CPI(M) and grow into a force capable of intervening in the politics of the State.

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